Teachers Helping Teachers

The Proceedings of

2008 Conferences, Seminars and Workshops

Bill Balsamo Memorial Edition

Lao-American College
Vientiane, Laos
March 20 - 29

College of Foreign Languages – Hue University
Hue, Vietnam
June 13 – 15

College of St. Anthony
San Jose del Monte, Philippines
August 23 – 24

San Lorenzo Lalud & San Lorenzo Banilad
Mindoro Island, Philippines
August 25 – 27

Edited by
Brent A. Jones

With the cooperation of Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

In Fond Memory of

Our Friend and THT Founder

Bill Balsamo

September 24, 1943 ~ April 22, 2008

Introduction

It is my tremendous pleasure to offer this collection of papers submitted by volunteers who presented at one or more of this year's Teachers Helping Teachers events. On behalf of all of the THT volunteers, we would like to dedicate this edition of the THT proceedings to our friend and founder of THT, Bill Balsamo. Each one of us has stories or anecdotes of how Bill inspired, encouraged and entertained us. I will never forget how his eyes would light up when talking about a favorite opera, an adventure during one of his many travels, or making a connection with one of his students. Bill was the closest thing to a saint that I may ever meet, and my own life is fuller through having a chance to interact with him, first in our roles as presidents of local JALT chapters, and then as part of THT. I am sure he is smiling down on us and will continue watching over our various THT activities.

As in the past, these proceedings were prepared as a resource for conference and seminar participants as well as teachers who may not have had the opportunity to attend. We also hope these proceedings will serve as a lasting record of our efforts in sharing the collective knowledge and experience of THT presenters/volunteers. In our call for papers, we expressed a desire for both theoretical and practical perspectives. Looking through the manuscripts, I feel we have again achieved success in this endeavor. Please enjoy the various offerings here and expand on them in your own personal way.

Here is to Bill,

Brent A. Jones
Editor, THT 2008 Proceedings

Table of Contents

Program Schedule (Laos Seminar: March 20 – 29, 2008)

Mini-Courses for Lao-American College Students

March 20, 2008		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
08:30 – 10:00	Patrick Dougherty	From the Self to the World: The Art of Memoir:
10:00 – 11:30	Colin Graham	Prepare, Practice, Present
March 21, 2008		
08:30 – 10:00	Patrick Dougherty	From the Self to the World: The Art of Memoir
10:00 – 11:30	Colin Graham	Prepare, Practice, Present
March 22, 2008		
08:30 – 10:00	Patrick Dougherty	From the Self to the World: The Art of Memoir
10:00 – 11:30	Colin Graham	Prepare, Practice, Present

Main Conference at Lao-American College

March 25, 2008		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
10:00 – 11:30	Michael Stout	Developing Projects for the Language Classroom
	Brent A. Jones	Learning Theory and EFL/ESL Study Skills
17:00 – 18:30	Patrick Dougherty	THT and the Asia-Pacific Region (Poster Session)
	Michael Stout	Test Design for Language Teachers
18:30 – 20:00	Michael Stout	Teaching Presentation Skills
	Steve Wolfe	Haiku in American Literature
March 26, 2008		
08:30 – 10:00	Brent A. Jones	Who is Thiagi and What are Framegames?
	Stephen Pihlaja	Teaching Internal Discourse: Computer Mediated Communication and the Future of the Written Word
10:00 – 11:30	Colin Graham	English through Mathematics (Tangrams)
	Chris Ruddenklau	Reading the News
17:00 – 18:30	Patrick Dougherty	Class and Self-Assessment Tools
	Stephen Pihlaja	Corpus Developing Worksheets
18:30 – 20:00	Brent A. Jones	Instructional Design in a Business English Context
	Stephen Pihlaja	Speaking English as a Skill

Main Conference at Lao-American College (continued)

March 27, 2008		
08:30 – 10:00	Mike Furmanovsky	Making and Customizing Board Games
	Steve Wolfe	English Haiku Workshop: When Least is Most
10:00 – 11:30	Mike Furmanovsky	Using Class Questionnaires in the Writing Classroom
	Colin Graham	Getting Flash with Flash C
17:00 – 18:30	Mike Furmanovsky	Using Songs with Content and Story Lines
	Steve Wolfe	The English Haiku Workshop: Fostering Cross-Culture Creativity, Community, Communication
18:30 – 20:00	Jill Bruellman	Shall we small talk?
	Patrick Dougherty	Teaching and Learning Strategies for Students with Limited Proficiency
March 28, 2008		
08:30 – 10:00	Jill Bruellman	Using Templates for Lower Level Presentations
	Cecilia Silva	Fun Ways with Grammar
10:00 – 11:30	Jill Bruellman	Pronunciation: Tips and Techniques
	Cecilia Silva	From Language Awareness to Text Awareness in Literature
13:30 – 15:00	Colin Graham	Origami Workshop – Understanding the Basic Folds and Shapes
	Chris Ruddenklau	Effective Pair Work: An Introduction
15:00 – 16:30	Colin Graham	
	Chris Ruddenklau	Effective Pair Work: Part 2
17:00 – 18:30	CSV Students	Cultural Performance

Program Schedule (Vietnam Seminar: June 13 – 15, 2008)

June 13, 2008		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
08:30 – 09:30	Patrick Dougherty	CoLTs: Collaborative Teaching Techniques
	Peter Wanner	Applications of Digital Courseware for Classrooms and Faculty Management
	Ronald Klein	Creativity Exercises for Creative Writing
09:45 – 10:45	Patrick Dougherty	CATs: Classroom Assessment Techniques
	Peter Wanner	Applications of Word Processing Programs in Building English Writing Skills
	Ronald Klein	More Creative Exercises for Creative Writing
14:00 – 15:00	Ronald Klein	The Tennis Way of Conversation
	Gerald Couzens	Basic Management Plan for Large Classes
	Elizabeth King	Fluency Squares & Story Squares
15:05 – 16:05	Patrick Dougherty	Heritage as Inspiration: Using Student Heritage in the EFL Classroom
	Gerald Couzens	Developing Several Activities from a Task-Based Lesson Plan Model
	Elizabeth King	Discussion and Presentation Skill of Mid-level University Students
16:20 – 17:20	Patrick Dougherty	Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking and Active Learning
	Peter Wanner	Consequences for Bilingual First Language Acquisition (BFLA) and Native Speaker Language Acquisition (NSLA) Infants
June 14, 2008		
08:00 – 9:00	Gerald Couzens	Theoretical Tasked-Based Lesson Format into Practical Application
	Patrick Dougherty	Setting the Stage: Making the First Lesson Dynamic
	Elizabeth King	The Synopsis/Reaction Paper: One Assignment, Many Skills
09:05 – 10:05	Roger Palmer	Communicative Language Teaching versus Content-Based Language Teaching: Which works?
	Patrick Dougherty	Learner Centered Teaching: Concepts to Practice
	Steve Wolfe	English Poetry Writing Workshop

Vietnam Program Schedule (continued)

June 14, 2008 - continued		
10:20 – 11:20	Roger Palmer	Communication Strategies: What are they, and how they can help our Learners
	Steve Wolfe	An Introduction to *Haiku*
14:00 – 15:00	Patrick Dougherty	Course Design: Developing Significant Learning Experiences
	George Mano	Using Student Logs for Classroom Management
	Steve Wolfe	An Introduction to American Poetry
15:05 – 16:05	Peter Wanner	Practical Teaching Applications of Advances in Brain Mapping of Language Processes
	Joseph Tomei	Utilizing Blogs and Wikis in the EFL Classroom
	Roger Palmer	Listening Skills and Strategies: Practical Teaching Techniques
16:20 – 17:20	Peter Wanner	Assessment and Evaluation of English Written Essays Submitted through E-mail Large Classes
	Joseph Tomei	Activities Types as Vehicles for Language Teaching and Learning
	Roger Palmer	Using Narrative Structure to Support Learners in Listening Class
June 15, 2008		
08:00 – 9:00	Joseph Tomei	Group Project Work in the Language Classroom
	George Mano	Short Plays for Content and Language
09:05 – 10:05	Joseph Tomei	Elements of English Writing
	George Man	Vocabulary Activities
Certificate Presentations and Closing Ceremony		

Program Schedule (Philippines Seminar: August 23 – 27, 2008)

August 23, 2008		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topics**
08:30 – 10:00	Cecila Silva	Plenary – Narrative: Teachers Reflection
10:15 – 12:15	Brent A. Jones	Learning Theory and EFL/ESL Study Skills
	George Mano	Vocabulary Games and Activities
	Patrick Dougherty	Setting the Stage: How to Make a First Lesson Outstanding & Learner Centered Teaching
	Maggie Lieb	Debate Skills for Students with Varying Abilities
13:15 – 15:00	Maggie Lieb	MI Theory and Special Needs Students
	Aya Dougherty	Graphic Organizers in the Language Classroom
	Cecilia Silva	Cultural Images as Mediation in the Language Classroom
	Will Kay	Ice-Breakers: Effective Warm-ups to Generate Student Interest & Enthusiasm in the EFL Classroom
15:15 – 18:00	Colin Graham	Plenary- Blooming Materials: Recognizing Cognitive Burden; Learning, Teaching and Assessing
August 24, 2008		
8:00 – 10:00	Brent A. Jones	Who is Thiagi and what are Framegames?
	Cecilia Silva	Activities for the Primary Classroom
	Patrick Dougherty	Heritage as Inspiration
	Maggie Lieb	Music in the Language Classroom
10:15 – 12:15	Colin Graham	The Corpus in the Classroom
	Aya Dougherty	Formal Speeches in the Language Classroom
	Patrick Dougherty	Collaborative Learning Techniques
	Will Kay	Interactive English Writing and Storytelling
13:15 – 15:00	Aya Dougherty	Using Pictures as Tools for Creativity and Communication
	Patrick Dougherty	Creative Writing and its Place in the EFL Classroom
	Will Kay	Project-Based Teaching/Learning in EFL Classrooms
	Brent A. Jones	Instructional Design in a Business English Context
15:15 – 16:45	Patrick Dougherty	Plenary – THT: The Benefits of Collaboration

Preface – THT 2008 Proceedings

By Patrick Dougherty, THT President

The year 2008 will stand in the history of Teachers Helping Teachers as a time of tragedy and resolve. In April, THT lost its founder and guiding force, Bill Balsamo, to cancer. In June, THT became a Special Interest Group of the Japanese Association for Language Teaching, and in November, THT had its inaugural General Meeting and first election of officers. THT carried on, through it all, and successfully held conferences in Laos, Vietnam, and the Philippines. In this, the third volume of Teachers Helping Teachers Proceedings, you will find mementos and monographs from the hard-working and openhearted members of the THT delegations to those events. In reviewing the year, I would like to thank those whose efforts allowed for the fruition of our plans. First and foremost, I would like to thank our hosts in Laos, Vietnam, and the Philippines. Without the efforts of Lao-American College Co-Director Virginia Van Ostrand, the University of Hue's Dr. Tran van Phouc, and our tireless organizers in the Philippines, Amelita Matsushita and April Alcazar, our THT programs would never have succeeded. They, and the legion of dedicated workers and helpers who aided in organizing and conducting each THT event, deserve our sincere gratitude. Secondly, I would like to thank our newly minted collection of THT officers for volunteering their time and toil: Treasurer, Anthony Torbert; Membership Chair, Colin Graham; Program Chair, Peter Wanner; and Publications Chair, Brent Jones. A willingness to blaze new trails, set precedent, and be creative is the hallmark of this bunch, and we are privileged to have them. A special note of thanks to Brent for taking on the role of editor for these THT Proceedings as well the past two editions. It has been something of a herculean effort in that he has done the vast majority of the work himself. Third, I would like to thank the teams of THT volunteers who kindly gave of their time, finances, intellects, and teacher know-how, to make our conferences a success this past year. Whether it was dealing with last minute schedule changes, a power-outage, a desk-sized spider crawling up the chalkboard, or dozens of children so exuberant they pulled you in twenty different directions at once, you all showed grace, compassion, and spines of steel. You were wonderful. All through it, this year of loss, challenges and triumphs, we have maintained our mission, to be of service and support to our brethren educators and students in developing areas of the Asia Pacific region. What a journey it has been. These proceedings are a reminder of the wealth of information shared in the course of that journey. It is fitting that we, the members of THT, dedicate these pages to our late friend, mentor, guide, and comrade in the classroom, Bill Balsamo.

"We're not just an organization, we are an idea, a concept."

-- THT Founder William Balsamo

Fun Ways with Grammar

Cecilia Silva

Tohoku University

Abstract

This article reports on the inclusion of grammar in a communicative class of English as a Foreign Language. Studying grammar involves learning the way a language manipulates and combines words so as to form longer units of meaning. This leads to the following question: What exactly do learners need to know in terms of grammar to be able to use it in a communicative situation? Basically, this work maintains that grammar should not be seen as an end in itself but as one of the means of acquiring a mastery of the target language. First, this article aims to define what is meant by "grammar as process" within a communicative classroom activity, and to provide a brief rationale for this approach. Second, it offers an account of techniques aimed to make students learn grammatical structures, and a description of class activities wherein learners applied such structures. This part of the work presents an analysis of whether the amount of grammar input received by students, the characteristics of the techniques used, and the activities performed in class were appropriate to make them feel confident when speaking. A third purpose is to mention some of the issues that could be problematic when teaching grammar and provide a basis for discussion. It is expected that the herein suggested techniques be useful for other language educators.

Introduction

The author of this article views the learning of a foreign language as the acquisition of "communicative competence" rather than "linguistic competence," use of language and language in action rather than language as a system of symbols, ability and command rather than static knowledge. Namely, it accentuates communication over accuracy. However, this article proposes the insertion of grammar practice in classes aimed at developing communicative competence. Contradictory as it may sound, this work refers to communicative grammar practice in the foreign language classroom. This work contains three parts, the first one aims at defining what grammar is and how we teach grammar in the language class. Thornbury (2005) maintains the concept of grammar beyond a set of rules, i.e., grammar is not just a thing but is also something people create. He goes on to criticize the way grammar is taught in the class, "I, the teacher, will cut the language into lots of little pieces —called grammar— so that you, the learner, will be able to reassemble them in real communication (p.2)." What happens is that learners take those little pieces of language and still cannot produce accurate sentences because

that concept considers grammar just as result and ignores the process to get such result. So far there are two concepts related to grammar as a product, namely grammar as a set of rules that describe the way language functions and a grammar as a book containing such rules and descriptions. What Thornbury proposes, and this author adheres to, is a combination of grammar as product and "grammar as process," considered in this article as a link between communication and accuracy. In the second part this article moves to a practical area: description of three classroom activities and analysis of application of grammar points in dialogues, and students' comments. In the third part, we look at the relationship between grammar and communication, and discuss areas that might prove to be problematic and deserve further research.

What is grammar? How do we teach grammar?

There is a set of rules that govern how units of meaning may be constructed in any language. A learner who knows grammar is one who has mastered and can apply these rules so as to express what would be considered acceptable language utterances. Grammar, in itself, may furnish the basis for a set of classroom activities during which it becomes temporarily the main learning objective (e.g., making learners feel confident when using the language). The key words here are temporarily and application. This means that at an early stage we can ask our students to learn a certain structure through exercises that concentrate on particular manipulations of language but we should quickly progress to activities where learners are required to use the grammar meaningfully.

Purpura (2004) poses the question, "What exactly does a student need to 'know' in terms of grammar to be able to use it well enough for some real-world purpose?" (p. 50) The author of the present work is an advocate of grammar study and the question posed is how to practice grammatical forms before using them in communicative situations.

Why teach grammar?

Ur (2006) outlines the relationship between form and meaning for each of the main language skills (Table 1). The following caveats are offered support of teaching grammar.

1. To acquire the ability to use new linguistic forms communicatively, beginners need the opportunity to understand those new forms so as to feel confident, and to practice them not in a drill but in meaning-focused language use.

2. Beginners have difficulty in processing meaning and form simultaneously, so effort should focus on communicative activities designed for the practice of forms, so that learners gain confidence in using forms not during a mechanical practice but when interchanging meanings.
3. For the reason commented in the previous point and for the sake of accuracy, it is necessary to design activities that allow learners the practice of forms during a communicative activity.

Table 1. Aspects of the Teaching/Learning of Structures (Ur, 2006, p.6)

	Form	Meaning
Listening	Perception and recognition of the spoken form of the structure	Comprehension of what the spoken structure means in context
Speaking	Production of well-formed utterances	Use the structure to convey meaning in speech
Reading	Perception and recognition of the written form	Comprehension of what the written structure means in context
Writing	Production of well-formed examples in writing	Use the structure to convey meanings in writing

The organization of grammar teaching

Ur (2006) suggests organizing grammar teaching in four steps: (1) presentation, (2) isolation and explanation, (3) **practice,** and (4) test (p. 6).

Presentation - Present students with a text or video in which the new grammatical structure appears so as to get the learners to perceive the structure as something new.

Isolation and explanation - At this stage we move away from the context, and focus, temporarily, on the grammatical items themselves: what they sound and look like, what they mean, how they function.

Practice - This step contains exercises whose aim is to cause the learners to absorb the new structures thoroughly. This works focuses on this step. The function of this step is to familiarize students with the new material. Does it mean students are to concentrate on boring exercises? Some types of exercises (slot-fillers, transformations) are mechanical and simply help make the rules of form clearer and ensure that the rules are correctly applied. Another category of exercises still stresses production or perception of correct forms and there is also a link with meaning (translation, slot-filling or multiple choice based on meaning, matching). However, the

language is not being used to “do” things but to provide examples of itself, thus it is not a communicative practice. A third type of exercise is that in which the stress is on the grammatical process, and on the production or comprehension of meanings. Moreover, this works proposes some classroom activities for beginners that imply not only mental but also bodily involvement.

Test - Some kind of feedback so as to check that students have understood and can use the new structures properly.

Classroom work

In this second part we offer a description of three activities that were performed with Lao students studying English. When deciding the activities for grammar practice, the following characteristics were considered:

- be embedded in meaningful, communicative contexts,
- contribute positively to communicative goals,
- promote accuracy within fluent, communicative language,
- do not overwhelm students with linguistic terminology,
- be as lively and intrinsically motivating as possible,
- contribute to help students to feel confident when using the learned structures,
- contribute to accuracy

Specifically, the activities aim at guiding learners to practice structures within a communicative context.

1. Word order with paper strips. Students receive the components of sentences on paper strips and are asked to make complete and grammatically correct sentences with them. This activity is accomplished in three steps: first students receive paper strips in different colors for the subject, the verb and the predicate, in the second step subject and predicate are in one color and the verbs in another, in the third step all the sentence components are in the same color.

2. Possessive pronouns: “During the quake.” What would you protect in case of an earthquake? Learners decide what they would protect in case of an earthquake, write a noun on a piece of paper and practice possessive pronouns: each student shouts “my computer” and the others shout “his/her computer.”

3. WH questions: “Find someone with the answer.” In this activity the class is divided in two groups and each group receives a different set of WH-questions according to the level of the class. Learners go around the classroom asking questions until they get all the answers (Fig. 1).

What language do they speak in New Zealand?	
Who wrote Macbeth?	
Where is Teheran?	
How many legs does a spider have?	

Figure 1. Part of the worksheet used by learners

4. Present perfect: “Find someone who …” In this activity the class is divided in two or three groups and each group receives a set of actions about which each learner has to ask using present perfect: “Have you ever …?” and another learner should also answer using present perfect: “No, I have never …” or “Yes, I have.” Learners wander around the classroom looking for answers from different peers (Fig. 2).

have a car accident Name:
write a letter to a newspaper Name:
sleep in a cave Name:
speak to a famous person Name:

Figure 2. Part of the worksheet used by learners: Find someone who …

5. To practice present continuous, learners use mimes to describe action in progress. The class is divided in groups and each group receives a few simple sentences which they have to mime and the other groups have to guess (Fig.3).

You are opening a tin
You are making a cup of tea
You are trying to catch a mosquito
You are killing cockroaches

Figure 3. Part of the worksheet used by learners

Why focus on grammar forms?

The point of departure for practicing forms is to cover the need for accuracy. Even when learners are guided in performing a spontaneous and informal conversation they will want to use accurate structures and avoid making mistakes that their peers might notice. To gain confidence about an accurate use of the target language, users will feel the need to organize clearly what they want to say, use appropriate language and structures, and check that they are correct when listening to their peers using the same structures.

The activity component of a class helps students to develop fluency in the target language. However, in an informal conversation performed by learners, we foresee the following problems should activities be the only means of language development:

- Some learners could revert to using their mother tongue when things get difficult, when they do not find the right word, when trying to avoid mistakes, or when feeling uncomfortable because of keeping the partner waiting for an answer or a question.

- There may be a disruption in communication when one of the conversational partners is struggling in search of the right word, or thinking how to say what he or she wants to convey.

- Should learners be immersed in an activity and they do not feel confident about the structures and words to use, it is possible that the concern for grammatical accuracy surpasses the concern for interchanging meanings.

From our own findings, it is maintained that, at least during the starting stages of language acquisition, the process is to be *supported* by practice of forms, which should be attended to even when performing communicative activities. There are, however, some necessary remarks:

1. To what extent should teachers engage in focus-on-forms? A communicative lesson has two purposes: to help learners build their language competence and gain confidence in using the target language. By engaging students in communicative activities the teacher may be risking students' accurate production. By regularly paying attention to forms the teacher can create the conditions for an accurate acquisition but at the expense of fluency and spontaneity. The particular characteristics of the class as well as the learners' inclinations and general purposes of the course are to be considered when deciding how much "form" and how much "communication" to attend to.

2. Should focus on forms be conversational or didactic? Both: didactic focus on form furnishes learners with accurate tools and conversational focus on form ensures a communicative activity as it provides the means for solving communication difficulties.

3. Should focus-on-forms be explicit or implicit? Both: beginners need some time to acquire new pieces of knowledge and to analyze them, and then they need to use them in a real situation so as to become aware of the communicative usefulness of the structures. Attention to form prior to its communicative application ensures that during the course of a communicative activity students will feel more confident and will not disrupt the conversational atmosphere with a great deal of structural questions.

Biographical Statement

Cecilia Silva is currently teaching Spanish at Tohoku University, Sendai. She is interested in media literacy, critical literacy, literature, and cultural awareness in foreign language teaching and learning.

Conclusions

The traditional division between communication and grammar study should be replaced. In its place, we suggest an appropriate balance between (1) form practice aimed at accuracy, and (2) conversation practice aimed at applying such forms. This work thus does not advocate the grammar study as an end in itself but as a step toward boosting learner confidence. Ideally, we aim at avoiding repetition practice and instead strive for communicative practice.

References

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Application of Electronic Grammar Check Functions in Writing Essays: Self Assessment and Evaluation

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Abstract

Many students and teachers are not aware of this important feature for checking the grammar and reading fluency of essays. This paper provides details of minimal applications of grammar checking functions for Microsoft Word documents. Furthermore, it explains why reading fluency and graded level scores of writing are effective applications for students in evaluating their writing skills. The application of the grammar check, reading fluency, and graded level scores is an important tool for providing students an objective analysis of their own writing development.

Introduction

One highly-emphasized area of specialization in both English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes is development of writing skills. ESL or EFL student essays are usually graded on content, organization, and grammar. Teachers or school programs will usually place more emphasis on one or more of these areas. This paper discusses ways to help students and teachers analyze their written essays with the help of electronic software tools available in most writing programs on the market. This paper will also discuss the advantages of having students submit essays electronically for both the teacher and the student.

Hand-written, print out or electronic submissions

Students may submit essays in electronic or hard copy format from a computer, or in hand written format in essay classes. The hand written hard copy format provides more personal identification with the writer because there are various writing styles. However, the writing styles can sometimes be difficult to read or comprehend if the teacher has difficulty reading the essay due to poor legibility. Hence, submitting essays electronically or handing in a printed document guarantees that the essay is legible and facilitates corrections by the teacher.

Spell check and grammar check functions

One of the most frequently used tools of word processing software is the spell check function. This tool can help identify misspelled words. However, it requires the author to also check that the words are used appropriately. It is possible that the spell checker function identifies a word as one of the words in the dictionary, but it could be the wrong word that was typed by accident.

The second most frequently used function is the grammar checker. This checks the sentences for functions such as agreement that are necessary for grammatical sentences. These functions can be set to check the essay as the author is in the progress of writing it or afterwards depending on the preferences of the writer.

Word count

A third tool that is available is the total word count. Most abstracts or essays have a recommended word count. This function helps the author prepare an abstract or essay of the appropriate length. Usually, it is much more difficult to summarize something concisely in only a few words than to write a lengthy account. Another option related to the total length of the essay is a calculation of the longest, shortest, and average length of a group of sentences in an essay. If an essay is written with many short sentences of four words or less, it can appear that the sentences do not flow or connect smoothly. Likewise, if an essay has too many very long sentences with more than two sentences embedded within the main sentence, the essay can become very difficult to follow or it is difficult to retain the intended message. The average length of the sentences overall is probably the most helpful and significant figure that helps determine the readability and level of an essay. Usually, an average of between 10 to 12 words per sentence would provide a possible indication of an advanced writer.

Passivity check

A fourth helpful tool is the passivity check. This tool helps determine how many passive sentences are in the essay. Technical articles usually have higher passivity scores, up to 20 percent. However, essays or letters with lower content difficulty usually have lower passivity scores from zero to 10 percent. Passivity scores can sometimes also indicate a possibility of excessive use of an electronic translation device to create the sentences in an essay. Electronic translation of Japanese sentences to English sentences usually has a large number of passive constructions. Effective use of electronic translation of Japanese sentences or essays usually requires an author to revise the essay considerably before it is acceptable to submit as a well written document and then the passivity level will stay within the acceptable levels depending on the content of the essay.

Readability tests

A fifth helpful tool is an analysis tool called the Flesch Reading Ease and Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level. This tool is not automatically set as a default in most software programs, but is widely available in almost all facets for use with Windows, Linux, and Macintosh systems. However, it

is very easy to set the default for this tool by selecting the appropriate grammar check functions that opt for it. Once this tool is selected, it can serve as a powerful tool to give an indication of the difficulty of the essay in terms of reading and understanding. The Flesch Reading Ease is reported as a percentage between zero to 100 percent. If an essay rates 100 percent, it is highly likely that the average word length is very low and furthermore that the difficulty level of words used within the essay are at the lower end of the readability scale. Hence, the appropriate level of difficulty should be determined by the student or teacher, and this can vary depending on the type of topic and technical complicity of the essay. An acceptable score for tertiary classes might be somewhere between 40 and 80 percent depending on the level of the students and the topic of the essay.

The Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level provides a score usually from as low as 0 to a difficulty level of 12 or 13 depending on the level of students in tertiary classes. The higher the Flesch Reading Ease score, the lower the number of the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level. The average number for tertiary classes at the intermediate level usually ranges from 6 to 8 while the average for advanced classes ranges from 9 to 12. Academic articles published in professional journals usually have a score of 12 or higher when they are analyzed by the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level.

Conclusion

Application of the Grammar Check function to get various numbers that represent the difficulty and probability of a grammatically well written article are helpful to anyone writing long essays, articles, or even personal letters. However, short essays of less than 100 words usually have a higher possibility that figures might be distorted regarding the actual reading ease or level of an essay.

What is most important for instilling writing skills in writers is that they can somehow evaluate their performance and progress on their own even after they have completed a writing course. The use of a table that looks at progress during a certain period of time (e.g., a semester in a university program) can provide tremendous insights to students. When students are aware of the quantifiable numbers and variables that contribute to better writing skills, they invariably improve their writing skills. If they can see these improvements through their own analysis of their writing using tools such as the grammar check function, then this tool and the readability tools that are associated with it are worth the effort of employing. Students' self-analysis of writing by themselves has proven to be highly beneficial and hence use of computers to help analyze written essays should be applied where possible.

Biographical Statement

Dr. Peter Wanner, Tohoku University, Language Education Department holds a Doctors Degree in Informatics from Nagoya University, a Master of Science Degree in Linguistics from Georgetown University, and a Bachelors Degree in Liberal Arts from University of Portland. His areas of specialization include cognitive sciences, language acquisition, applied linguistics, and psychology.

Skills for Global Communication: Pursuing a positive learning environment

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Abstract

Seido Language Institute of Kobe, Japan, published the four-skills textbook, Skills for Global Communication, in the spring of 2006. It had been piloted at the University of Hyogo from the spring of 2004, and was formally adopted as the required text for all first-year English-language students at that university at the time of its formal publication. In this paper the researchers, and authors of the textbook, will explicate key pedagogical frameworks from the book and accompanying teacher's manual and will provide cogent proposals on the application of said frameworks in the language classroom. This elucidation of such structural knowledge and its application to practice will prove valuable to those educators currently utilizing the text and will offer insights to those weighing the possibilities of its usage in their classrooms. The central question that will drive this article is the following: How may the materials provided in the textbook package be best utilized to improve the classroom environment and thereby assist students in their pursuit of English comprehension and production?

Introduction

Skills for Global Communication is comprised of twelve lessons, with each lesson being divided into three sections: reading, writing, and speaking. Supplemental listening tasks round out the four-skill set of the textbook. The textbook design and format were informed by four factors: (1) over three decades of combined teaching experience in North America, Asia, and the Indian subcontinent, (2) influential language comprehension tests that Japanese students might be expected to take, primarily the TOEIC® test, (3) the bilingual ability and bicultural understanding of one of the authors, and (4) the benefit of one term with minimal teaching duties that allowed one of the researchers to visit classes, interview teachers, and conduct cross referential studies of materials that were being used at the university at the time.

Since its formal publication in 2006, many university teachers throughout Japan have adopted *Skills for Global Communication* for use in their classrooms; however, it began as a university publication that was dedicated to serving the needs of University of Hyogo students. The researchers would like to share insights into methods that have worked in their classrooms at the

University of Hyogo as they have utilized the textbook. As stated earlier, the central question that drives this research dialog rests on the materials provided in the textbook and the teacher's manual and their application to best promote a positive environment in the language classroom. A positive environment, one in which the student feels that he or she belongs, is energized by the material presented, and yes, is having some fun in the pursuit of English language fluency, will best promote actual language learning. This is basically a case of intentionally reducing the affective filter, those elements of fear, frustration, and a lack of fortitude that impede the learning process.

We can thank the many researchers in applied linguistics, especially Stephen Krashen (1985), who have dealt with the issue of the *affective filter*. It is a theory that is largely regarded as axiomatic in the profession due to its resonance in the experience of teachers. In the case of the researchers, its validity is evident in the over thirty years of combined teaching experience. More detail concerning the affective filter will be offered later in the monograph.

This paper will be divided in the following manner: (1) a brief explanation of the affective filter hypothesis, (2) a definition and discussion of classroom environment as it pertains to student-centered learning, (3) a survey of pedagogical concepts from *Skills for Global Communication* and its accompanying teacher manual and their applications in pursuit of a student-centered learning environment, and (4) a discussion of future research tasks and concluding remarks.

The Affective Filter Hypothesis

What is the Affective Filter Hypothesis? It is an educational theory articulated by Stephen Krashen (1985) that says, basically, that certain negative affective states such as anxiety combine to throw up a mental block to language acquisition and inhibit the student from accepting language input in a useful manner. In situations where the language student is unduly uncomfortable, language learning is hampered, impeded or even shut down. It would be useful here to use Krashen's (1987) own words to describe the impact that a high Affect Filter has on the learner:

> *The Affective Filter Hypothesis captures the relationship between affective variables and the process of second language acquisition by positing that acquirers vary with respect to the strength or level of their Affective Filters. Those whose attitudes are not optimal for second language acquisition will not*

> *only tend to seek less input, but they will also have a high or strong Affective Filter - even if they understand the message, the input will not reach that part of the brain responsible for language acquisition, or the language acquisition device. Those with attitudes more conducive to second language acquisition will not only seek and obtain more input, they will also have a lower or weaker filter. They will be more open to the input, and it will strike "deeper" (p. 31).*

Interestingly, psychologist Charles Curran came to regard many of the anxieties that language learners exhibit as the same type of mental stresses that he had observed in psychotherapy (Curran, 1976). Examples of these anxieties include such issues as fear of competition, failure complexes, fear of rejection, and self-doubt (Taylor, 1987).

Classroom environment

According to Stephen Krashen (2003) language learning is best done with adequate input that is provided in a low-anxiety setting. Curran (1976) emphasized the importance of this low-anxiety setting and promoted the idea of a classroom structure based on cooperation, security, and positive interplay between the instructor, the student and his or her classmates.

Classroom management, the structuring of the class to produce academic results, the order and rules that are necessary in ensuring an orderly classroom atmosphere, are the responsibility of the teacher to present and maintain (Allwright, 1979). So, the question could be asked, how can a student-centered learning environment be achieved without infringing on the responsibility of the teacher to maintain order and avoid chaos in the classroom?

Stevick (1980) addresses this issue. He drew a distinction between what he considered to be teacher control and what he viewed as student initiative. Control, he felt, deals with the establishment of classroom procedures, the presentation of classroom activities, and the review of student performance in the accomplishment of said activities. At the beginning of each course of instruction, at the start of a term for example, the instructor must hold central authority in the classroom. This is conducive to producing a stable and safe environment for the students. As the term continues, and as part of a public policy in the classroom, the teacher could share some of this responsibility for the maintenance of structure and order and the presentation and review of curriculum with the students, caring always that the students are kept within a framework of personal comfort and security. This, according to Stevick (1980), allowed for student initiative. The following is his explanation of control and initiative:

> *[In] exercising "control," then, the teacher is giving some kind of order, or structure, to the learning space of the student. In encouraging him to take "initiative," she is allowing him to work, and to grow, within that space. The trick, for the teacher, is not only to preserve this distinction; it is also to provide just the right amount of learning space. If there is too little, the learner will be stifled. If there is too much, the student will feel that the teacher has abandoned him (p. 20).*

Curran (1976) held many of the same views as Stevick, and argued that a student would be receptive to learning only if he or she was allowed to exercise some responsibility for the learning environment and learning procedures and tasks. Hence, a student-centered approach to classroom management and structure was the key to attaining educational goals.

In this next section the researchers will detail seven activities and teaching techniques from *Skills for Global Communication* that allow for a secure learning environment but also provide a classroom atmosphere where students take initiative for elements of their own learning. In other words, these activities are imbued with the ideals of a student-centered educational approach.

Seven student-centered activities and techniques

There are seven activities and techniques that will be examined in this section of the monograph. In the order in which they will be addressed (1) picture activities, (2) interviews and surveys, (3) vocabulary charts, (4) textbook speaking activities, (5) one-minute speeches, (6) peer editing, and (7) student note cards.

(1) Picture activities

At the beginning of each lesson in *Skills for Global Communication*, resides a picture activity. For example, in the second lesson, *Dates and Hobbies*, the student is offered two pictures. In the first picture, Picture A, a sign is shown that advertises a Chinese restaurant, and in the second picture, Picture B, two women are shown engaged in a karate match or practice. The pictures are accompanied by a set of questions. For Picture A the questions ask the student to identify the type of restaurant that is being advertised, an opinion about whether the student likes the food served at this type of restaurant, what the student's favorite type of restaurant is, and how often the student goes out to a restaurant. For Picture B the student is asked to identify the sport that is shown, the part of the world that this sport originated in, whether or not the student would like to learn the sport shown, and what sports the student engages in.

In both sets of questions, the discourse goes from the concrete and external to the more nuanced and personal. The student begins the activity by simply stating factual information about the pictures but then is prompted to generate personal responses about personal topics.

Another example may be taken from Lesson 4, *Ailments*. In that lesson, the student is again presented with two pictures. In Picture A, a young girl is shown sitting in a wheelchair, wearing a hospital gown, and holding stuffed toy. In Picture B a surgeon is shown performing surgery in a hospital operating room. After a series of interpretive questions (i.e., *What might be wrong with the little girl in Picture A?* and *What is happening in Picture B?*), the student is then asked to create a short story generated from the combination of the two pictures. This moves the task from factual to fictional, but allows the student the opportunity to take the context and generate his or her own English to accomplish the task. Further, there is no right or wrong response in this activity, only the reference to whether the task is undertaken and completed.

(2) Interviews and surveys

In each of the twelve lessons there is an opportunity for the student to be interviewed and interview other students or conduct a survey about the lesson topic. In lesson 2, *Dates and Hobbies*, the student is taken through a staged interview process. Initially, the student is asked to identify leisure activities from a list of nine activities. The student is then asked to state what he or she does for leisure, after this the student is asked to complete a chart (Fig. 1), where he or she reflects on his or her typical weekend day and catalogs a typical allocation of time and activities (Dougherty and Dougherty, 2006: 23).

How do you spend your time on weekends? Complete the chart.

a) On the weekend I sleep for	___hours each day.
b) On the weekend I study for	___hours each day.
c) On the weekend I do chores for	___hours each day.
d) On the weekend I have fun for	___hours each day.
e) On the weekend I _____ for	___hours each day.
TOTAL HOURS:	24 HOURS

Figure 1. Time allocation chart from Lesson 2.

After quietly completing the chart, the student is then asked the following questions: *Are you happy with the way you spend your weekends? Would you like to change anything in the list above? If so, what would you change?* This allows the student to generate enough information, and to comprehend what is being asked about said information, in the next section of the interview process.

In the second half of the interview the student is asked to interview a partner (and by context, be interviewed) about the hourly division of his or her typical weekend day. After this stage, the focus temporarily goes to the teacher, who is interviewed by a student for the benefit of the class. The teacher is asked this series of question dealing with his or her "perfect" weekend: *What would your teacher do, where would your teacher go, and who would your teacher spend time with?* This provides the opportunity for the teacher to offer an example response in preparation for the student to interview, and be interviewed by, a partner regarding the same questions.

Another example of this technique for interviews comes from Lesson 12, *Speculating about the Past and Present*, where students are asked to talk about their dream vacations. Again the student is led through a series of questions and activities to generate enough familiarity with the topic and key words to prepare for an interview.

In the first task regarding the dream vacation topic, the student is given the opportunity to select several descriptive words from a selection box to complete a sentence describing his or her dream vacation. For example, a student might select the words "thrilling" and "dangerous" to complete the descriptive sentence, writing, *"Wouldn't it be great if I had a dream vacation that was thrilling and dangerous."* Afterwards, the student is asked to select from a set of activities for the vacation to complete a statement about the vacation. For example, a student might choose "mountain climbing." He or she would then complete the statement by writing, *"On my dream vacation I would go mountain climbing."* The student is then given a chance to write down two more personally generated activities for their vacation.

As a final stage before the interview the student is asked to identify whom he or she might select to accompany him or her on this dream vacation. Possible choices are given as family, friends, pets, teachers, boyfriend, girlfriend, a celebrity, or alone.

At the interview stage, the teacher is interviewed first, in front of the class. The interviewer can be a randomly selected student. The basic questions are listed as, (1) *Where would you go if you*

could take a one-month dream vacation? (2) *Why would you go there?* (3) *Who will you go with?* and, finally, (4) *What activities would you do?* (Dougherty and Dougherty, 2006: 162).

After the instructor answers these questions, and the students write down the answers in the textbook, each student is required to interview two classmates using the same questions. These procedures allow the instructor to model answers and add cogent information to the basic responses, fleshing out a greater exchange of information. For example, rather than just responding to question three by stating that she would go with family members on her dream vacation, the instructor could add that she would take her husband and children because it would be a valuable bonding time or because it would be educational for the children, etc.

What is significant about this pedagogical format for interviews and surveys is that, while the student is given guidance in generating the linguistic tools necessary to complete the task, and is offered examples generated from the teacher for guidance, he or she is still responsible for creating a unique, personal, response to the interview questions. The student is neither thrown to the wolves nor given all the answers on a silver platter. He or she is offered assistance, but the final steps must be accomplished on his or her own.

(3) Vocabulary chart

A vocabulary chart such as that in Figure 2 is provided in each of the twelve lessons in the textbook (Dougherty and Dougherty, 2006). The concept behind the activity is that the students will generate vocabulary information for themselves and for the class in general.

The vocabulary words are generated from the readings in the textbook or from the activities that precede the vocabulary chart. The chart may be done individually, but the textbook authors make it a classroom activity and involve the whole class in the process. Once five words are generated from the readings or activities the instructor divides the words up among five student teams and then the student teams complete the chart and the process together.

What is the process? The process involves students identifying the word type for their assigned vocabulary word, whether it is a verb, noun, adjective, etc., writing a definition of the word in English, drawing a picture that illustrates the word's meaning, using the word in a new sentence, and then identifying, if possible, one antonym and one synonym for the vocabulary word. After the group is finished completing the chart for its assigned word, one or two students are selected from each group to proceed to the board and complete the chart for the sake of their

classmates. After each group is done writing its answers, the instructor quickly makes any necessary adjustments to the material, and then all the students use the information from the board to complete their individual charts in their textbooks.

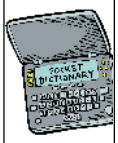
Word 	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Word Type					
Definition 					
Picture 					
Use it in a sentence 					
Write one synonym (=) or one antonym (opposite)					

Figure 2. Sample vocabulary chart (Dougherty and Dougherty, 2006).

To complete the chart individually would be time consuming and fraught with opportunities for error in nuance or meaning. By completing the chart as a class the frustration level is negated, the responses are more meaningful, and the teacher has an opportunity to correct the information in a quick, painless, and non-threatening way. The charts are perfect, the students have a sense of accomplishment, and they now have more vocabulary in their corpus. Also, something that has been observed by the researchers is that this also provides students a chance to exhibit their artistic skills. Often the student teams will send up more than one student to complete its chart, having one person who has some artistic merit assigned to complete the drawing while another student completes the written sections of the chart. This shows that students are identifying each other's strengths and are giving credit to those strengths via labor division. Though anecdotal, this factor is felt to be one more instance of a lowering of learner anxiety and the promotion of a positive environment in the classroom.

(4) Textbook speaking activities

The final section of each lesson deals directly with speech production activities. Titled, *Expressions and Functions for Speaking*, each of these sections has two parts: a set of expressions to use when speaking about the designated topic and a set of functions for speaking. Each section gives examples and then gives the student the opportunity to generate his or her own English to address tasks. To illustrate, we will examine the speaking section of lesson 10, *Satisfaction and Regret*.

The first section, dedicated to introducing a set of phrases useful in communicating the expression of satisfaction and the expression of regret, lists the target phrases and idiomatic structures as shown in Figure 3.

Expressing satisfaction:

1. Thank goodness I studied English.
2. I'm glad that I went to university.
3. I'm happy that I stopped smoking.
4. I've never regretted learning how to sew.
5. It's a good thing that I moved into my own apartment.

Expressing regret:

1. I wish I had studied Chinese.
2. I wish I hadn't become a banker.
3. I should have become a history teacher.
4. I shouldn't have quit my summer job.
5. It was stupid of me not to have studied for that test.
6. If only I had studied harder I would have passed that English test.
7. I regret spending so much money on gambling.

Figure 3. Target phrases and idiomatic expressions from Lesson 10.

Students are then provided with a space titled, *Now your turn*, where they are asked to generate two new expressions, one a statement of satisfaction and the other an expression of regret.

The second portion of the speaking section lists functions for speaking. A function, in the case of linguistics, is a word or phrase used in a particular construction. In the case of Lesson 10,

there are three sets of functions. Each is formulated as a miniature dialogs. They are exhibited in Figure 4.

1. Expressing satisfaction about past events:

A: I'm really glad I decided to move to Canada after college.

B: Really, why is that?

2. Expressing regret over past events and replying to such expressions:

A: I should've studied computers in college.

B: Well, I wouldn't worry about it.

A: I wish I had studied computers, if I had, I would be making more money.

B: Maybe you would, maybe you wouldn't. Nothing is certain, you know.

A: I know, but still, I wish I hadn't majored in French. I'm not happy teaching French to junior high school students.

B: Well, it could be worse.

3. Expressing satisfaction in an occupation:

A: I bet that you're happy that you became an automotive engineer.

B: Yes, I love designing new cars. I find it very creative.

A: How is the pay?

B: It's not a fortune, but I'm happy with my salary.

Figure 4. Linguistic functions from Lesson 10.

As with the first portion of the speaking section, the student is then asked, as an individual or as the member of a partnership or team, to generate a new dialog using the expressions and functions that have been exhibited, as well as creating their own functions and expressions. Here is the specific assignment as given in the textbook: *"Now your turn -- Take the two functions that we have just reviewed and use them to create one dialog between two people. Your dialog should have six to ten sentences."*

This format promotes a positive experience in generating English communication. Examples are provided first, short responses are then elicited (to boost confidence), and then students have the opportunity to generate a complete and creative dialog. All of this is done with the assistance of copious linguistic support via examples of idiomatic expressions and functions and is done at

the end of a lesson dedicated to the discussion of the topics of satisfaction and regret. The student, if he or she follows the format of the lesson, will have little risk of foundering.

(5) One-minute speeches

The one-minute speech activity comes from the *Skills for Global Communication* teacher's manual. Its basic aim is to encourage students to express themselves. The exercise places them in front of the class, or a smaller sub-group, where they are expected to speak on a set topic, using body language, and at least one visual aide. Each speech, as done in the researchers' classrooms, also involves a peer grader and a peer "questioner," selected randomly. The peer grader joins the instructor in the task of evaluating the effectiveness of the speech and the student questioner is tasked with preparing a simple question for the speaker about the topic presented. Hence, for each speech, a minimum of three students are directly vested in giving, listening to, judging, or preparing a question about, the topic at hand. Figure 5 includes examples of the Peer Judge Sheet and the Self Evaluation Sheet.

Specific directions from the teacher's manual are as follows:

> *A very good idea is to model a One Minute Speech for the students first. Show them what an excellent speech should look like (in your opinion). If you can, videotape the speeches so students can see themselves presenting their speeches and doing the self critique included with this assignment. You might do this as a Lesson activity, a Chapter activity, or as a mid-term assignment, or as you finish the textbook.*
>
> *You might consider having one student assigned (or more) to ask one question to the student speaker after the speech. You might also have student judges rate the speech along with you. This insures that a few of the students will be following the speech very closely.*

Speech Judging Sheet:

Presenter Name:_____ ID#:_____

Topic:_____ Score:_____/25 points

	Good				Bad	
Physical:						
Eye Contact	5	4	3	2	1	0
Gestures	5	4	3	2	1	0
Verbal:						
Pronunciation	5	4	3	2	1	0
Rhythm/Intonation	5	4	3	2	1	0
Word Choice	5	4	3	2	1	0

One Minute Speech Self Evaluation

Name:_____

Topic:_____

A. Circle the answer that describes your speech.

1. I spoke loudly and clearly.	Yes	No
2. I spoke for at least one minute.	Yes	No
3. I looked at the class.	Yes	No
4. I used body language and smiled.	Yes	No
5. I used a visual aide.	Yes	No

B. On a scale of 1 - 5, I would rate my speech:

Bad		So-So		Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

Figure 5. Peer Judge Sheet and the Self Evaluation Sheet

Student speakers are given a simple spider-graph to utilize as a prompt as they prepare and deliver their speeches. The topics for the speeches are generated from the lesson material. A set of possible topics for the speeches is also given in the teaching manual. Examples of topic sets from lessons 2 and 10, *Dates and Hobbies* and *Satisfaction and Regret*, respectively (Dougherty and Dougherty, 2006: T.M., pgs. 77 - 78):

Lesson 2: What are your hobbies? How long have you been practicing them? Why do you like them? Is there a hobby you would like to try? Why?

Lesson 10: What was the worst problem that a friend or relative of you has had? What advice did you give him or her (or what advice would you have liked to give him or her)?

The use of one-minute speeches lends itself to the active learning of communicative strategies such as gesture skills, articulation, and organizational formats. In the researchers' classrooms the one-minute speech is viewed as an opportunity for the student to act on the material contained in the lessons and to share more personal information than would be possible within the constraints of the textbook itself.

Due to time constraints, students give only two such speeches in the course of a term; yet, it provides an environment where positive peer pressure has usually proved effective in maintaining a good to excellent level of speeches. Additionally, the use of peer judges and peer questioners require students to be involved in each other's presentations. This breaks down barriers between students, encourages attention, and ties together class work holistically.

(6) Peer editing

In each of the twelve lessons in *Skills for Global Communication* there is a writing assignment. These assignments range across a multitude of topics and set writing styles. Students are asked to write a resume and cover letter, a movie review, a letter of invitation, a letter to an advice column, a travel brochure, and several other types of writing. In each of the writing sections is a peer-editing page.

The editing page is a very straightforward. It has a checklist that asks the student editor if he or she has checked the spelling, the grammar, and the punctuation. Then, the peer editor is asked if he or she understood the writing. Finally, the peer editor is asked to sign the page indicating that the peer editing is finished.

The concept behind peer editing is that it will give the student a chance to have his or her work checked by another student and also that he or she will have the chance to see the work that other students are doing. How often does a student have the chance to carefully read another student's paper? Peer editing also promotes the writing process as a team effort rather than a

solitary endeavor. It has been noted by the researchers that students will devote considerable time to editing a partner's paper. There is a sense of responsibility engendered in the editing process. It has also been noted that students will have their first draft ready for editing on the designated day if they know that they will have other students waiting to review and edit their papers.

The first time a class goes through the editing process the instructor should take time to familiarize them with whatever editing marks he or she deems necessary. The usual time frame for a peer editing session is ten to fifteen minutes. One of the researchers has tried a round-robin format for the peer editing session. The students pass their writings around to five other students. This is effective, but rather time consuming, taking upwards of forty-five minutes to accomplish.

Students tend to be very successful at locating spelling and punctuation errors, but might need more time to find syntax mistakes or grammatical errors. With time, students become familiar with the editing process and the level of writing can improve. At the least, the process makes students feel less alone in their pursuit of writing skills.

(7) Student cards

The *Skills for Global Communication* teacher's manual includes a template for a student card. These cards are simple in nature. The cards can be anywhere from the size of a playing card to the size of a B5 sheet. The card asks the student to write some general information: Name in roman letters, name in kanji (Chinese characters) if applicable, student number, a name to be used in the class setting, and finally, and most important for the instructor, a photograph of the student.

The uses of these cards are multitude. The researchers have used them to quickly divide the class into random teams, to select the order of speakers for one minute speeches, to obtain peer judges and questioners, and, most importantly, to select students to respond to questions, to tasks in front of the class or on the board. One of the researchers structures his class around their use. He maintains a "not spoken" pile and a "spoken pile" on his classroom podium. As he encounters possibilities for students to answer questions, he takes his not spoken set of cards, spreads them out in his hand like a deck of playing cards, and has a student select a card. The student whose card is selected is then required to answer the question or do the task. Once the question is answered or the task accomplished, the student's card is then enshrined in the

"spoken" pile. Occasionally, for some topics or tasks, the researcher will hold both piles up and let a student choose a person from either group. This prevents the "spoken" group from getting complacent.

This simple tool allows the teacher to avoid the pitfall of always calling on the few bright-eyed students in the class. Also, it makes every student aware that he or she will be called on to participate in the class.

Future research tasks and concluding remarks

This monograph dealt with seven activities and teaching techniques from *Skills for Global Communication* that have proven useful in the researchers' university classrooms and have, in the opinion of the researchers, helped to lower the affective filters of the students and promoted positive classroom environments. However, a question remains that intrigues the researchers and will be a focus of future academic work. The questions are these:

1. How do the individual students perceive the seven activities and techniques presented in this monograph?

2. Which of the seven activities and techniques are most effective in reducing students' affective filter?

3. Do the activities and techniques improve the classroom environment for the student, and, if so, how?

The answer to these questions would most likely be generated via student questionnaires and focus groups aimed at answering these and related questions in regard to each of the activities.

We do have an oblique answer to this question in hand, however, via class evaluations from the past year that have two questions that ask students to rate on a five point scale (with five being excellent and one being poor) the following (University of Hyogo, 2006):

> Were the class materials, the textbook and handouts, effective?
>
> Were the teacher's explanations and materials easy to understand?

In the case of the two researchers, students answered these questions by rating, on average, above four points. This was consistent over the course of a total of six classes and represented the opinions of approximately one hundred and fifty students. This is a strong indication of

success. Anecdotal evidence generated from the classrooms of the researchers have also supported the success of *Skills for Global Communication* in its promotion of a positive classroom environment. However, more research is needed and desired.

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Listening Activities Using Popular Music

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Abstract

Throughout history, the link between music and language has been well established. Awareness of this link is growing, and many now acknowledge the connection between the key components of verbal interaction and the classical elements of music. Yet, music remains drastically underutilized as a pedagogical tool in language classrooms, arguably to the detriment of student success. Coupled with this is the high anxiety and lack of relevancy associated with EFL listening tasks among many East Asian EFL learners. Utilizing popular music in EFL listening tasks offers the potential to reduce anxiety, increase relevancy, and offer success opportunities by capitalizing on the interconnectivity between music and language. This paper offers a rationale for the use of music to enhance L2 listening and language learning in general, and describes a variety of popular music listening tasks that can greatly enhance English Language Teaching in any context.

Introduction

It is widely acknowledged, in the field of general education, that successful teaching and learning is rooted in students' needs and interests. Furthermore, since education is concerned with contributing to the enhancement of the individual as a whole, it follows that pedagogical approaches should address not only cognitive needs, but also affective and emotional needs. Achieving these goals requires openness to a wide range of pedagogical approaches, both traditional and non-traditional. In the field of English Language Teaching, one "non-traditional" approach that holds enormous potential to enhance holistic language learning is the use of music. Yet, there are many, particularly in the Japanese EFL context, who resist the implementation of such non-traditional approaches. Compounding the problem is the perception among many Japanese that "if anything comes easily . . . it does not confer virtue" and "the ability to commit intense effort to a task and . . . devotion to hard work is the mark of virtue" (White, 1987, p.13). As a result of this "no pain, no gain" mentality, music, despite its potential as a valuable tool in the language teacher's arsenal, is drastically underutilized in Japanese language classrooms (Lieb, 2008). This, in turn, leads to the loss of valuable teaching opportunities, and may be detrimental to students' overall achievement. Therefore, this paper will offer a rationale for the use of music as a pedagogical tool in the language-learning classroom, based on the unmistakable interconnectivity between music and language. The author has chosen to focus in

particular on the use of popular music to enhance language listening development, and will suggest practical activities to accomplish this goal.

Music and language

Music, as we know it, can be traced back to the musicas of Ancient Greece, although the Greek notion of music was much more inclusive than the present-day concept. Believed to be "an intimate union of melody, verse, and dance" (Dickinson, 1909, in Stansell, 2005), music was believed to come from the muses, who used it to inspire spoken language such as epic, lyric, sacred, and love poetry, as well as comedy and tragedy (Bullfinch, 1913, p.22). Although modern ideas of music tend to be less inclusive, there remains an acknowledgment of the interconnectivity of music and language. Del Campo (1997, in Mora, 2000), for example, points out that the three key components of verbal interaction, (words, body language, and intonation) correspond directly with the three classical elements of music (verse, dance, and melody, respectively). This suggests that linguistic prosody is key in the communication of meaning. Studies of early childhood language acquisition further highlight the interconnectivity between music and language. Mora's (2000) research suggests that rhythm and musical contours of language are mastered long before speech, and that this lays the foundation for the acquisition of linguistic components such as phonemes. Loewy (1995), in a similar line of enquiry refers to "Musical Stages of Speech" as evidenced by the work of Van Riper (1984), who observed the development of language from crying in babies, to babbling, to eventually using words. Even the field of brain research offers evidence of a musical-linguistic connection. Building upon Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory (1983), Zatorre, Evans, Meyer, & Gjedde (1992) suggested that the dual processes of phonological processing and pitch discrimination, vital to linguistic competency, are governed jointly by the musical and linguistic intelligences.

Music and listening

Based on the nature of the musical-linguistic connection, it could be argued that it is in the teaching of listening and speaking that music holds the greatest potential as a pedagogical tool in the EFL classroom. Mora (2000) posits that central to both listening and speaking is efficient auditory discrimination, which facilitates processing of prosodic elements of language such as intonation, pitch, rhythm, dynamics and timber. This is of particular concern in contexts where the prosodic features of the L1 differ significantly from English (as is the case with Japanese). Since many English popular songs consist of 4-beat time signatures which correlate with the linguistic foundation of binary alteration, this offers Japanese students unique opportunities to subconsciously process the system of stressed and unstressed syllables in English (Palmer &

Kelly, 1992). Also, because of the pervasive nature of popular music, students are highly likely to receive continued intonation practice outside of class. Further involuntary rehearsal may take place because of the power of music to activate "A melodic 'Din' in the LAD (Language Acquisition Device) . . . or involuntary rehearsal of a foreign language in one's mind" (Murphey, 1990). Murphey contends that when students experience the "Song Stuck In My Head Phenomenon" (SSIMHP), recall of linguistic prosody as well as vocabulary and grammar is greatly enhanced, due to enhanced "Comprehensible Input" (Krashen, 2003).

Perceptions of listening: Anxiety and relevance

To fully appreciate the potential of music to enhance L2 listening, it is necessary to briefly examine the issue of listening anxiety. According to the Yerkes-Dodson Law (in Job & Dispamo, 1991), high anxiety is detrimental to performance on difficult tasks. Since L2 listening is widely perceived as a difficult task by many Asian learners, and therefore provokes a high degree of anxiety, it follows that there is a great need for low-anxiety listening tasks that increase student confidence and prospects for success. The field of music therapy has long utilized music as a way to reduce anxiety, as have many in the business and commercial worlds. This author maintains that the power of music to "assuage and soothe" (Bancroft, 1985, p.4), should also be harnessed for use in the EFL classroom, to "create a relaxed, stress-free learning atmosphere" (Richards, 1993, p.109). Shimo (1992) also highlights the need to consider learners' feelings and attitudes to increase positive associations and reduce anxiety. However, often the root cause of L2 listening anxiety is related to Japanese students' desire to understand 100% of the message. This can also be addressed by designing musical listening tasks that invite students to engage in "essence" opposed to "precise" listening (Lieb, 2008, Murphey, 1992).

The other main obstacle to successful and rewarding L2 listening tasks among Japanese students in particular, is the perceived lack of relevancy of such tasks. Although they often have extensive experience in reading and writing as they progress through the school system, many Japanese students lack experience listening to native speakers. Because of this, there is often a lack of authentic L2 listening tasks, and those that are available are often irrelevant to students' lives. Lamie (1998) claims that many students feel distant from listening materials currently available. However, since Japan is currently the largest importer of English language music in the world (Cullen, 2000), and since the vast majority of university students are interested in music, popular music offers a tantalizing opportunity to increase the relevancy of music to students' lives. Popular music has the potential to become instantly meaningful for students as many of the lyrics contained therein consist of vague referents and lack of specificity that allow

students to attach their own meanings as they listen (Murphey, 1992), and relate to each song in a unique and individual way. Relevancy is further heightened by the fact that students are highly likely to seek out popular songs on their own (as mentioned earlier), and this encourages "out of class" associations crucial to language learning (Stansell, 2005).

In sum, popular music can be utilized to address the issues of anxiety and relevancy in L2 listening tasks, and help learners instead to "develop positive attitudes towards . . . listening skills" (Shimo, 2002, p.4).

Listening activities using popular music

The following is a list of listening activities using popular music that have been designed and implemented by this author. All of these activities can be utilized with a variety of songs and in a variety of contexts.

(1) Sequencing lyric strips

Song: Another Day in Paradise
Artist: Phil Collins

Preparation: Make enough copies of the song lyrics for each pair of students in the class (Appendix 1). Cut them up into pairs of lyrics and mix them up. Then paperclip them together for the students.

Activity: Pass out the sets of mixed-up lyric strips to the students. Play the song and allow them to arrange the strips in order.

Wrap-up: Review answers without music first, and follow-up by allowing students to sing the song with the CD. This provides multiple exposures to key words and expressions while, at the same time, enhancing pronunciation and rhythm.

Notes: The difficulty level of this activity can adapted to any situation. For more advanced students, lyrics can be divided into lines or phrases, while for beginner students, strips can contain two, three, or more lines. Although this activity can be done individually, it works well when students complete it in pairs. As a collaborative activity, it reduces listening anxiety, and allows students to focus on "essence" rather than "precise" listening. Finally, the fact that some

lyrics repeat with minor alterations provides an extra challenge for all students – beginner and advanced.

(2) Musical Bingo

Song: Hey Jude
Artist: The Beatles

Preparation: Choose a selection of expressions from the song lyrics (10 – 12 for example). Make a bingo chart with 16 blank squares with the selected lyrics listed on the same sheet (Appendix 2).

Activity: Pass out the bingo chart with the expressions to the students. Tell them to write the expressions into the chart in random order. Tell them that they can write the same expression more than once. Then tell them you will play the CD and as they hear each expression, they should cross it off on their bingo sheet.

Wrap-up: Ask students how many of them scored at least one "bingo" (one row in any direction). Then ask how many scored at least two, three, etc. Keep going until there is a winner. Then replay the song and have them sing along with the full lyrics.

Notes: There is great flexibility in this activity as teachers can vary the number and type of expressions, focus on individual words or full sentences, or alter the number of squares on the bingo sheet. This activity also encourages students to focus on "essence" listening and should also be effective in reducing listening anxiety.

(3) Gap Fill / Matching

Song: Friday I'm in Love
Artist: The Cure

Preparation: Type the song lyrics and delete the days of the week from the first and second verses (Appendix 3). Mix the daily activities in each of the choruses so that students must listen and match the day with the activity.

Activity: Pass out the sheet with the gaps and matching activity to the students. Tell them they must fill in the blanks with the days of the week for the verses and match the days with the activities in the choruses. Play the CD, and allow them to complete the activity.

Wrap-up: Allow them to compare answers in pairs and then review answers with the class. Play the song again and have them sing along for added listening and pronunciation practice.

Notes: As this is a gap-fill activity, it could be construed as a type of "precise listening". Limiting this type of activity to a certain category of words (in this case days of the week) and having students compare answers in pairs are effective ways to reduce anxiety. This particular song was also selected because it contains a lot of repetition that increases students' listening opportunities.

(4) True/False and Comprehension Questions

Song: Cats in the Cradle
Artist: Harry Chapin

Preparation: Prepare a series of true/false comprehension questions based on the lyrics of the song. Also prepare a list of comprehension questions. (Sample questions are included in Appendix 4).

Activity: Play the entire song for students, allowing them to listen for the "gist". Then pass out the true/false statements and have them listen again while answering the questions. Depending on the ability level of the class, review the answers at this point, or after they complete the next set of questions - comprehension questions which require them to write the answers.

Wrap-up: This song offers enormous potential for follow-up activities. After reviewing all answers, students could have group discussions based on the theme (a father who regrets not having taken the time to slow down and appreciate the significant events in his son's life). This could also be used as a springboard for a writing assignment, and/or grammatical practice giving advice, "He should have . . . ," etc.

Notes: Again, this activity could be adapted to the needs of any class. True/false questions tend to encourage more "essence listening" while the comprehension questions require more "precise

listening" for students needing a challenge. In any case, these activities are best suited to songs that tell a story, the lyrics of which could be used like any regular reading text.

(5) Correcting Mistakes

Song: It's My Life
Artist: Bon Jovi

Preparation: Go through the lyrics of this song, replacing words with other words, in other words, making mistakes. Gap fills can also be included in some sections, with the missing words provided for reference (Sample activities are included in Appendix 5).

Activity: Pass out the lyrics to the students. Either individually or in pairs, have them listen to the song, correct the mistakes, and fill in the gaps.

Wrap-Up: After reviewing all answers with the class, have them listen to the song again, sing along, and notice the "corrected" mistakes.

Notes: This activity is particularly useful in cultivating auditory discrimination, especially if the "mistakes" sound similar to the original words. It is also advantageous to choose a popular song that students are familiar with, and have some idea of how the lyrics should sound. This gives them a better chance of successfully spotting mistakes. Of course, the difficulty level of this activity can be adjusted to any level of class.

Things to consider when choosing songs

Selection of songs for EFL listening activities is very much a subjective process that depends almost entirely on the preferences of the teacher. That said, there are some factors that should be considered when choosing songs for classroom use. Paramount for listening activities, of course, is the clarity of the lyrics. Lyrics that are obscured by strong instrumentals and/or percussion are not effective for listening activities, and run the risk of frustrating students, thereby "losing the affective advantage" (Lieb, 2008). Even with lyrics that are clear, the difficulty level should be considered, as some songs contain highly idiomatic, or heavily inflected terminology that may be daunting for students. Students' interests should also be considered, as most students have their own favourite English language musical artists. Also important is the suitability of the lyrics, especially in terms of messages students may consciously or subconsciously receive

regarding the target culture. While song selection is a highly subjective process, it would be advisable to avoid lyrics that are violent, profane, or subversive in nature. Song length should also be considered as most songs will need to be replayed numerous times. Songs that are 4 minutes or longer may make this a cumbersome process. Also, in the interests of sharpening students' auditory range, a variety of genres, styles, and tempos should be utilized. Teachers could also select songs based on the target language structure, as there are many songs that are ideal for certain grammatical structures and/or vocabulary lists. Included in Appendix 6 is a list of useful website that should be helpful to teachers in locating song lyrics and activities.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the value of music as a pedagogical tool, not only in the enhancement of L2 listening, but in English Language Teaching in general. Popular music in particular offers promising opportunities to address the issues of L2 listening anxiety and relevancy of listening activities. Indeed, the use of music in the language classroom can help to facilitate effortless processing of prosodic features of language, thereby capitalizing on the well-documented interconnectivity between music and language. If more ELT teachers in Japan appreciate the benefits of this "non-traditional approach," the result can be a more holistic language learning experience that transcends the mundane and moves teachers and students in the process, in the same way that the Ancient Greeks were moved and inspired by the musicas of the muses.

Biographical Statement

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Appendix 1. Lyric strips for Another Day in Paradise by Phil Collins

Probably been moved on from every place
Cos she didn't fit in there

Oh lord, is there nothing more anybody can do
Oh, lord, there must be something you can say

He walks on, doesn't look back
He pretends he can't hear her

Oh, think twice, its another day for
You and me in paradise

She calls out to the man on the street
"Sir, can you help me?"

She calls out to the man on the street
He can see she's been crying

Starts to whistle as he crosses the street
Seems embarrassed to be there

It's cold and I've nowhere to sleep
Is there somewhere you can tell me?

You can tell by the lines on her face
You can see that she's been there

Oh think twice, it's just another day for you,
You and me in paradise

She's got blisters on the soles of her feet
Can't walk but she's trying

Appendix 2: Musical Bingo for Hey Jude by The Beatles

Write the following words and expressions into the bingo chart below, in any order. Then cross them off as you hear them in the song.

* don't carry the world
* on your shoulder
* don't let me down
* plays it cool
* you have found her
* remember
* don't make it bad
* take a sad song
* anytime
* make it better
* you feel the pain
* don't be afraid
* let her under your skin
* you know
* go out and get her
* let her into your heart

Appendix 3. Gap fill / Matching for Friday I'm in Love by The Cure

(Write the days of the week)

I don't care if _____'s blue
_____'s grey and _____ too
_____ I don't care about you
It's _____ I'm in love

(Match the days with the phrases)

Monday	I'm in love
Tuesday, Wednesday	you can fall apart
Thursday	break my heart
It's Friday	doesn't even start
Saturday	always comes too late
and Sunday	never hesitate
But Friday	wait

I don't care if _____'s black
_____, _____ heart attack
_____ never looking back
It's _____ I'm in love

(Match the days with the phrases)

Monday	watch the walls instead
Tuesday, Wednesday	I'm in love
Thursday	stay in bed
It's Friday	you can hold your head
Saturday	never hesitate
and Sunday	wait
But Friday	always comes too late

Dressed up to the eyes, it's a wonderful surprise to see your shoes and your spirits rise,
Throwing out your frown and just smiling at the sound,
And as sleek as a shriek spinning round and round, always take a big bite
It's such a gorgeous sight to see you in the middle of the night
You can never get enough, enough of this stuff. It's _____ I'm in love.

Appendix 4: T/F and comprehension questions for Cats in the Cradle by Harry Chapin

While you listen to this song, decide if the following statements are true (T) or false (F). Correct the false statements the second time you listen.

(1) _____ He learned to walk while I was at home.
(2) _____ My son turned twelve just the other day.
(3) _____ My son said, "Thanks for the ball, Dad."
(4) _____ My son wanted to borrow my cell phone.
(5) _____ I've long since retired.
(6) _____ My son has free time to see me.
(7) _____ My son's kids have the flu.
(8) _____ My son is not like me.

Listen to this song and answer the following questions.
(1) Did the father see his son learn to walk? Why?

_____

(2) What did the father say when his son asked him, "When you coming home, Dad?"

_____

(3) What present did he give his son for his birthday?

_____

(4) What did he say when his son asked him to play?

_____

(5) What did the father say to his son when he came home from college?

_____

6) Why didn't the son sit with his father after he came home from college?

_____

7) Why couldn't the son see his father after he moved away?

_____

8) What occurred to the father at the end of the song?

_____

9) What do you think the message of this song is?

_____

Appendix 5: Correcting mistakes for It's my life by Bon Jovi
(Adapted from www.esl-lounge.com)

Use these words to fill in the blanks. You will not use all of them.
Money voice prayer train sun song face

This ain't a _____ for the broken-hearted
No silent _____ for the faith-departed
I ain't gonna be just a _____ in the crowd
You're gonna hear my _____ when I shout it out loud

Now find the 8 words that are wrong and correct them using these words.
highway alive (x2) life (x3) way never

(Chorus)

It's my wife, it's now or always,

I ain't gonna live forever, I just want to live while I'm young

It's my wife, my heart is like an open market

Like Frankie said, I did it my best

I just wanna live while I'm young, it's my wife.

Now, use these words to fill in the blanks. You will not use all of them.
make stood believe eating getting backed

This is for the ones who _____ their ground
For Tommy and Gina who never _____ down
Tomorrow's _____ harder make no mistake
Luck ain't even lucky, got to _____ your own breaks

(Chorus)

Now, use these words to fill in the final verse. You will not use all of them.
calling telling bet bend back break stand

Better _____ tall when they're _____ you out
Don't _____, don't _____, baby, don't _____ down

(Chorus)

Appendix 6: Useful websites

ESL Through Music: www.caslt.org/research/music.htm
(great starting point - provides links to many of the sites listed below)

ESL Through Music: www.forefrontpublishers.com/eslmusic
(useful source of articles, materials, lesson plans submitted by teachers, books and CD's)

ESL Lounge, Songs for English Teaching: www.esllounge.com/songstop/shtml
(Good source of free song lyrics and activities)

Teaching Language With Music: http://gs.fanshawec.on.ca/tlwm
(with "ESL Song Directory" available for download. stipulates that files are available with the understanding that they will be used for educational purposes only)

Teaching With Songs: www.isabelperez.com/songs
(30 songs complete with activities)

Song Lyrics: www.songlyrics.com
(an excellent source of song lyrics, with music available for download after a 14 day free trial)

Teaching Communicatively in a (Very) Large Class

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Abstract
Although it is very difficult to teach a large class using Communicative Language Teaching methods, it is not unusual to find classes of 100 students and more in some Asian teaching contexts. This is never an ideal situation, but there are ways for the teacher to teach a fun, interesting and useful class. This article introduces a method of classroom management that was successful in a class of over 100 students. The system is based on awarding points for group and individual work. Students found this to be motivating and participation improved.

Introduction

There are many reasons that a small class is optimal, if not essential, for Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Common CLT activities such as role plays or information gaps are very difficult to do if the teacher is not available to help and supervise students. It is difficult for learners to take the more independent role that CLT calls for. Perhaps most importantly, it becomes more of a challenge to create a learner-centered classroom, since the teacher cannot get to know the students well enough to judge their interests or proficiency levels.

In many teaching contexts, however, teachers have no control over how large their English classes are, and large classes tend to be the norm. This is thought to be a major obstacle to effective English teaching (see, for example, Taguchi 2002, Takahashi 2004, Sammin 1998). It should be mentioned that the first two of these concern English teaching in Japan, in which classes consist of about 40 people, not one or two hundred as is common in some countries.

A small class size is, for many reasons, probably the best situation for a teacher. This does not mean, however, that the teacher with many students must give up teaching communicatively. Having spent several years teaching in an institution where my classes ranged from 80 – 120 students, I was able to develop a method that helped me to maintain a fairly personal relationship with my students, encouraged them to be more autonomous, and developed their communicative language skills.

Problems with the large class

The biggest problems with having a large class are related to class participation. First, it is very difficult to encourage students to raise their hands and speak in class. Students are understandably nervous about speaking in front of a large group. In a class of over one hundred students, learning names can be impossible. This means that it is difficult to give class participation grades, so students have little motivation to participate. Not knowing students' names also means that discipline may be a problem.

Students may have a harder time concentrating in a large class, which provides more visual stimulation. They may have problems with being able to see and hear the teacher. Students also

usually feel less constraint about extraneous talking or speaking their native language in class, which poses more challenges for the teacher.

Perhaps the biggest problem is lack of personal contact between the teacher and students. Students may find it harder to get individual help. The teacher may be exhausted by keeping an eye on all the students and projecting her voice, and may lose motivation herself.

A system of classroom management for very large classes

The system that I developed consists of several parts. Although I had a great deal more freedom than teachers in many situations (i.e. I could decide my own text and assessment system), the approach or its component parts can be adapted by teachers in other contexts.

Permanent groups

At the beginning of the semester students made their own groups of no more than six. Although keeping the groups relatively small means many groups in a class, it is important to keep the group at a size where everyone feels that they can and should contribute. Students were told in the first week that they would have to make a group in the third week, which gave them time to try working with different people and make friends. Then in the third week they decide on their group and turn in a list of group members. They understand that this will be their group for the rest of the semester, unless they have serious interpersonal problems.

Students will have varying levels in the group, but this can be seen as a good thing. If the class is conducted in English the students can help each other, which is good for both the good students and the slower ones. The teacher needs to keep an eye out for students who do not pull their weight. When I saw a student sleeping or obviously not engaged, I would tell her that she was now responsible for the group's final answer.

Points

I used a point system to determine my students' grades. Their grade was made up of points earned in the goup, individual participation points, and individual assignments (papers and a vocabulary test). Each group got a number, and there was a page in the grade book with each group number listed and the date of each class. When a group got a point, I would record it on the appropriate square. For each day, there was a space for absences as well. Periodically I would total the points for each group, and subtract for each student points obtained when he or she was absent.

Class usually began with a question for students to answer in their groups. This question was usually a discussion or opinion question designed to build schema about the topic of the lesson. Students were allowed to talk about this question in Japanese, but the answer had to be in English. While they were thinking of the answer to this question, I would go to each group, ask if everything was clear, and ask them if anyone in their group was absent. This saved me from having to take attendance, an extremely time-consuming task in a large class.

In order to give students as much autonomy as possible, I made them responsible for their own time management. They were given a time after which I would no longer accept answers, and it was their responsibility to formulate an answer and ask me to listen to it. When they determined that they were ready, I went to their group and listened to their answer, and gave them a point if it was satisfactory. If it was not, they could try again before the time limit. The students were not allowed to choose a "spokesperson," so theoretically they all had to be ready to answer.

This point system accomplishes a number of things. Since they cannot choose a speaker, all the students in the class were prepared to give an answer, but they did not have the stress of answering in front of a huge group of their peers. In addition, going to each group and speaking with the members gave me and the students the feeling that there was contact between me and them and that I was aware of them as individuals. I was sometimes able to ask a follow-up question to extend the dialogue. The point and the accompanying praise was an immediate reward for them, and they worked very hard for the points and were pleased when they earned them. I eventually started giving two points for an especially good answer and this motivated them more.

Individual points

Because each group finishes at a different rate, I eventually realized that I had to have something for the quicker groups to do. This led to a system of individual points, which were added to group points and assignments for their final grade. This also gives quick students who are in a slow group the chance to get more points, and students who are absent have the chance to make up some of their work. In addition, the instructor can also give a student who is having trouble with a certain aspect of English a chance to work on it. I prepared several types of activities and put them in a box. These activities were worth one, two or three points depending on whether they were easy, intermediate, or challenging. The activities were labelled so that students knew how many points they would be able to obtain. The easy activities were usually short grammar exercises about things we had already covered. Intermediate activities generally used graded readers and asked students to answer questions. These were the most popular. Challenging activities were more difficult readings and writing prompts.

When making these activities, it is necessary to think about ease of grading. Paragraphs were of course the hardest to grade, but they were not popular so I had to do it very rarely. Everything else was multiple choice or short answer so I could look very quickly and determine whether the student had earned the points. I would grade these in class while students were working on other things. I didn't allow the students to take these home, so their time working on them was limited—this prevented anyone from turning in an overwhelming number of activities (or skipping all the classes and making up the points with the individual activities, which was a theoretical possibility). About twice in the semester, I gave them a half an hour or so to work individually and get more points.

Fluency activities

One drawback of group work is of course that it is very hard to keep them from speaking their L1. I found that encouraging students to speak English, or even doing scaffolding exercises to encourage English discussion, did not result in students' attempting to speak English in their groups. I decided to acknowledge that they probably would not be able to use English most of the time, and to start fresh with a new pattern.

For the fluency activities, students were given some time to prepare to speak on a certain topic. Preparation may consist of drawing pictures to aid memory or looking up keywords in a dictionary. I allow them to look up only a certain number of keywords and write them down, in order to prevent them from writing sentences and reading them to the other student. Preparation can also be silent planning. No talking in either language is allowed during the preparation period. After the preparation period, students are told to speak for one minute. I began with this extremely short period because my students were intimidated by the idea of speaking English for any length of time, but more advanced classes can certainly start with a longer time period. I told the students that all the groups started with one point. If I did not hear them speaking Japanese for the minute, they got to keep the point. If they were speaking Japanese when I passed by, I would take the point back. This absolved me of having to listen to all the students at once, which is one of the drawbacks of fluency activities in the large class. If they exhausted the subject, they could either sit silently or talk about something else in English. I increased the time by small increments until they could speak for ten minutes by the end of the semester—longer than most of them had ever spoken English before.

Intensive speaking day

Of course, there are some activities that are difficult or impossible to do in a large class. In order to be able to do these at least occasionally in my class, I instituted an Intensive Speaking Day (ISD) twice a semester. For the ISD, I divided the class into three sections of about 30 – 40 students each, then had each section come for thirty minutes (of a total 90-minute class). It is important to put people who are in the same class group into different sections, so that they get the chance to speak to different people.

During the thirty-minute mini-class, the teacher can do the communicative activities that cannot be done in the larger class. Students are usually motivated by the break in routine and by the fact that they only have to be in class for thirty minutes. They were quite excited by simple information gap exercises or drawing questions out of a hat that they had to answer aloud. Although the activities were not complicated, they were designed so that students were speaking and listening to English for all of the thirty minutes. This, I felt, made the class as good, or better than, the regular ninety minute class in which they were not spending so much time speaking English.

Attitudinal changes

In my years teaching this class, I also was able to make several changes to my attitude that allowed me to maintain a positive attitude and not punish my students for something that was as difficult for them as for me.

I have always used personal essays as a way of judging their written communicative competence, but over the years these also become an important reference for me to be able to think of students as individuals. I made a note for each student, listing not only my assessment of his writing but also the unusual hobbies or experiences that he might have. This provided me with a good mnemonic for learning at least some names, and I was able to see the students more as individuals.

In the course of developing these activities, I had many failures. The only way to deal with them was to be open with the students in telling them that I was trying to find ways to deal with our large class size so that the class would be interesting and effective for them. I sometimes asked them for feedback, or admitted that I didn't think things had gone well. This helped us to develop the attitude that we were all on one team, fighting together against bad circumstances.

Conclusion

Although it does not make a very large class as pedagogically effective, or as easy to teach, as a small class, it is hoped that this system can at least make teachers feel that class is interesting and has some use for students. I found that the system increased student autonomy by giving them control over how they used their group time and how they obtained individual points. It also increased the time spent speaking face to face with individual students, so that they felt I was concerned about them and their progress. It increased student motivation as well, both because they were getting the immediate reward of points and because the classroom activities were more interesting to them than the teacher-fronted class I had been doing before.

It took eight years of trial and error to develop this system. One of the things that was most helpful to me was to read articles and see conference presentations about classroom management, and then try to think of a way to adapt them to my class. I hope that other teachers can be similarly inspired to think of things that work in their own contexts.

Biographical Statement

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CLT versus Context-based Language Teaching: which works best?

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Abstract

It seems that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is being assailed on all sides. Being so visible and unloved, it is an easy target for those decrying "declining standards in education." Popularised in the early 1970s, it came out of the writings of applied linguists such as Brumfit, Candlin, Widdowson and Wilkins, and had an emphasis on language use rather than language knowledge, with communication the goal of language learning. Over time there have been modifications, especially through new theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), which have broadened the research field to cognitive psychology and emphasised form-focused instruction (FFI). These days, words like 'tasks,' 'projects' and 'portfolios' are increasingly entering the lexicon of university courses, with mechanical targets (the TOEIC test) reflecting an era of centralised information-gathering and data control. This workshop at Hue University investigated the assumptions underlying communication as an aim for learners in an EFL setting, the place of CLT as just one way or as the way to achieve communicative aims and, given the reality of teaching and learning in Asia, appropriate context-specific solutions.

Introduction

A number of questions were posed to participants at the beginning of the workshop. They were encouraged to consider whether communication was one aim or the primary aim of English language study in Vietnam. They were asked if they thought CLT worked, in the sense of being the best means to achieving the aim of communicative competence. In addition, they were urged to think about the use of learning strategies and communication strategies and whether these could help their learners apply what they know to achieve their communicative needs.

The reason for the general background questions was to highlight the confusion of purpose that exists in curriculum planning and then works its way down into syllabus design and lesson planning. Time and resources in English language education for second language learners are frequently devoted to the study of English Literature, or of liberal arts, when we are hoping or even expecting them to acquire oral proficiency in English. Yet oral proficiency may not be the most useful aim for technician who will be researching English-language journals in their field. If instructors are unclear about the overall direction of study in their respective institutions and departments, then it follows that so too are our learners.

CLT and its development

Most participants were instructors in secondary or tertiary education, and had attended the workshops precisely because some kind of communicative need is deemed to exist for Vietnamese learners of English. CLT arose in the West as a reaction to traditional teaching approaches, and "soon spread around the world as older methods such as Audiolingualism and Situational Language Teaching fell out of fashion (Richards, 2006, p.8)." It is pertinent to ask how well it translates to English language teaching in Vietnam. As CLT first developed, it came

to be typified by a communicative syllabus that was often skills-based or grounded in functions. English for Specific Purposes also grew out of this. More recently, it is a set of principles that are generally agreed upon.

The problem with those principles is that they are tied to attitudes underlying a kind of cultural imperialism. According to Pham Hoa Hiep of the University of Hue (2005),

> "current literature on English Language Teaching (ELT) criticizes the transfer of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) from Western English-speaking countries to other development contexts. This transfer is seen as problematic since pedagogy imported from abroad conflicts with the social, cultural, and physical conditions of the recipient countries. However, abandoning CLT in the English classroom in countries such as Vietnam or China seems not to be a viable measure, given that the ultimate goal of English teaching in these countries is to help learners acquire a good working command of English. The solution, therefore, appears to be a modified version of CLT, made appropriate to the local condition."

Holliday (1994) offers a short list of considerations related to CLT in Asian EFL contexts **(**Appendix).

Reaction to CLT

One reaction to CLT has been the "context approach." Bax (2003) argues that the dominance of CLT has tended to result in the neglect of the context in which learning takes place. He sets out a comparison between a CLT and context approach:

CLT approach	Context approach
CLT is the complete answer.	We must consider the whole context.
If we don't have CLT, then we can't learn a language.	Methodology (including CLT) is just one factor in learning a language.
No other factors count in learning a language - only teaching methodology.	Other factors may be more important.
If you don't have CLT, then you are backward.	Other methods and approaches may be equally valid.

Figure 1. Comparison of CLT and a Context Approach (Bax, p.281).

Group task

The participants split themselves into small groups, on the basis of whether they preferred to design a short lesson plan governed by *Lexical, CLT* or *Task-based Learning* assumptions.

1. Lexical
2. CLT Presentation-Practice-Production
3. Task-based Learning

The starting-point for the example lesson was a text and song: *Yesterday* by the Beatles.

Yesterday all my troubles seemed so far away
Now it looks as though they're here to stay
Oh I believe in yesterday (verse 1)

Why she had to go I don't know . . . (chorus)

Each group was given time to come up with ideas, and a sheet to make notes on. A leader from each group then displayed their ideas on the board and explained them briefly. After a discussion and feedback, the participants were then introduced to a number of suggestions or possibilities for teaching the class on the basis of the three sets of assumptions.

Lexical
Grammar-translation worksheet
Words & verses jumbled
Reformulate text & write it out
Put verses in order
Translate lyrics
Analyse language
= We assume knowing a language is knowing its nuts and bolts

CLT (especially derived from older ideas like PPP)
Many stages e.g. eliciting so set up is busy, teacher-centred
Present language items to make meaning clear
Present target structures to make form clear
Gap-fill, sing , repeat, shadow, etc.
Controlled practice
Freer practice if time for student centred work
Find someone who ATE breakfast, BRUSHED their teeth YESTERDAY
= Production is controlled, predictable, systematic

TBL with/without FFI
Play song for pre-listening/background
Student-centred jigsaw task where A & B have to get missing info from one another

Interactive dictation where focus is on meaning, not predictable lexis or form
Group work - read - compare - choose - share
Review/feedback stage
= We use all the language we know to work through a process to communicate meaning (a product)

Context approach

The ideas generated by the various groups were contrasted with the considerations of context that could apply to a class in Vietnam. According to Bax (2003: 287), one might begin by looking at and analyzing the learning context. From there, one would move on to take account of individuals (learning styles, strategies), classroom culture (group motivation, school environment), local culture (regional differences, status of teachers and students in the community) and national culture (politics, religion). Only then would one deal with a teaching approach (methodology, materials, methods) to accomplish those aims, and finally consider a language focus (lexis, phonology, grammar). With methodology placed much lower down the list of priorities than is common in CLT, assumptions underlying practice in and out of the newly conceived classroom are thus (Bax, 2006):

STAGE ONE

- Improve your awareness of all aspects of context

STAGE TWO

- Plan and teach a lesson, being constantly aware of and responsive to the unfolding context

STAGE THREE

- Evaluation and Reflection.

Think how to do the lesson differently next time.

Consider whether learners are getting what they need.

Start the cycle again.

Strategies

As part of a context approach, it is hoped that instructors would leave behind some of the constraints of a skills-based or functional or notional syllabus, and consider the strategies that successful language learners apply as individuals. Strategy instruction and training is particularly useful in that: (1) it is applicable to any context, (2) it does not deal with a fixed

body of vocabulary or grammar, (3) it can be used in class and outside class every time we interact in the L2, and (4) it works with CLT, FFI, PPP, TBL, etc. in a range of different contexts.

For example, strategies can be broken down into vocabulary strategies:
- Make more use of collocations
- Make word lists meaningful
- Make use of an L2 corpus

They can also be categorised as listening strategies:
- A variety of top-down and bottom-up processing activities
- Noticing the kinds of information that English speakers listen out for, such as intonation and catenation, which are often overlooked while pronunciation is over-emphasised

And then there are the communication strategies, which are of particular importance to learners struggling to get their messages across with a limited repertoire of linguistic resources at their disposal in conversation:
- Own-performance strategies may be the best to concentrate on

Clearly then, CLT is neither the whole picture nor the most satisfactory answer for every L2 classroom.

Conclusion

Within the confines of a single workshop, it is difficult to cover a lot of ground without falling victim to the accusation of superficiality. The attempt here has been to limit the scope of inquiry to the relevance and effectiveness of CLT, and the possibility that considerations of context might be a better starting point for many instructors than an approach designed in the West and artificially grafted on to teaching in situations for which it was never properly suited. CLT in its current form and broadest sense still has much to offer, providing it is employed after an analysis of a specific learning context has identified it as part of the solution to second language education, and not as part of the problem.

Biographical Statement

Roger Palmer graduated from London University in European history. His postgraduate study was in Education, and research interest is communication strategies. He currently teaches at Kyoto Sangyo University and is the co-author of a four-level blended learning (online plus textbook) series for Pearson Longman Asia, coming out in 2009.

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Appendix (Holliday 1994)

Questions concerning CLT from Asian teachers' perspectives

• What do teachers find potentially useful in CLT?

• How do teachers go about implementing what they value in CLT, and what challenges do they face in their attempts?

• Do teachers believe they can incorporate the key aspects of CLT theory without using common Western techniques such as pair and group work?

• Is there any empirical data to document the success of adapting CLT to local culture?

• How do constraints within the non-Western EFL setting shape teachers' understandings, beliefs, and practices with respect to CLT?

• Are the forces that are often viewed as constraints necessarily constraints, or should they be considered essential components in a process of developing appropriate pedagogy for use in a local context?

Students Helping Students: The Laos Mountain Coffee Experiment

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Abstract

This report chronicles the development of a recent student fund raising initiative organized to help foster support and awareness towards educational needs in Laos. The students involved in this fund raising drive participated in a study abroad program in Laos during the month of February, 2008. This report will first offer a brief background of the study abroad program and then focus on the salient events that led to the students' decision to participate in this recent fund raising effort. Student accounts and reflections of both the program and the fund raising drive will also be offered.

Program background

In February of 2007, I participated in my first THT conference/workshop in Laos. The conference/workshop was held at Laos-American College in Vientiane. During our time in Laos, THT volunteers were able to form special bonds with the Laos-American College co-director (Virginia "Ginny" Van Ostram) as well as with several LAC students and teachers. The conference/workshop was considered a great success with the result that more conferences and workshops would be planned at this venue in the future. This THT initiative was also poignant since it sadly turned out to be one of the last conferences that our founder Bill Balsamo would attend. As a novice member of THT at the time of this conference, I was lucky to have been able to get to know Bill a little and to share some quality time with him throughout the conference. One of the lasting memories I have of Bill is from a moment after having one of our evening dinners by the Mekong River. I remember Bill encouraging me not to be afraid of taking this experience [in Laos] and doing something special with it myself. Although I wasn't exactly sure what to make of his words at the time, these words would serve as the impetus for a special study abroad program that was launched the following year.

When I returned to Sapporo for the beginning of the April school term in 2007, I found that a small group of enthusiastic students had joined my World Englishes seminar. This seminar was based on the concept of examining how English language and culture has historically influenced communities around the world (both positively and negatively) as well as the lasting impact this linguistic and cultural movement is having on communities around the globe today. I approached one of my tenured colleagues at Sapporo Gakuin University, Tim Grose, with the idea of organizing a field trip to Laos with groups of our respective students. The idea was to organize a field trip that would focus on issues of language, culture and environmental issues in Laos. This seemed natural and appropriate since his seminar theme was based on Global Issues. To my relief, Tim was very positive and enthusiastic about the idea and plans were immediately set in motion for a February 2008 visit to Laos. Amongst many of the activities and events that our students participated in during their visit to Laos, one special field trip co-organized by the Laos-American College stood out in terms of affecting and influencing our students. The following section will detail some of the salient events that occurred during that special day.

Nong Phong Village field trip

The Nong Phong field trip was organized by Ginny at the LAC in an effort to educate both her and our students on the various environmental challenges currently facing the rural areas outside of Vientiane. The schedule involved making a visit to one of the rural elementary schools in the village of Nong Phong, meeting with the village officials to discuss environmental challenges in the area, having a picnic lunch with the Laos-American students in the LAC "environmental garden" and finally taking a short hike around the area. The main linguistic focus for all of our students was English with the exception of the meeting with the village officials since this naturally had to be conducted and chaired in their own native language. The LAC students graciously offered to translate the important discussion points for our Japanese students. The following sections will briefly outline the activities we participated in during the field trip as well as student reflections on the day.

Nong Phong Elementary School

We arrived at the elementary school around 8:30 in the morning. The school inhabited a rather large area of land and appeared to be basic, but well organized. The school itself was comprised of a main schoolhouse with a series of smaller rustic classrooms. One of our student-participants shares his impression about the appearance and condition of the school:

The school buildings had no walls or windows and the study materials seemed poor. For these reasons, I imagine that the study environment there had to be poor as well…(Shinosuke Takahashi, Sapporo Gakuin student)

As we stepped off of the buses, the village children ran to greet us. These children were very pleasant and engaging. We quickly organized everyone and brought out various classroom materials and resources that Ginny had collected to donate to the school.



Our students were all amazed by the level of enthusiasm and motivation the children of the village displayed despite the obviously disadvantaged backdrop. As discussed later, this particular experience served as a pivotal point for a further volunteer initiative by our students.

Nong Phong Environmental Summit

Our next stop was at the LAC environmental garden. Participants were given a list of guided environmental questions about the planned discussion points. The students arranged themselves on blankets and small stools within the lush natural setting of the “garden” which was large and resembled more of a type of farm.

The local officials sat at conference tables and chaired the meeting for our students. This proved to be a slightly challenging activity for our Japanese students as the discussion was in Laos. The LAC students, however, did a fine job translating for our group and as a result our students were able to glean some important information about the environmental challenges the Nong Phong area faces:

The villagers told us about their many problems. The number of people in the village was decreasing. The water condition in the village was poor, so they could not drink it. The food grown in the fields was badly damaged by snails. (Takehiro Iwasaki, Sapporo Gakuin student)

After the meeting, villagers and students took part in a picnic lunch organized by the LAC students.

Each student brought a special home cooked dish and shared with all of our students. All agreed that the food was remarkable.

Environmental hike

After lunch, we all set off on a short hike around the garden. Various grain and agricultural initiatives were pointed out to us.

This proved to be a further opportunity for our students to bond with the LAC students and to further talk about some of the pressing environmental issues facing the area. Guitars were brought out later and our students had an impromptu hootenanny in the lovely surroundings of the LAC garden.

Laos Mountain Coffee initiative

Upon our return to Vientiane, we began talking about our experience and reflected on the region's needs and challenges. Our students focused on the plight of the rural children and how much of a challenge it must be to get a good education under such impoverished circumstances. They were impressed by the enthusiasm displayed by the students as we had handed out materials that most of their fellow students in Japan take for granted. Our students began to brainstorm some ideas about possible things they could do to make a small difference for the children in Nong Phong. An idea began to gel after we made a visit to fair trade supporting coffee company based in Laos known as "Laos Mountain Coffee". Laos Mountain Coffee is a small coffee production company owned by an American ex-pat named Steve Feldschneider. The concept of fair trade is that the Laotian coffee plantation farmers receive a fair price for their produce and their labor. Our students liked this concept and felt that a good idea would be to import coffee from Laos and sell it at their upcoming school festival. The money raised through the sale of the coffee at the festival would then be sent back to Laos with the intention of buying more school supplies for the elementary school in Nong Phong.

Bringing it all back home: The Laos Cafe in Sapporo

After a considerable amount of effort, we were able to have a fair amount of coffee shipped over to us from Laos and our students were able to successfully put together what they referred to as the "Laos Café" for their school festival:

We tried hard to prepare for the café. We tried to make many posters and picture displays that had a "Laos" feeling. We didn't think many customers would come, but actually many customers came. We were in a bit of a panic, but it was fun. We tried to talk to as many

customers as we could about our travel. We were very proud that we could share our experience with so many people and that we would be able to send the money we made to the Nong Phong elementary school. I hope this café's tradition will continue for future students at our school. I think they would enjoy it. (Kazuyuki Mutou, Sapporo Gakuin student)

The students sold their coffee at a modest price, but were still able to raise almost 20,000 yen for the Nong Phong village children. The program and subsequent fund raising experience appeared to have a dramatic and lasting effect on this group of students:

When I went to Laos this February, I hadn't thought about global problems. I had vaguely listened about these types of problems from school or media, but I changed due to seeing these problems directly. There were many problems about children, education, money, landmines, disease, environment and water… I can't count them all. Of all others, I was stricken about the children. Children begged us through the town…even adults. I have never seen that before. When I went to the country elementary school, there were no chalks, pencils, or notes. Now I'm interested in global problems due to my Lao experiences. I want to be a person who works around the world in the future. The Lao cafe was my first step… So my Lao experiences changed my way, and taught me that there are many different people in the world. (Takayuki Murabe, Sapporo Gakuin student)

Results and future implications

Mirroring the THT approach, this study abroad program was conceived as a type of grassroots initiative that was (in this context) jointly developed by both teachers and students. Although this program was approved by our university, it was not granted any financial funding. As a THT inspired initiative, part of the goal of this project was to encourage our students to use their own time and resources to research about the formidable challenges facing fellow students in one of their neighboring Asian countries. Pedagogically speaking, our program adopted a participatory approach to language learning where students used the target language they had been studying to get involved and offer solutions to help improve the quality of a situation for people in need.

More universities in Japan would benefit from promoting such volunteer study abroad initiatives where students can actively use their English skills in a very worthwhile and productive manner. The value of such initiatives broadens the concept of learning a language to a more functional level, merging "particular content with language teaching aims" (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989). Seminars created to facilitate this educational passage can encourage students to become more active in language learning with the result of building more motivation and self-confidence. Such a syllabus design could also encourage students to actively "participate in determining the content of their course so that what they do in class gives them the tools to cope with and change what they will encounter outside of the classroom…" (Graves, 1996). This will not only directly benefit the more economically disadvantaged members in our Asian community, but also benefit participant-students' sense of educational incentive and purpose. In

these seemingly bleak and uncertain times, such "hands-on" pedagogical directions should be pursued or at least explored.

Conclusion

As this issue of the THT proceedings is serving as a memorial issue for Bill, I hope that this report will be interpreted as a fitting tribute to him since the actions our students took reflect many of the notions and intentions that I feel Bill had toward active volunteerism and teaching as a whole. During the time when I was working on various logistical issues for this study abroad program last year, I was in periodic contact with Bill via email. Unbeknownst to me at the time, Bill was already suffering from the terrible illness that would sadly take his life. Nevertheless, he continued to act as a mentor to me; always offering kind advice and encouragement. This, of course, is not out of character for someone who always put his own needs far behind those who were in need of help and assistance. I would like to think that Bill would have been proud of the students who were involved with this program and I know he would certainly have encouraged more likeminded initiatives to be both attempted and supported.

Biographical Statement

William Kay has been teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Sapporo, Japan for ten years. He graduated from the University of Toronto with a B.A. in English Literature and graduated from Macquarie University (Sydney, Australia) with an M.A. in TESOL Applied Linguistics. He is an active member of JALT Hokkaido and Teachers Helping Teachers. He is currently teaching English at Hokkai Gakuen University in Sapporo, Japan.

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Shall We Small Talk?

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Abstract

Small talk is a skill that students need in order to become successful communicators. It builds relationships, fills silence, and is the beginning of many English interactions. Yet, Japanese students often do not understand why it is important and often struggle with it. In addition, it is a hard skill to teach and is often overlooked in the classroom. The researcher was surprised to learn that many students at the end of her course rated learning small talk higher than persuading, presentation, and meeting skills. Moreover, she received negative feedback from global managers that many Japanese with advanced English skills do not engage in small talk and instead simply get down to business. This practice-based paper will address why small talk is important and what skills students need to be successful at it. In addition, it will show possible outcomes of teaching small talk in the classroom. Finally, small talk will be broken down into teachable parts and activities will be presented.

Introduction

Small talk is a skill that can and should be incorporated into English classrooms around the world. It can be introduced at any level in open enrollment programs, workforce language programs, university programs, and ESP programs. Students need it in industries like business and tourism, at conferences, during job interviews, and during interactions with their teacher and other students/colleagues. It is a 'small' skill with large implications both for the students and the English classroom.

Rationale

In the book Global Literacies: Lessons on Business Leadership and National Cultures, the authors identify four global competencies: personal, social, business, and cultural which are imperative for being a successful in the global business world (Digh, Phillips, Rosen & Singer, 2000). Small talk is one way students can develop this social competency and in turn become successful and active participants in the global business world.

In addition, small talk is one way that students can be 'recognized' as competent English speakers. James Paul Gee (2005) talks about this idea of recognition in his book about discourse analysis (p. 27). He writes to pull off a Discourse if you can successfully be recognized by others 'as a particular type of who (identity) engaged in a particular type of what (activity)' (Gee, et al., 2005). As educators, we want our students to be recognized as competent English speakers (who) by participating successfully in small talk (what). Therefore, it is our responsibility to give our students the tools they need to be confident and successful communicators, and teaching small talk is one way we can do that.

As further evidence of the importance of teaching this skill, the researcher asked students who work for a Japanese affiliate of a global pharmaceutical company to do a key learnings

presentation at the end of her course covering social communication, email, presentations, meetings, and negotiations. She was surprised to learn that thirteen out of fifteen students rated small talk as one of their three key learnings of the course. In addition, the author conducted a course on global communication behavior for managers where she received direct feedback from their global manager that three out of the eight managers did not engage in enough in small talk and instead just got down to business. Both the students and the managers said (1) they did not know how to do the skill (2) did not realize it is important. Based on this feedback, it is clear that small talk is a skill that seems to be overlooked, is important, and needs to be overtly taught.

Definition

In order to teach small talk, it is important to understand what it is and the roles it plays in English social communication. Small Talk is defined in Longman's Online dictionary as 'Polite unfriendly conversation about unimportant subjects' (http://www.ldoceonline.com/). Another definition can be found in a VOA interview with Debra Fine, author of The Fine Art of Small Talk, who defines small talk for business as, 'A picture frame around every business conversation' (http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2005-11/2005-11-01-voa2.cfm). It is important to share these definitions with students.

Although many people may think that small talk is superficial, it has three main functions: it starts and ends almost any English interaction, it fills uncomfortable silence, and it helps build and maintain relationships. It is important to share these functions with students in order to raise their awareness of the importance and role of this skill.

Being good at small talk involves juggling many language skills at once. First, students need to know the structure and rules of small talk. They also need to have knowledge, vocabulary, and fluency to be able to talk about many general topics and especially themselves and their culture. Listening and active listening skills are also needed. In addition, students need to be able to maintain eye contact, respond quickly, ask questions (question forms), and be aware of turn taking.

Outcomes

The main outcome of teaching small talk is that students will become successful and recognized English speakers in the global arena. However, there are three additional outcomes: assertiveness, student-centered classroom, and increased language skills.

Assertiveness

Educators in Japan often complain that their students are not interactive or assertive enough and are quick to blame Japanese culture. However, instead of taking this culturist approach it is better to ask why students are quiet or not assertive. Cheng argues (2000) that 'if some Asian students are indeed observed to be quieter than expected in certain circumstances, the causes are situation specific rather than culturally pre-set` (p. 435). Therefore, w need to teach our students how to be interactive and assertive instead of assuming they are quiet because they of culture.

One way to do this is by teaching small talk and encouraging them to use it inside and outside of the classroom. This gives them a way and an opportunity to show they are interactive and assertive.

Student-centered learning
Classes should be student-centered, but often the beginning of class is teacher-centered with the teacher asking the class how they are or how their weekend was. This automatically puts the teacher in control during the first five minutes of class. After small talk is taught, students should be encouraged to speak to each other and engage in conversation with each other before the class starts. This puts them in English mode and sets the students as the center before the class even starts. Students should also be encouraged to initiate conversation with the teacher when she enters the classroom. This puts the student at the center of learning and takes focus away from the teacher as total controller.

Improved language skills
Finally, students should be able to improve their language and cultural skills. They will have awareness of small talk in English and their own culture. They will know the basic forms and rules. Teaching small talk should help their listening/active listening, speaking/fluency, question forms, eye contact, response time, and assertiveness.

Language activities
One way to teach this skill is to break it down into manageable parts: beginning, middle, and end. Here are some activities to teach and practice beginnings, middles, and ends.

Beginnings
1. Schema building: For homework, direct students to this VOA article about small talk: http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2007-10/2007-10-02-voa2.cfm. You might want to pre-teach vocabulary and give comprehension questions. Students can listen to it or read it. Discuss the questions and article in class.

2. Schema building: Ask students if they know what small talk is. Ask them if they know when small talk is used and how/where/when it is used in their own language. This may be difficult for some levels.

3. Input: Ask students to generate beginnings of small talk-questions and responses-how are you, how're things going.... Give students beginning phrases sheet-see Appendix 1. Go over items on the sheet and have students repeat questions first and then responses after you, using the audio-lingual method technique of choral repeat. Then teacher asks the questions and students respond and vise versa. Students need a lot of practice saying these phrases, so give them time to develop their confidence in a group.

4. Input: Go over the points to remember section. There are many ways to greet, but students do not have to be creative. They can always use the same greeting, but they should be able

understand them all. The greeting is short, and the answer should be short too. The response should be quick; it is not something you think about. Encourage students to try to greet first. Often they rely on native speakers to initiate conversation. This can be one way for them to show they are assertive. Finally, it is important to point out that sometimes people greet quickly in passing. In this case, 'How's it going' simply means hello and students do not have to stop and answer the question. They can just respond with 'hello' or with 'Hey, how's is going?'

5. Output: Have them practice with a partner just going down the list with one person asking the questions and the other responding and then switching. Then have students move around and ask each other the questions.

6. Pronunciation: For a short pronunciation lesson, point out that 'How's it going' when spoken actually sounds like 'Howzitgoing.' This is an example of reduction of function words and linking. You can show this with other examples as well.

7. Additional practice: Cut up the worksheet into strips-both questions and responses. Have students put the questions and responses together. Alternatively, print the worksheet with either the questions or responses missing, and have them provide the appropriate answer.

8. Link to real world: Have students bring in at least two examples from the daily lives or from T.V. shows.

Middle

1. Schema building: Ask students what people talk about for small talk in their countries. Go over what topics are common or typical in English and what topics should be avoided. Common topics in English are: weekend, job/school, weather, sports, or hobbies, music, movies, T.V. shows, and family. Topics to be avoided are: money, politics, religion, and health problems.

2. Input: Give students middle phrases sheet (Appendix 2). Go over sheet and have students repeat questions/statements first and then responses after you, using the audio-lingual method technique of choral repeat. Then teacher asks the questions and students respond and vise versa. Ask students if they have any other examples.

3. Input: Go over points to remember section. Students also answer the question, "How was your weekend?" with an answer about what they did (answering a what instead of how question). Remind them that they must answer with an adjective and then can tell what they did. Tell them that people do not go into too much detail and often try to stay positive. Encourage them to keep the conversation going. Give them the analogy of tennis match. They can keep the conversation going by adding information and asking questions. In addition, they should use active listening techniques by making comments, nodding, and having good eye contact. Point out that compliments are often used to enter/continue small talk and show ways to respond to compliments. Finally, point out that both statements and questions are used to continue the conversation.

4. Output: Have them practice with a partner just going down the list with one person asking the questions and the other responding and then switching. Then have students move around and ask each other the questions, but allow them to pick and choose and have them start from the beginning of small talk. Have them work with one partner and try to keep the conversation going, and the teacher yells 'Switch' and then move onto the next partner.

5. Additional activity: Students should have general knowledge about many topics, so encourage them to simply read the headlines of an online newspaper or search engine such as Yahoo. They only need general information, so headlines are enough. Additionally, have students do fluency practice about sports, hobbies, family, music, movies, and weather to have them practice talking and learn the vocabulary that goes with these topics.

6. Additional activity: Students also need to be able to talk about their own culture, but often lack the vocabulary or do not know much about their own culture. Having students give mini-presentations, practice describing food or cultural objects, Doing these activities involve other skills such as presenting and describing, but can be tied into the middle section of small talk. Dr. Pat Dougherty (2007) has great ideas about describing culture in his article, 'Tell Me About Your Country: Native Culture and EFL/ESL.'

7. Active listening: Talk to students about what active listening is and what it is-see Appendix 3. Give students worksheet and ask them to practice the phrases. Put them in pairs and have students talk about different topics. Have them check off the active listening phrases they used.

End

1. Schema building: Elicit from students any phrases they might know which are used to end a conversation.

2. Input: Give students end phrases sheet. Conduct activities similarly to beginning and middle.

3. Input: Go over points to remember. Point out that many phrases can be mixed and that often many are used at one time. Also, if you need to be somewhere, feel free to end the conversation. This is also true if you only want to get out of the conversation.

4. Output: Give students opportunities to go through the list with a partner, practicing both the statements and responses. Then have them walk around just practicing ending phrases with different people.

5. Output: Have students put it all together and walk around making small talk with different people in the class. When the teacher yells 'switch', the students must end the conversation, and move to the next person. For a more difficult option, allow students to begin and end the conversation or join and leave conversations on their own.

6. Link to real world: Have students make goals to use small talk with other students before class and with teachers/supervisors outside of class. Have students share their goals with each other or at the beginning class. The teacher can also collect the goal sheets and make comments.

Conclusion

This paper has shown why small talk should be incorporated into any English classroom because many students do not know how to use it or do not know the important role it plays in communication. Small talk can enable students to become successful and recognized English communicators. In addition, it can help students to become more assertive, make classes more student-centered, and improve student language skills and awareness. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate any activities and adapt them for their classrooms. It is a small skill but can have a big impact for your students and classes.

Biographical Statement

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Appendix 1. Small talk: The Beginning

Greeting	Response
Hi. How are you?	Good, and you? Pretty good, and yourself?
Hey. How's it going?	Great/pretty good/okay/not so good. How about with you?
Hey. How're things going?	Great/pretty good/busy/okay/not so good. How about with you?
Hey. Long time no see.	Yeah, it's been a long time. How's it going?
What's up?	Not much. How about with you?
What's new?	Not much. How about with you?

Your Turn: Do you know any other greetings that are appropriate for small talk? Write your ideas in the space below.

1.

2.

3.

Points to remember:

(1) There are many ways to greet. You only need to be able to use one, but you need to be able to understand them all.
(2) The greeting is very quick. You must also answer quickly. Usually the answer is short.
(3) If you can, try to ask the first question. Often non-native speakers rely on the native speaker to start the conversation
(4) Sometimes native speakers say very quickly, `Hey, how's it going` in passing. You don't have to stop and answer the question. You can simply reply, `Hey` or `Hey, how's it going?`

Appendix 2. Small talk: The Middle

Greeting	**Response**
How was your weekend?	Great/pretty good/okay/uneventful.
What did you do?	I went to my friend's house. How about you?
Do you have any weekend plans?	No, I don't have anything planned yet./I am going to go shopping.
How is work going?	Good. I just finished a project, so it is not so busy right now. How about you?
Did you see the game yesterday?	No, I missed it, but I heard it was really exciting.
I like your necklace.	Thanks. I bought it in Korea. Have you ever been there?
It is hot today.	I know. It is always so hot during this time of year.
You looked stressed. Is everything okay?	Yeah, I have a big presentation tomorrow, so I am kind of nervous.

Your Turn: Do you know any other conversation starters that are appropriate for small talk? Write your ideas in the space below.

1.

2.

3.

Points to remember:

(1) There are not set phrases for this part, but people often talk about their weekend, their job/school, the weather, or sports. These are safe topics.
(2) People usually don't go into too much detail and often try to stay positive.
(3) Try to keep the conversation going. You can do this by:
    - Adding information. Just don't say yes or no. Try to give a one sentence answer.
    - Asking questions to the other person. Often the native speaker only asks questions, so it seems like an interview, not a conversation. Try to ask questions too.

Appendix 3. Active Listening

Active listening is a skill used to show that you are paying attention and interested in what the other person says. It is an interactive and assertive way to listen to someone.

What are some behaviors or words that you use in Japanese to show you are listening?

1.

2.

In English, we often use the non-verbal behaviors of nodding and maintaining eye contact to show we are listening.

In addition, we often use phrases to show we are listening, interested, and paying attention. Here are some of those phrases:

Sorry?
Pardon?
I see
Right…Right…right
Okay…okay...okay
Really?
Exactly
(Yeah), Me too
That sounds stressful/fun/busy.
I'm jealous.
I totally agree/I disagree.
Oh, wow
Amazing
Cool

Can you think of anything else you have heard/used?
1.

2.

In order to practice active listening, pick a topic and talk to your partner about it for three minutes. Your partner should use active listening strategies and check off the ones he/she says. Then you will switch. Any topic is okay, but here are some suggestions:

Food, family, current news story, hobby, music, sports, books, work, weekend

Appendix 4. Small talk: The Ending

Farewell	**Response**
Well, it was nice talking with you.	Thanks, you too. See you later.
Have a good day.	Thanks, you too. Bye.
Have a good one.	Thanks, you too. See ya.
Well, I have to get to a meeting.	Me too. See you later.
I've got to go. See you later.	Okay. Have a good day.
I've got to run.	Me too. Have a good one!

Your Turn: Do you know any other ways to end the conversation that are appropriate for small talk? Write your ideas in the space below.

1.

2.

3.

Points to remember:

(1) These can be mixed. Often many are used at one time.
(2) If you need to be somewhere, you should use one of the bottom three examples. You can be direct.
(3) Even if you don't have to go anywhere, but you want to end the conversation, you can also use the bottom three.

Who is Thiagi and what are Framegames?

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Abstract
This paper outlines a workshop-style presentation I have used to introduce the work of Sivasailam Thiagarajan, aka Thiagi (http://www.thiagi.com), and his performance-based training activities called Framegames. I normally include short overviews of each Framegame (i.e. Classify, Envelopes, Generic Board Games (GBG), Group Grope, Take Five and Matrix Games) and try to give participants a feel for these activities by demonstrating as many as time permits. I also try to describe how I have used these games in my own classes, especially Business English and Studies in Multicultural Economies, as well as other settings such as faculty development meetings and teacher-training workshops. I encourage participants to come up with ideas for using Framegames in their own context and provide them with a list of references to get them started.

Introduction

I began hearing the name Thiagi in 2006 while taking some online courses in instructional systems technologies through the School of Education at Indiana University. As I remember it, the name came up in online discussions about teaching strategies. The rumor was that this charismatic gentleman was making a splash in Performance Training (PT) circles. I decided to find out more, and one of my first destinations was Thiagi's website (http://www.thiagi.com). There I discovered that Thiagi is short for Sivasailam Thiagarajan and that he was originally from India but has been living in the US, and been involved in performance training, for more than thirty years. I also signed up on the website for a free monthly newsletter, and began reading more about his various training techniques. Foremost among these was something called Framegames. Eventually I obtained Framegames by Thiagi (2004), as well as some of his other publications, and have been experimenting with these activities for the past two years. So, what are Framegames? The following definition comes from Thiagi himself:

> *A framegame is a game that is deliberately designed to permit the easy switching of content. It is a game that can be applied to a wide variety of topics (Thiagi, 2004).*

In other words, these are activity shells that can be used for a wide range of training settings. The teacher/trainer simply plugs in the content. This could involve training police officers how to treat evidence at a crime scene, teaching third-graders how to gather information for a science project or testing factory workers knowledge of safety procedures. To my knowledge, Framegames were not being used in language teaching contexts, but it seemed like a natural fit, especially where the focus is on content and learning the target language by actually using it. I was eager to get started. A short list of reasons for why to use Framegames can be found in Appendix 1.

Overviews and examples

In this section I will outline each of the Framegames and explain some of my own experiences and/or how it might be used in English as a Second/Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) classes. Short list of learning objectives that might be addressed by each Framegame are included as appendices together with a set of generic instructions. These appendices were compiled and adapted from Thiagarajan (2004) and can be copied and used as job aids.

Classify

This Framegame can be used when the learning objective is to get participants to group like items in different categories, check items against some standard or criteria, group items in the appropriate step of a longer process, or match problems with possible solutions. As language teachers, we can use this to involve students in thinking how specific objects, concepts or procedures can be grouped or categorized. Basically, individuals or groups are given a set of criteria to be used for classifying, and then compete to place items in the appropriate category. Points are awarded for each correct response as well as incorrect responses from competing individuals or teams. One of the examples included in Thiagarajan (2004) involves categorizing instructional topics into learning domains (cognitive, psychomotor, interpersonal and affective), and I used my adaptation of this training activity at Teachers Helping Teachers (THT) workshops in both Laos and the Philippines. With further modification, this activity could be used to help ESL/EFL learners better understand how language learning involves development in all of the learning domains. Items might include memorizing vocabulary or grammar items (cognitive), forming different sounds by adjusting tongue placement (psychomotor), expressing interest in what an interlocutor is saying (interpersonal), and building self-confidence in speaking the target language (affective). Appendix 2 includes other ideas and a generic set of instructions for using this Framegame.

Envelopes

Basically, this activity involves two or more teams offering a solution to the same problem, and then having another team evaluate the solutions on their various merits. I have used this Framegame for both Business English classes and faculty development meetings. For the former, I wrote down the following prompts on the outside of size 3 envelopes (120mm x 235mm): (1) write five rules for students in this class, (2) write five rules for the teacher, (3) write five pieces of advice for succeeding in Business English class, and (4) write five pieces of advice for studying English on your own. Depending on the size of the class, I prepared three or four envelopes with the same prompt. After forming pairs or groups of three, I passed out the envelopes with three or four index cards inside (to match the number of envelopes circulating with that same prompt). The groups would then read the prompt on their envelope and write their response on one of the index cards. After the set time limit (usually about 5 minutes), groups would place their response back in the envelope and then the envelopes would be passed to the group to their immediate left. Each group would then have an envelope with a new prompt (this takes a bit of coordination on the part of the instructor/facilitator). Each group would then consider and write a response to the new problem (without looking at the previous group's response). After two, three or four groups have a chance to write their response, the next

group to get the envelope takes out all of the index cards and evaluates the responses. I tell the students to distribute a total of one hundred points among the cards based on the relative merits of each response (e.g. 40, 40 & 20 for three responses). This has been an extremely successful first-day exercise to get students thinking about where we are going with Business English. As with all of the Framegames, we conclude by debriefing participants and reflecting on what was learned, what was missing, etc.

Prompts for the faculty development (FD) meeting included: (1) write five objectives for our freshman orientation course, (2) write five fundamental skills that incoming freshmen should have to succeed in their studies in our department, and (3) write five ideas for activities aimed at building a sense of classroom community for freshman orientation classes. Using Envelopes with these prompts successfully got faculty members involved in brainstorming activities and resulted in rather extensive lists of ideas for each prompt. Generic instructions and other ideas can be found in Appendix 3.

Generic Board Game (GBG)

Although quite flexible in terms of context and target objectives, the GBG shell can be used most effectively to review content and check understanding of factual information. One of the examples in Thiagarajan (2004) is a game called ASIA, where participants in groups compete to match factual information with one of six countries in Asia. The structure and aims of this activity seemed well-matched for a course I was teaching called Studies in Multicultural Economies. At the time we were learning about Laos and its five neighboring countries: Cambodia, China, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. My approach was to get students to propose facts for each country via e-mail, and then the best eighty facts were used for the game. This Framegame requires a bit more preparation than the others, as well as a game board, cards with individual facts, game pieces, a feedback sheet and die. For ESL/EFL classes, I would choose a theme or issue that involved from five to eight categories. Although most factual information should be true for only one of the categories, there will likely be items that fit into more than one category or possibly all categories. See Appendix 4 for more ideas and a set of generic instructions for conducting the game.

Group Grope

This is the Framegame that I have the most experience with. It is also one of the easiest to prepare for and conduct. This is basically a shell to promote brainstorming on a specific topic or issue. I have used this to solicit student-generated objectives for Business English class as well as suggestions for reducing our global footprint in teacher-training courses. Generic instructions can be found in Appendix 5, but I will offer a brief overview of how I conduct these sessions using the Business English example listed above.

First, when participants enter the room I pass out three index cards and ask them to write an objective they would like to set for the term. If participants seem to be struggling with this I explain that this is something they want to be able to do when they finish our course that they can't do now. Then, I collect all the cards, shuffle them and redistribute three cards to each

member, mixing in a few of my own examples. I then have participants mingle and trade cards among themselves, trying to get cards that reflect their preferences. They are also allowed to swap cards with cards that I have prepared and placed on display somewhere in the room. The next step is to organize their cards in order of their preference. Participants are then instructed to form groups of three or four, and then need to select the three cards that best reflect the group's preferred objectives for our class, again putting them in order of preference. At this stage, I pass out poster paper and markers, and announce that each group needs to prepare a visual representation of their objectives. No text is allowed on the posters. Groups then discuss (and often struggle with) how to best complete this task. Completed posters are then displayed around the room and participants view the posters prepared by other groups and try to decipher what the objectives are. Finally, each group presents their poster with the objectives they selected. Again, it is important to debrief participants after they complete the task. This debriefing gives participants a chance to reflect on the experience, share what the learned as well as struggled with, and suggest how to improve the activity.

Take Five

Although this is probably the easiest Framegame to prepare for, I still have but limited experience using it. It is basically a brainstorming activity that can be used to generate ideas, solutions, etc. The one setting where I tried this was a recent sample lesson I taught for a group of first and second-year high school students. I was introducing the topic of global footprint (the area of land required to produce what we consume as well as accommodate our waste) and wanted to conclude the lesson by inviting students to come up with their own suggestions for how to reduce the size of our own global footprint. My approach was as follows: (1) I first asked students to independently write down as many ideas as they could in two minutes. (2) I then asked students to put their notes away and form groups of three. (3) Next, I instructed the teams to spend five minutes compiling a group list of suggestions, sharing their original lists but also generating more ideas. (4) Teams were then instructed to choose the best five items and prioritize them. (5) I then had teams call out their best suggestions as I recorded them (with slight rewording) on a piece of paper viewed via overhead camera. (6) After we had a common list of ten suggestions, I asked teams to discuss among themselves and choose the best suggestion from the common list. (7) At this time, I explained the scoring system (each teams score will equal the number of teams selecting the same suggestion, e.g. if 3 teams choose the same item, each of those team gets 3 points). (8) Teams wrote down their choice on a piece of scrape paper and passed them to me. (9) I announced each teams choice and there were two teams with the same answer (We should walk or ride our bicycle whenever possible). The other four teams all had different answers. Thus, I crossed out this suggestion on the common list and awarded two points to both of these teams. The other four teams got one point each. (10) We continued with successive rounds until we had crossed out the top five suggestions. (11) I tallied up the scores and we congratulated the top teams. (12) I explained that we would also award points for items on their original lists if they were in among the top five we selected (5 points if they had the top selection, 4 points for the second-ranked selection, etc.). (13) I asked students to reflect on the list of suggestions and the activity. My first question was which of these suggestions are easiest to follow.

As with the other Framegames, Take Five has both training and testing applications. Again, readers are directed to Appendix 6 for generic directions and other ideas.

Matrix Games

Thiagarajan (2004) reminds us that Matrix Games, "are well-suited to exploring interrelationships among ideas." Again, as with Take Five, this is another Framegame that I am still getting acquainted with. The one context where I have used Matrix Games is a teacher-training workshop in the Philippines on aligning learning objectives, instructional strategies and assessment. I was introducing the work of Anderson, et al (2001), and wanted participants to explore the intricacies of matching these three dimensions of the teaching craft. The matrix we used was the taxonomy table proposed by Anderson, et al (Table 1). I roughly followed the generic instructions outlined in Appendix 7, with successive rounds for learning objectives, instructional strategies/activities and assessment.

Table 1. The Taxonomy Table (Anderson, et al, 2001)

The Knowledge Dimension	The Cognitive Process Dimension					
	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Factual Knowledge						
Conceptual Knowledge						
Procedural Knowledge						
Metacognitive Knowledge						

I will leave it to the reader's imagination to think of possible ESL/EFL contexts where Matrix Games might come in handy. Again, I believe this and other Framegames are an excellent vehicle for getting learners to "learn by doing." Also, we should again recognize the various applications for both training and testing.

Conclusion

The point that hooked me on Framegames was the flexibility. All of these shells can be modified to accommodate different numbers of participants, learning objectives, time allotments, areas of the curriculum (as main component, as warm up, filler, or wrap up), etc. The relative ease of plugging in content also makes Framegames an attractive addition to the busy teacher's toolbox.

The mission that I set for myself in writing this paper was to outline the various Framegames in a way that would intrigue readers to experiment for themselves or at least compel them to research the topic further. I would never try to tell participants how to do something when I

could show them. We didn't have that luxury here in these pages. My parting advice is to get acquainted with the various Framegames but jumping right in. It might not come off perfect the first time, but you should go away with ideas for improvement. Each successive attempt will bring more insight as well as confidence. Eventually you should be able to instinctively match new learning challenges with an appropriate Framegame and plug in your content before you can say Sivasailam Thiagarajan.

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Biographical Statement

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Appendix 1. Why use framegames? (Thiagi, 2004)

New content – Off-the-shelf instructional games rarely provide the exact content you need. You can plug your own content into the framegames.

Certainty – Designing a new game is an unpredictable adventure. Framegames are a field-tested procedure that ensure successful outcomes.

Involvement – Players can load their own content into a framegame. This helps them gain an intimate understanding of the content.

Learning task – Most training objectives can be classified into types such as concepts and procedures. Framegames exist for each type of learning.

Appendix 2. Framegames by Thiagi – CLASSIFY (Thiagi, 2004)

CLASSIFY games can be used with different types of instructional objectives such as:
- to make fine distinctions among items
- to check an item against required criteria
- to review different steps in a process
- to select the most appropriate solution

Generic Instructions

1. Assemble game materials (e.g. job aids, list of items, Facilitator's Master List, Team Record Sheet)
2. Explain the classification scheme (e.g. what categories will be used).
3. Distribute the items to be classified.
4. Demonstrate the task.
5. Form teams.
6. Explain the rules.
7. Explain the scoring system.
8. Begin the first round.
9. Monitor the teams.
10. Announce the official response.
11. Award points.
12. Continue the game.
13. Coordinate an intermission.
14. Conclude the game.
15. Debrief the players.

Item Classification. This involves placing similar items into different concept categories.

Criteria Check. This involves identifying standards or criteria that are not met by particular items.

Process Review. This involves choosing the step of a process to which various items belong.

Solution Selection. This involves choosing the best solution for various problem situations.

Appendix 3. Framegames by Thiagi – ENVELOPES (Thiagi, 2004)

Two key elements of ENVELOPES are:

- two or more teams solve the same problem
- another team compares and evaluates the different solutions

Generic Instructions

1. Prepare the envelopes.
2. Prepare the rating scale.
3. Organize the participants into groups.
4. Seat the teams.
5. Brief the participants.
5. Distribute the stimulus envelopes and response cards.
6. Conduct the first round.
7. End the first round.
8. Conduct the second round.
9. Repeat the procedure.
10. Ask the teams to evaluate the response cards.
11. Ask the teams to announce the results.
12. Identify the winning team.
13. Debrief the participants.
14. Assign follow-up activities.

Possible objectives for ENVELOPES include:

- ABSTRACTS. Produce standardized summaries of readings.
- USES. Identify creative uses for common objects.
- MEETING MANAGEMENT. Effectively handle disruptive participants.
- TEAM PERFORMANCE. Make creative team presentations.
- COMPLAINTS. Select the most cost-effective response to a customer complaint.
- ANALOGIES. Create graphical analogies to explain complex concepts.
- SALES PITCH. Position different products to appeal to different market segments.
- ASSUMPTIONS. Examine basic assumptions behind different work processes.
- TRAVEL ENGLISH. Write short paragraphs for travel brochures.

Appendix 4. Framegames by Thiagi – GENERIC BOARD GAME (GBG) (Thiagi, 2004)

GBGs can be used to create instructional games that deal with processes (e.g. step-by-step procedures) or categories (e.g. concept learning, fact review, solution selection).

Generic Instructions (Categories version)
Materials – Game board, Game cards, Game pieces, Feedback sheet, Die

1. Set up the game board.
2. Select the first dealer.
3. Deal the cards.
4. Determine the category for the round (dealer roles die).
5. Select cards.
6. Begin card display.
7. Move the piece.
8. Encourage objections.
9. Persuade the player.
10. Challenge the card.
11. Continue after the challenge.
12. Continue the first round.
13. Continue the game.
14. Conclude the game.
15. Debrief the players.

GBGs can be played by individuals or in teams. You can set a time limit and the player (or team) that has moved furthest along the game board wins.

Appendix 5. Framegames by Thiagi – GROUP GROPE (Thiagi, 2004)

The GROUP GROPE Framegame is used to elicit responses to some prompt. After brainstorming for as many responses as possible, individuals choose the best responses. Teams are then formed and work together to prepare some graphical representation of their top three responses.

Generic Instructions.

1. Give each participant four blank cards and ask them to write responses to the prompt. After 5 minutes, collect the cards and mix them with your prepared cards.
2. Randomly distribute three cards to each participant. Ask everyone to study the items on the cards and to arrange them in order of personal preference. While participants do this, spread the leftover cards on a large table.
3. Ask participants to exchange the cards they don't like with those on the table. Allow a couple of minutes for this activity.
4. Ask participants to exchange their cards with each other. Every participant should exchange at least one card and may exchange any number. Stop this activity after 3 minutes.
5. Ask participants to form teams. There is no limit to the number of participants who may join the same team, but no team may keep more than three cards.
6. After an appropriate pause for the teams to discuss and discard, instruct each team to prepare a graphic poster (without any text) to reflect its three final cards.
7. After a suitable pause, ask each team to read its three final cards and present its poster. Comment on each presentation. If appropriate, identify the best presentation and give an award to the team that created it.

Appendix 6. Framegames by Thiagi – TAKE FIVE (Thiagi, 2004)

TAKE FIVE games can be used for a variety of purposes, and is well-suited to teamwork, testing and training. Some specific uses in teamwork situations include:

- Problem solving
- Forecasting
- Policy formulation
- Strategic planning
- Change management

Specific uses of TAKE FIVE games in testing situations include:

- Constructing tests and other data-collection instruments
- Collecting information from focus groups
- Conducting a needs analysis
- Operationalizing abstract concepts and soft skills
- Gathering inputs from stakeholders

Two ways in which TAKE FIVE can be used to help players achieve training goals are:

- To structure an activity through which players learn from one another
- To review and reinforce principles and procedures learned through other methods and media

Generic Instruction

1. Brief the players
2. Begin with individual brainstorming.
3. Form teams.
4. Assign teamwork.
5. Ask the teams to narrow down their lists.
6. Prepare a common list.
7. Ask the teams to select the best idea.
8. Explain the scoring system.
9. Conduct the first round.
10. Award points.
11. Rank the top idea.
12. Continue the game.
13. Break ties.
14. Conclude the game.
15. Award scores for the original lists.
16. Debrief the players.

TAKE FIVE games can be shortened or lengthened to match the allotted time.

Appendix 7. Framegames by Thiagi – MATRIX GAMES (Thiagi, 2004)

MATRIX GAMES are well-suited to exploring interrelationships among ideas.

Generic Instructions

1. Get ready. Prepare a transparency or game board showing the matrix with labels for its columns and rows, as well as examples of different types of statements.
2. Organize the players. You will need at least 3 players. This team can also be played in teams. Two individuals (or teams) compete against each other, and the third one acts as a judge. Each team selects a symbol.
3. Explain the object of the game. The first team to occupy all the squares on any row, column, or main diagonal wins the game. If neither team can achieve this, the team with the most squares wins.
4. Specify the statements.
5. Begin the game. Decide which team goes first. Ask this team to select any square and to write down an appropriate statement on a piece of paper. The opposing team also writes down its statement for the same square.
6. Ask for the judging team's decision. If there is no challenge, the judging team decides whether the statement is acceptable or not. If the statement is acceptable, place the team's symbol in the selected square. Otherwise, leave blank.
7. Continue the game. Alternate between teams, asking them to select squares and to write down appropriate statements.
8. Conclude the game. The game ends when one team occupies all the squares in a row, column, or main diagonal.

Why? Training, Testing, Teamwork
When? Before training, during training, after training
What? Concepts, People, Solutions, Events
How? Comparison, Cross impact, Cause-effect relationships, Selection, Perceptions.