Teachers Helping Teachers

The Proceedings of
2009 Conferences, Seminars and Workshops

San Francisco College
San Jose del Monte, Philippines
February 21 – 22

San Lorenzo Lalud & San Lorenzo Banilad
Mindoro Island, Philippines
February 24 – 25

Lao-American College
Vientiane, Laos
March 20 - 29

Hue University, College of Foreign Languages
Hue, Vietnam
June 12 – 14

Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association
Dhaka, Bangladesh
July 23 – 25

Bishkek Humanities University
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
September 8 - 10

Edited by
Brent A. Jones

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

Introduction

Welcome to The Proceedings of 2009 Conferences, Seminars and Workshops of Teachers Helping Teachers (THT). This year got off to a great start with our second visit to the Philippines in February and continued gaining momentum with repeat visits to Laos (March), Vietnam (June) and Bangladesh (July). We then rounded out the year's activities with an inaugural visit to the Kyrgyz Republic in September. Additionally, several of our volunteers were able to gather in Shizuoka in November at the 35th Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning, sponsored by our parent organization, the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT). There are several indications that our special interest group will continue to thrive into the new decade.

The collection of papers you are holding is a small slice of the work our volunteers have been sharing at THT teacher-training conferences, seminars and workshops. We have aimed at a healthy balance of theory and practice, and hope that readers will go away with ideas and inspiration for the classroom, as well as seeds for thought for future professional development.

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.

Finally, on behalf of this year's authors and other THT volunteers, we wish to thank the various host institutions and conference/seminar participants. The warm welcome and enthusiasm we have received this year has been overwhelming.

Warmest Regards,
Brent A. Jones
Editor, THT 2009 Proceedings

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Preface – Teachers Helping Teachers Proceedings

Patrick Dougherty, THT Immediate Past President

The year 2009 marks Teachers Helping Teachers fourth year as an organization. In our 48 months of existence, we have conducted fourteen conferences attended by over 2000 teachers and students. We are now active in five countries throughout Asia. We have had more than fifty volunteers join us in our endeavors, and these volunteers have come from across the globe: Russia, New Zealand, Japan, Canada, Australia, Germany, Argentina, Great Britain, Ireland, and the United States.

From the banks of the Perfume River to the hills of Mindoro Oriental; from the Dhaka to Kyrgyzstan, we are a known force for educational and social change. Not bad for a group that started as a small association of friends and acquaintances that Bill Balsamo gathered together to give a "one-off" conference in Bangladesh. We have grown. However, the grass-roots nature and adventurous spirit that marked that first THT delegation has been maintained. We are still an "association of friends." We are still grass-roots. We are still adventurers at heart. It has been a marvelous ride, and we have thousands of highways and pathways yet to travel.

This, the fourth edition of the Teachers Helping Teachers Proceedings has gathered together papers from the wealth of workshops and programs that THT volunteers conducted in 2009. Consider it a distillation of wisdom garnered from years in the laboratory and theater of the classroom. These years are many. I once did a rough tally of the years of teaching experience represented by our family of THT volunteers. I stopped counting after seven-hundred years.

Read, enjoy, remember . . .

All the best,

Pat Dougherty

THT Coordinator, 2008 – 2009

Message from Incoming Coordinator

Dear Reader,

Teachers Helping Teachers is proud to be able to publish the proceedings for our highly successful seminars in 2009 with articles from select authors who presented at those specific conferences. A list of the various presentations at these conferences is listed in the schedules at the beginning of the journal so you will be able to get an idea of the wide range of areas revolving around discussions of how to teach languages in second and foreign language classrooms. We look forward to continuing these programs for 2010 and welcome participation by individual presenters.

Respectfully yours,

Peter John Wanner, Ph.D.
Incoming THT Coordinator 2010

Philippines Conference at San Francisco College (February 21 – 22, 2009)

Day One - Saturday, February 21		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
08:00 – 09:15	George Mano	Opening Ceremony – Introduction to THT and Volunteers
09:30 – 11:00	Michael Furmanovsky	Making and Customizing Board Games for the Conversation Class
	Brent Jones	A Bag Full of Tricks
	Steve Wolfe	Haiku in American Literature: Beading Down the Words
	George Mano	Teaching History to Students
11:15 – 12:45	Marian Wang	The Writing Process and Peer Editing
	George Mano	Poster Projects and Presentations
	Brent Jones	Aligning our Learning Objectives, Instructional Strategies and Assessment
	Steven Snyder	Student Created Media
13:45 – 15:15	Michael Furmanovsky	Using Class Questionnaires in the Writing Classroom
	Steve Snyder	How to Use Class Testing as a Teaching Tool
	George Mano	Teaching History to Students in a Second Language
	Steve Wolfe	Haiku in American Literature: Beating Down the Words
15:15 – 18:00	Brent Jones	Plenary – Looking for Lev in all the Wrong Places

Day Two - Sunday, February 22		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
08:30 – 10:00	George Mano	Using Student Logs for Classroom Management
	Steven Snyder	Simple CALL: Using Presentation Software for Storytelling and Computer-Based Activities, with or without the Internet
	Shirley Ando	Teaching Strategies for the ESL/EFL Classroom
	Michael Furmanovsky	Using Short Animated Videos to Generate Descriptive Vocabulary
10:15 – 11:45	Michael Furmanovsky	Using Songs with Content for Reading Comprehension
	Marian Wang	Writing to Captivate the Reader

	George Mano	Round Table on English Education in Japan and the Philippines: Successes, Failures and Points of Collaboration, and Recommendations for the Future
	Libby Brown-Osuga	Storybooks for Young English Learners
12:45 – 14:15	Stephen Snyder	Simple CALL: Using Presentation Software for Storytelling and Computer-Based Activities, with or without the Internet
	Marian Wang	Writing to Captivate the Reader
	Brent Jones	Strategies for Teaching Speech Communication
	Libby Brown-Osuga	Weaving Games and Songs into Language Learning
14:30 – 16:15	Steve Wolfe	The English Haiku Workshop
16:30 - 18:00	Closing Ceremony and Awarding of Certificates of Completion	

Philippines Seminar/Workshops at San Lorenzo Lalud (February 24, 2009)

Day One - Tuesday, February 22		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
13:00 – 14:30	Libby Brown-Osuga	Weaving Games and Songs into Language Learning
	Brent Jones	A Bag Full of Tricks
	Michael Stout	Who is Simon and Why Should We Do What He Says?
	Steve Wolfe	The English Haiku Workshop: Fostering Cross-Culture Creativity
	Shirley Ando	Teaching Strategies for the ESL/EFL Classroom
14:45 – 16:45	Libby Brown-Osuga	Storybooks for Young Learners
	Brent Jones	Strategies for Teaching Speech Communication
	Michael Stout	Kamishibai: A Collaborative Project for Young Learners of English
	Steve Wolfe	The English Haiku Workshop: When Least is Most
	Shirley Ando	More Strategies for the ESL/EFL Classroom

- February 25 (Wed) – February 26 were spent working with teachers and students at San Lorenzo Banilad.

Laos Seminar at Lao-American College (March 24 – 27, 2009)

Day One - Tuesday, March 24		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
08:30 – 10:00	Roger Palmer	Be a Better Listener!
	Colin Graham	Speak, Talk, Say, Tell – What's the difference?
10:00 – 11:30	Lori Parish	Intensive Reading for University Preparation
	Andy Hockersmith	Discussion and Debate Activities with Almost No Materials
17:00 – 18:30	Roger Palmer	Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): Does it Work in the Lao Context?
	Marian Wang	The Writing Process
18:30 – 20:00	John Spiri	Country Watch and Other Communicative Activities
	Lori Parish	Get the Talking: Creative Communicative Materials

Day Two - Wednesday, March 25		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
08:30 – 10:00	Roger Palmer	Experimenting with Communication Strategies
	Colin Graham	Calligraphy and the History of the Roman Alphabet
10:00 – 11:30	Colin Graham	Getting Flash with Flashcards
	Laura Copeland	Coloring Outside the Lines: Language Acquisition Through the Arts
17:00 – 18:30	Tony Torbert	Culture Mapping in the Classroom
	Andy Hockersmith	Jigsaw Activities
18:30 – 20:00	Tony Torbert	Comparative Adjectives and Stereotyping
	Andy Hockersmith	Creative and Effective Writing Activities

Laos Seminar at Lao-American College (continued)

Day One - Thursday, March 26		
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	Marian Wang	Peer Editing Workshop
10:00 – 11:30	Laura Copeland	Reading in the Leaves: Literature Circles for Young Adults
	Marian Wang	Writing to Captivate the Reader
17:00 – 18:30	John Spiri	Content-Based Learning Through Dictogloss 1
	Chris Ruddenklau	Teaching Large Numbers
18:30 – 20:00	John Spiri	Content-Based Learning Through Dictogloss 1
	Chris Ruddenklau	Alternative Ways to Use Textbooks

Day Four - Friday, March 27		
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08:30 – 10:00	Lori Parish	Building Oral Fluency
	Cecilia Silva	Creative Activities for Key Areas in Language Teaching
10:00 – 11:30	Cecilia Silva	“Xieng Mieng” for Learning English
	Laura Copeland	Films & Frames: Using Movies in Language Learning
12:00 – 15:00	Lunch with LAC teachers	
	Basi Ceremony	
15:00	Culture Performance by CSV Students	

Vietnam Seminar at Hue University, College of Foreign Languages (June 12 – 14, 2009)

Day One - Friday, June 12		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
10:00 – 11:00	Peter Wanner	Study Tips for Students and Teachers
	Ronald Klein	Tennis Way of Conversion
	Joseph Tomei	Using Quicktime to Create Video Tracks for Classroom Use
14:00 - 15:00	Steve Wolfe	Using Cultural Parables for Critical Thinking
	Ronald Klein	Speech Clinic: Pronunciation Practice
	Peter Wanner	Development of Multiple-Choice Tests
15:10 – 16:10	Peter Wanner	Language Supplement Learning Through Leadership
	Steve Wolfe	Using Zen Stories for Creativity and Critical Thinking
	Joseph Tomei	Using Writing Topics to Structure a Tense-Based Syllabus for Composition

Day Two - Saturday, June 13		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
09:00 – 10:00	Peter Wanner	Linguistic Phonetics in the Classroom
	Ronald Klein	Speech Clinic: Pronunciation Practice
	Steve Wolfe	Using Cultural Parables for Critical Thinking
10:15 – 11:15	Ronald Klein	Fun with Phonics
	Steve Wolfe	Using Zen Stories for Creativity and Critical Thinking
	Peter Wanner	Computerized Student Portfolio Organization
14:00 – 15:00	Peter Wanner	Elicitation Techniques for Testing Spoken Language
	Ronald Klein	Teaching Vietnamese American Fiction; Combining Language, Literacy and Culture
	Joseph Tomei	Using Quicktime to create video tracks for classroom use
15:20 – 16:20	Joseph Tomei	Using Writing Topics to Structure a Tense-Based Syllabus for Composition
	Steve Wolfe	Combining Haiku and Photography
	Peter Wanner	iKnow Computer-Based Independent Vocabulary Study Workshop
16:30	Certificate awarding and Closing Ceremony	

Bangladesh Seminar in Dhaka/Sylhet (July 23 – 25, 2009)

Day One - Thursday, July 23		
09:00	Opening Ceremony	
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
1015 – 11:00	Patrick Dougherty	Teaching Creative Writing in Bangladesh: What I Learned
11:01 – 11:45	Patrick McCoy	Academic Literacy: Extensive Reading and Presentations
11:46 – 12:45	Patrick Dougherty	Successful Beginnings: Making a "First Class of the Term" Successful
	Cecilia Silva	Learning to Teach: Discussion about Theory and Practice in Key Areas
	Patrick McCoy	Using Authentic Materials: Keeping it Real
14:00 – 15:00	Cecilia Silva	Learning to Teach: Working in English with Bangladeshi Folk-Tales and Short Stories
	Carla Wilson	Teaching Through Games
15:00 – 15:45	Anne McLellan Howard	Japanese Culture in English Language Teaching
15:46 – 16:45	Stephen Wolfe	Using Cultural Parables for Critical Thinking
	Cherie Brown	Mapping the Maze: A Practical Pathway to Improved Vocabulary Skills
16:45 – 17:45	Stephen Wolfe	Creating Creativity: Photo-Stories and Poems
	Jill Bruellman	Shall we Small Talk?

Day Two - Friday, July 24		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
08:30 – 09:15	Jill Bruellman	Successful Discussions in the EFL Classroom
09:16 – 10:15	Michael Stout	An Introduction to Project-Based Language Learning
	Carla Wilson	Teaching Phonics to Elementary School Children
10:30 – 11:30	Stephen Wolfe	Haiku Workshop: A Walk on the Creative Side
	Anne Howard	Diagnosing and Treating Reading Problems
11:30 – 12:15	Jill Bruellman	Using Templates for Lower Level Presentations

Day Three - Saturday, July 25		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
08:30 – 09:15	Patrick McCoy	Project-Based Learning
09:16 – 10:15	Cherie Brown	Fluency: A Preparatory, Multi-Skills Approach
	Anne McLellan Howard	Relatively Speaking: Practicing Hedging in the Language Classroom
10:15 – 11:15	Cecilia Silva	Narrative: Teachers' Reflection
	Michael Stout	Collaborative Story-Telling Projects for English Language Learners Through Kamishibai
11:30 – 12:30	Patrick Dougherty	CATs and COLTs: Animals in the Classroom or Successful Teaching Techniques
	Cherie Brown	Stage Fright? – Using Dramatic Process to Enhance the Accuracy of Written Language and Develop Speaking Fluency
12:30 – 13:30	Michael Stout	English for Presentation Purposes
14:15 – 15:00	Patrick Dougherty	Where Do I Come From? Using Student Heritage in the EFL Classroom
	Anne McLellan Howard	Pragmatics for Language Teaching
15:01 – 15:45	Carla Wilson	Communicative Activities for Large Classes
	Patrick Dougherty	Education in Bangladesh: The Path Followed and the Highways Ahead

Kyrgyz Seminar at Bishkek Humanities University (September 8 - 10, 2009)

Day One - Tuesday, September 8		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
09:00 – 09:15	Brent Jones	Opening Remarks and Introduction to THT
9:15 – 10:15	Roger Palmer	Plenary – Introduction to Teaching Methodology
10:30 – 12:00	Roger Palmer	Practical Ways to Develop Listening Proficiency
	Brent Jones	Who is Thiagi and What are Framegames

Day Two - Wednesday, September 9		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
09:00 – 10:00	Brent Jones	Plenary – Learning Theory and Language Acquisition
10:10 – 11:40	Roger Palmer	Considerations in Lesson Planning
	Brent Jones	Strategies for Teaching Speech Communication
11:45 – 12:00	Roger Palmer	Teachers Helping Teachers – An Overview

Day Three - Wednesday, September 10		
Time	**Presenter**	**Title/Topic**
9:15 – 10:15	Roger Palmer	Plenary – Introduction to Teaching Methodology
10:30 – 12:00	Roger Palmer	Blended Learning
	Brent Jones	A Bag Full of Tricks
11:15 – 12:00	Panel Discussion with Representatives of Bishkek Humanities University and Teachers Helping Teachers	
13:00	Closing Ceremony and Awarding of Certificates of Completion	

Working with Literature in the English Classroom:
Laotian folk-tales and Bangladeshi short stories

Cecilia Silva, Tohoku University - Japan

Abstract

The present paper is based on workshops done in Laos and Bangladesh in 2009. The basic idea of these workshops was to explore the use of literature as support for language teaching and learning. This article is divided into two parts: first, a theoretical view exploring issues and concerns related to the use of literature in the language class; second, a description of the activities performed in the workshops.

Introduction

Literature, particularly in a foreign language, is often seen as something remote and far removed from "ordinary" language. One of the aims of the workshop activities is to show that literature is not necessarily a language apart.

One general point to be raised is the use of student-generated literature as motivating material. English students normally experience a real sense of achievement when tackling literary materials in the classroom. In the case of learners' literature in English, it can provide an interesting and thought-provoking point of comparison. Regarding cultural background, literature can provide students with access to the culture of the language they are studying and, in the case of students' literature in English, they can gain a fresh view of their own culture.

Literature in the language classroom

Why? What? How?

Collie and Slater (2003) have successfully answered these commonly asked questions.

Why? There is such an incredible variety of materials designed for learning English. Why use literary texts then? The simplest reason is that literature offers authentic material and not material intended for teaching a language. Therefore, students have to cope with language intended for native speakers without simplification and adaptation for foreign learners. Thus, learners gain familiarity with different linguistic uses and forms. However, the language of literary works is not typical of daily life and we would not like our students to think that "And I will make thee beds of roses" is a kind of utterance lovers commonly use. The positive side is that literary works provide such a rich context that shows lexical and syntactical items in use

and thus makes them more memorable. The above-mentioned features lead us to the next aspect to be considered: what literary works we can use in the classroom.

What? What sort of literary works are suitable for the language classroom? The criteria of suitability depend on several aspects: the group of learners, level, curriculum, and interests. We suggest two considerations when choosing a literary text: language difficulty according to the level of the students, and meaningfulness which is able to stimulate personal involvement of learners.

How? Once a text has been chosen, how best can teachers and learners work with it? We herein outline some of the aims that guided our search:

(a) Syntactical items in study

(b) Cultural background

(c) Feasibility of a wide variety of student-centered activities

(d) Feasibility of activities that allow research and vocabulary enhancement

(e) Length of texts that allows reading of all the text in class

From the huge field of literature we have chosen short stories and folk-tales for the activities in the workshops.

Stories and folk-tales

Stories and folk-tales serve teachers and learners in the classroom as a highly natural means of teaching in two main ways: they provide a rich cultural content and a means of teaching language. Wajnryb (2005) proposes the analysis of three conditions of language learning with stories:

(a) Exposure: this refers to the potential of stories as "comprehensible input," i.e., language that is within the range of access of the learner. In this sense, literature in the language classroom encourages language acquisition because reading literary texts becomes an important way of increasing the language input in the classroom. Besides this, even if the focus of an activity with literary texts is a grammatical point, the activity will somehow encourage students to share their feelings and opinions.

(b) Motivation: the dynamic unfolding of stories involves and engages the learners, and expands their language awareness. Using literature can help students to become more sensitive to special uses of the words and learn to go beyond them. For example, in the story "Roots" by Syeda Rhaman, the word "border" is not just the geographical boundary but it also refers to parting of lovers and shattered dreams. Therefore, it is not

only the story itself –content and meaning- but also the special relation between words and narrative which makes stories particularly useful for language teaching.

(c) Use refers to exchange of meanings: use of the language to do things with the story and use of the story to learn language. Thus, literature in the language classroom helps to develop students' interpretative abilities because texts are often rich in multiple levels of meaning. Teachers can take advantage of this multiplicity of meanings with tasks that accompany, precede or follow the story, thus giving learners further opportunities to use the language.

Activities

This part of the work offers a description of the activities carried out in the three workshops. The proposed activities focus on the following aspects:

(a) Skills within the text: reading and grammar. These activities are centered on what is actually said in the text.

(b) Skills beyond the text: writing and speaking. These activities encourage students to use their imagination and go beyond the limits of the text.

The following activities were during the following workshops: ***Xieng Mieng for Learning English*** at the Lao American College (Vientiane). ***Stories by Women Writers from Bangladesh*** at the American International University (Dhaka) and UKBET (Sylhet).

1. Warming-up

Take between 5 and 7 minutes to elicit some basic vocabulary: novel, short-story, poem, essay, etc. and use it in questions and answers.

What's the name of your favorite novel?

My favorite novel is ……. by ……..

2. Introduction to Literature

These two activities allow students a first contact with the literary field. Many learners might be unwilling to read literary works because they are rooted in traditions, cultural, social or religious aspects that could be new for young learners. That is why is seems well worth spending some time on orientation about the characteristics of the literature of their country, its main themes or characters.

(a) Complete the text. Participants practiced gap-filling with a text of about 250-300 words

related to the characteristics of literature in Laos and Bangladesh.

(b) Roses of ideas and mappings. This activity was done in Bangladesh after the gap-filling activity and participants produced mappings. In Laos it was accomplished after the scrambled stories activity; one group of participants referred to a noun related to the character Xieng Mieng: trick (Fig. 1).

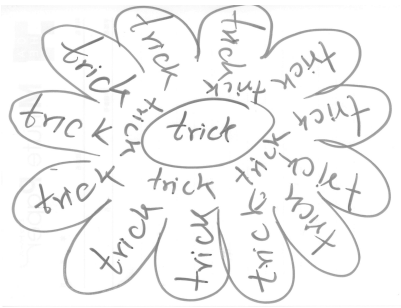

Fig.1. Rose of ideas made by a group of students in Vientiane

3. Runaway lines

Choose two or three short stories, take several sentences from each of them and mix the sentences. Provide the learners with the titles of the stories and ask them to put each sentence under the corresponding title. In this activity students learn to look for clues, to mark features in language, and to make relations in meaning.

4. Split sentences

This activity can be graded to suit the students' language level. Choose one story, take several sentences from it, divide the sentences into A and B, and give A to one group of learners and B to another. Ask learners to re-construct the sentences, using words from A and B (Fig.2). The sentences can be selected in order to illustrate particular aspects of language, such as the use of a tense, or nouns, subject-predicate structure, etc. The activity combines constraint with freedom; the material itself is controlled but several combinations might be possible. Hopefully, isolated sentences can arouse curiosity and the same story can be used for further activities.

A	B
1. Lal Miah had stayed	a. be free again
2. He would never	b. streamed down his cheeks
3. His eyes	c. late in the afternoon, after the Asr prayer
4. Tears of rage	d. awake all night
5. Hashu Banu came	e. had desperately looked for Hashu

Fig.2. Part of the worksheet used by participants in the workshops in Bangladesh

6. Scrambled stories

This is a very appropriate activity for allowing learners to read, read and read! Choose a story and cut it into stripes which learners will put in order until they get the complete story. At the Lao American College, participants worked in groups, each one using a different folk-tale from the book *Xieng Mieng: The Cleverest Man in the Kingdom*. In order to give learners almost complete independence it is advisable to choose shorter stories so that they can be printed in large sheets and hung on the walls for learners to check and read again!

7. Biographies

This is an activity appropriate for practicing past tense or vocabulary related to literature while working with all the class. Choose a well-known writer and delete either the verbs or the vocabulary related to his/her literary works; make as many gaps as the number of learners (or double that number), number them and also write the numbers on little pieces of paper. Allow participants a limited time for work and then ask them to pick pieces of paper and fill the corresponding gap.

8. Characters

From a novel, short story or autobiography, select a striking character sketch. Prepare for each character a short list of prompts, adjectives which might or might not apply to the character described. In groups, students decide which of the prompt adjectives are the most or least appropriate for the character. They should find words or lines in the text to support their decision. In Bangladesh we worked with characters from the story *Motijan's Daughters*, by Selina Hossain.

> *Motijan looked at her husband with her eyes wide. His appearance was always bewildered, his eyes bloodshot and he was totally indifferent about family life. He had absolutely no interest in household affairs. He frequented a den where he smoked ganja with his friends. He was a regular ruffian and thought nothing of spending money on a woman named Rosoi who had a place in the market. Neither his mother nor his wife was of any concern to him. Realizing this truth, Motijan grew hard.*

9. Incomplete passage or story-lines without end

Provide learners with a passage and ask them to imagine what happens, what is going to happen, what the characters say or what they are going to say, and produce context, dialogue and a title for the story. In Bangladesh, we worked with story-lines without endings and participants provided a rich historical context. However, it is important to remind students that the purpose of the activity is not to guess the right explanation, but to speculate on what the words might mean, that is, the students can create their own context.

Roots, by Syeda Farida Rahman

> *We were both students at Dhaka Medical College.*
> *Then one day we were both doctors.*
> *I was left in this side of the border – you crossed to the other side.*
> *Nearly twelve years have passed since then. You will come back . . .*

10. Feelings

This is a challenging and enjoyable activity, and the emphasis should be put on imagination. Students can refer to feelings they think the characters experience or feelings awakened in themselves. In Laos, participants expressed feelings elicited by lines taken from a story by Bounyavong (Fig.3).

Story: *What a beauty!* By Outhine Bounyavong	Feelings
She was the only girl who was still sitting alone because no man had offered her a garland.	
"Poor Phaengkham. She has to go on slapping at mosquitoes as usual. These men are so completely hardhearted. Couldn´t they at least offer her one dance . . . just enough to stretch her limbs?"	
"Wow, Phaengkham is dancing! I bet it´s going to rain . . ."	
"Oh, those girls . . . They are gone. Some of them fled the country, and some didn´t do well and became ´no good´ so the government sent them to be reeducated in Dorn Nang."	

Fig.3. Part of the worksheet done by participants in the workshop at the Lao American College in Vientiane.

Conclusion

One of the things we had in mind at the time of choosing literature as a resource was that "literature is always more than the language and that appreciation and enjoyment of literature

transcend that development of linguistic capacities" (Carter and McRae, 1996:xxv). Therefore, we chose working with learners' literature considering that if the door to literary works is already open it could lead more naturally to enjoying the trip. It is highly expected that participants (students and teachers) profited from the proposed activities based on learners' literature.

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Short Stories

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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.

Communicative Activities for Large Classes: Implementing communicative activities in oral communication classes for non-English majors in Japanese universities

Carla Wilson
David English House

Abstract

This article reports on an attempt to include communicative activities in oral communication classes for first year non-English major university students. It briefly examines why communicative activities are particularly important in university oral communication classes in Japan and outlines some of the more successful activities the author has used. It also addresses some of the pitfalls that may be encountered when trying to implement a communicative activity and ways to overcome these difficulties.

Introduction

Communicative language teaching (CLT) became popular in the 1970s as a response to the backlash against the audio-lingual method that had been widely used in EFL classrooms. The features of CLT were summarised by Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) and included,

> Meaning is paramount.
> Dialogs, if used, center around communicative functions and are not normally memorized.
> Language learning is learning to communicate.
> Effective communication is sought.
> Communicative competence is the desired goal.

When students reach the first year of university in Japan, they have generally had six years of English education. The predominant teaching method used in Japanese secondary schools is the grammar-translation method and few students have had teachers who use CLT methods. The above features are therefore absent in most secondary school English classes. Instead there is a focus on accuracy and structure; language learning is the learning of sets of rules; dialogs, if used, are simply memorised; there is virtually no communication in English in the class; and the desired goal is to pass exams. The result is many students who cannot hold even a simple conversation in English. To counteract the predominance of the grammar-translation method used in secondary schools, CLT methods can be used successfully at college level, and can have

a positive impact on both students' ability to hold conversations in English, and their attitude towards English. This author has used CLT methods with students who had a relatively low English level although the university itself is a relatively high level (national) university. The students were majoring in science, biology and law, and most of them were not interested in English. CLT methods were successful in increasing ability to hold conversations, increasing motivation levels and improving attitudes towards English.

Communicative activities

Nunan (1991) lists five basic characteristics of CLT:

- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on the language but also on the learning process itself.
- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

These, combined with the above features of CLT outlined by Finocchiaro and Brumfit, can give teachers guidelines on which to base activities. The following are some of the CLT activities that this author has used successfully with non-English major students. After a description of each activity there is a brief outline of how the activity relates to CLT. Richards (2006) distinguishes between meaningful and communicative activities, the main difference being that in a meaningful activity the language produced by the students is predictable even though it has meaning. It could be argued that some of the activities described below are meaningful rather than communicative. The crossword activity for example gives students a list of words and has the students define or explain the words. This could be considered fairly predictable. However, in practice, the language produced by the students is not predictable. In describing the word "elephant" for example, students may say, "It's a big gray animal with a long nose" or they may say "We can ride this animal if we go to Thailand." or they may say, "It's the animal we studied in biology class this morning," or something else entirely. For this reason - the variety, and therefore unpredictability, of the language produced by the students - the activities below can all be considered communicative according to Richards' criteria.

Half Crosswords

Students are put into groups of four. The four is further divided into two pairs. Each pair

receives a half completed crossword. The two halves make up a complete crossword. There are no written clues. The two pairs takes turns explaining their words, and listening to the other pair's explanations, thereby completing the crossword.

This activity places importance on effective communication as students must somehow explain to their partner-pair what the word is without using Japanese or the word itself. It is also helping to increase communicative competence as it practises the strategy of talking around words when the specific English word is unknown.

Jigsaw Reading

Students are in pairs to start with but later will form groups of four and then different groups of four, so the teacher needs to mentally or graphically divide the students into groups of eight. Each pair is given a piece of English to read. Each pair of the group of eight has a different passage, so there are a total of four different passages. The pair reads their passage together, checks any unknown words and tries to remember the main points (not memorise the passage). Each pair then turns their paper face down and tries to recall in English with their partner the main points. They are allowed to check their paper once more before all the papers are collected by the teacher. The pairs are put into groups of four. Each pair tells their new partner-pair about what they read. If some groups finish quickly they should try to recall their partner-pair's information. The pairs then form a new group of four with a new partner-pair. The new group of four now knows a total of four pieces of information. Each pair tells their new partner-pair their own information plus the information of their previous partner-pair. The logistics are tricky but worth the time taken to set up the activity.

This activity places importance on meaning as each pair must convey the main meaning of the passage they read. Authentic texts can be used as the passages to be read, or can be slightly adapted according to the level of the class. Effective communication is sought as the students try to explain the information that they have read.

Moving partners

Start the activity in pairs. Students are given a target time, e.g. 3 minutes in which to talk about the given topic. They must continue talking until the 3 minutes is over. Assign students as A or B within pairs. Ask all the A students to stand and move one place so everyone has a new partner. Increase the time to 4 minutes and repeat the activity. Continue this four or five times or

even more, each time increasing by one minute or increasing every other time by one minute. Higher levels can have longer times, and for all levels, as the weeks go by, the starting time can gradually increase.

This activity assumes that learning will take place by interacting in the target language. As the students talk about the topic for increasing lengths of time and interact with different people, they will get fresh ideas for questions they can ask and will pick up new vocabulary from their different partners. Students' own personal experiences are important elements as the students are often talking about themselves or talking about the topic with relevance to themselves, They are exchanging real information and are usually genuinely interested in what their partner is telling them.

Role Plays

Practise functional situation such as ordering in a restaurant, booking a hotel room, and visiting a doctor by using role plays. In pairs, assign roles and allow some time to think about what they will need to say. A couple of minutes is sufficient. This should be thinking time not writing time. Have them act out the role play, changing roles when finished. The teacher should monitor carefully, noting where problems have occurred and where new language is needed by the students. Write this up on the board and point it out to the students. Change partners and practise again. Repeat once more if time allows.

This activity allows students to draw on their personal experience of these situations in their own country. It focuses on meaning and effective communication as the students must just achieve their goal without focusing on accuracy. There is a dialogue but it is not memorised and the function is the focus. The students can see how this would be useful outside the classroom, both when visiting another country, and maybe even more so within Japan as many of our students have part-time jobs in cafes, restaurants and shops, and may occasionally have to serve non-Japanese speakers.

Avoiding pitfalls

There are various pitfalls that can ruin a lesson using communicative activities. It is important for teachers to anticipate these problems, and to plan their lessons so that these pitfalls can be avoided. Below are some common pitfalls and simple ways to avoid them.

The tendency to use the native language

The main pitfall of trying to use communicative activities in monolingual classrooms is that the students will often revert to their native language, especially at the point when they become genuinely interested in what they are talking about. The best way to get around this is to have a "No Japanese " rule which is used from the first day and which is strictly (but kindly) enforced. If the teacher thinks some parts of the lesson absolutely need to be in the native language then these should be the special parts and the "No Japanese" should be the default setting.

The tendency to show their friend any information they have

This can be a problem when doing an activity like jigsaw reading or half crosswords if the students work individually. They may want to show their friend to compare their passages and this defeats the purpose of the activity. This can be overcome by having pairs rather than individuals as the starting unit. Having a pair as the starting unit has several advantages. They can help each other understand the original vocabulary or information, meaning that this part of the lesson also becomes communicative, instead of having students individually checking their dictionaries. They won't show their information or half crossword to anyone else as it becomes their secret property. They can practise (in jigsaw reading) retelling the information with their partner before having to retell it for real to a new partner-pair.

The tendency to not talk

In the Moving Partners activity when students have to talk for a given amount of time, some students may simply stop speaking after one minute and think that is adequate. Others open up their dictionary as soon as they don't know a word and have their head in their dictionary for the next minute or more. Others may have problems continuing the conversation due to a lack of conversation skills even in their native language. Some students may have a fear of making a mistake which leaves them tongue-tied. Five rules are needed here. These are No Silence, No Dictionaries, Ask Follow-up Questions, Give Long Answers and Mistakes are Okay. The first two rules are self-explanatory. Teachers may want dictionaries used at some points but during the actual speaking activity (not the preparation) this rule should be strictly enforced. Follow-up questions and long answers will need practising before these rules can be introduced. Follow-up questions can be introduced easily with a Have you ever...? activity. After students get a "yes" answer from their partner they must ask three follow-up questions. Long answers can be introduced easily in a Do you like . . . ? activity. Students can't answer with a simple yes or no, but must add to their answer, for example, Do you like dogs? Yes, I used to have a dog when I

was a child but now I don't have one because my landlord doesn't allow dogs, and I don't have time to take care of a dog. Once these two techniques have been practiced in class, the rules can be added to the other class rules. The Mistakes are Okay rule helps students to understand that when communicating in English, it is acceptable to not speak perfect English and to make some mistakes.

The tendency to become cliquey

Young adults are likely to become cliquey and to not want to speak to certain members of the class. This can be overcome to some extent by having partner-changing or seat-changing arrangements as a regular part of the class right from the first lesson. The more partners they have in the first couple of lessons the better the class atmosphere will be throughout the course. Students often comment that they could make a lot of friends in English class because of having to speak with lots of different people on a regular basis. Changing partners regularly also means that students can practice talking on the same topic several times without it becoming boring. Between partners the students can be given the opportunity to ask questions of the teacher or check their dictionaries for unknown words. They can of course ask questions to the teacher during their conversation as well if necessary.

Class Participation Grades

In classes of up to about 40 students it is possible to give class participation scores to all students for every lesson. These scores are added up at the end of the course and form one component of the course grade. Doing this will make students see the importance of speaking English in class for their grade and will give the rules mentioned above some "bite", i.e. if they break the rules their class participation score will suffer. This author had the class participation scores add up to a possible total of 50 and formed 50% of the overall grade - the remaining 50% coming from a speaking exam. To make time for giving these grades, for the final 20 minutes of class, the students can write a dialogue or a short passage about the lesson topic. This helps to consolidate what they have learned, forms a basis for revision for the speaking test, and gives the teacher enough time to call the students one by one, and give them their score. Scores out of five work well. If a student has followed all the class rules, they get five, and so on. It is relatively easy to see who the best students are in terms of making an effort to follow all the rules, who the average ones are and who are the ones who aren't really trying and they are given scores accordingly. If they don't get five, they are told how they can improve their score e.g. give longer answers, don't use Japanese, etc. Generosity with scores is more motivating for the

students. Basing class scores on effort rather than ability is also more motivating. The weaker students see that as long as they try hard they can get a high score and this will keep them motivated throughout the course. Ability can be taken into account in the exam by having a criterion such as “ability to talk easily about the topic” to ensure that the most able students are getting the grades they deserve. It would be unfair, this author believes, to base the speaking tests grades on accuracy after spending class time focusing on communication rather than accuracy. Making “ability to talk easily about the topic” will allow the more able students to get a higher grade, while still keeping the focus on communication and fluency.

Student feedback

An argument used sometimes against using CLT methods is that students don’t like it, or students expect the teacher to stand at the front and teach them in a traditional way. Students may expect the teacher to stand at the front and teach them. They may also expect to be bored and expect to not learn anything, and to find the lesson pointless and of no value to them. This doesn’t mean teachers have to meet these expectations. This author has had extremely positive feedback from the students about the class rules, the class scoring system and the types of activities. Many students mentioned that they looked forward to the lesson and that they were glad to be “forced” to speak English. Some students said they were shy but that they were glad that everyone had to speak English and that this made them less shy. A very rewarding moment for this author occurred when, in about the tenth lesson of the 15 lesson course, a new, rather difficult activity was being attempted for the first time. The students had been told the activity was quite difficult but not to worry and to do their best. The teacher said “Gambatte” - Japanese for “Do your best” or “Good luck”, having not used Japanese at all previously except occasionally on a one-to-one basis. About five of the students immediately shouted out, “No Japanese”.

Conclusion

Communicative activities can be used successfully with Japanese university students who may have had negative experiences of English, and who may not like English. Although there are many pitfalls to introducing communicative activities, these can be overcome through establishing class rules which are enforced by a class participation scoring system. This scoring system also serves to increase motivation even among weaker students.

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Using authentic materials: Keeping it real

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Abstract

This paper offers a definition of authentic materials followed by an exploration of their benefits in the English as a Second Language classroom. This is followed by a discussion as to why authentic materials are effective for ESL classroom use. Next is a discussion of potential problems and issues that may arise in the use of authentic materials. Other considerations concerning implementation of authentic materials are also discussed. Finally some examples of authentic materials developed by the author based on a film and a newspaper article activity from ***The Bangkok Post*** *will be presented as examples of practical implementation. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the materials and implementation will be offered.*

Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that authentic materials are beneficial to the English learner. However, before looking at the aspects that make them effective. It will be useful to identify what authentic materials are by defining the term. One definition from Morrow (1977) that was cited in Gilmore (2007) is as follows: "An authentic text is a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of sort (p. 98)." This paper will present two examples of tasks based on authentic materials including a Hollywood produced film and an article from a daily English newspaper. First, there will be an evaluation of the positive and negative aspects of using authentic materials, considerations to keep in mind when creating tasks for authentic materials, and finally an evaluation of the two sample exercises.

Benefits of The Use of Authentic Materials

There are several ways in which authentic materials are motivating and useful to second language learners. For example, one way authentic texts increase student motivation is by giving the learner the feeling that he or she is learning the 'real' language; that they are in touch with the living entity, the target language as it is used by the community, which speaks it (Guariento & Morely, 2001). Some of these authentic materials include newspapers, magazines, books, films, advertisements, and the like. In addition, authentic texts are often regarded as more interesting than textbook materials because they can be more up-to-date, and relate to everyday

issues and activities (Lee, 1995). This would suggest their relevancy is increased and therefore student motivation naturally follows.

Authentic materials present several opportunities to engage with language in specialized contexts. In particular, authentic texts have more natural examples of passive voice than EFL course books. If students keep learning unsuitable model sentences for passive voice, they will never obtain naturalness in the use of the target language (Higuchi, 1998). Also, if we are to help learners cope with the authentic situation of mismatch between the language they produce and that which they hear, we must at least expose them to authentic language and, if possible, lead them to work out strategies for bridging this language gap (Porter & Roberts, 1981). Additionally, according to Higuchi (1998), stories are valuable for students to raise their grammatical awareness, and internalize the language rules again and recreate them as their own rules. In this way learning with stories can lead them to a more profound understanding of the target language. Both stories and films are well-contextualized so that students can smoothly understand the reasons why all those particular forms appear.

Authentic materials, particularly audio-visual ones such as films and TV shows, offer a much richer source of input for learners and the potential to be exploited in different ways on different levels to develop learner's communicative competence (Gilmore, 2007), And the most useful point of a film is that learners naturally acquire the sense of 'language in action' in the target language. McCarthy and Carter (1995) explain that "language in action' involves participants in using language to refer to action in an easy and unproblematic way because they are taking place before their respective eyes" They also mention that "there is . . . no need for elaboration; a lot of knowledge is shared, and a lot of referents can be mutually taken for granted (p. 209)." In films, sometimes things related to a particular scene are not clearly spoken; viewers recognize them from watching the previous scenes. The latter case is nearer to our everyday life. The concepts of 'language in action' and 'shared knowledge' are so natural that it is hard for us to realize them let alone articulate them. Learning a foreign language and learning it with films, learners can realize these concepts afresh in order to facilitate developing performance skills in the target language such as body language and facial expressions (Higuchi, 1998). Learners who are watching a film are not actually involved in the language interaction in the film; however since they are watching and hearing what is going on in the film, they are, in a sense, pseudo participants in the language interaction in the film.

Additionally, films provide streams of speech, such as reduced sounds of phrases and stammering, which occur in spontaneous discourse common in everyday speech. In order to spontaneously deal with real conversations in the target language, students can obviously benefit from trying to understand these forms in the receptive phrase, namely in listening. Films that have both sound and pictures can offer learners unique exposure to "language in action" (McCarthy & Carter, 1995). Also, with respect to films, they can give students the exposure to highly pseudo-real spoken interaction in the target language. This can initially improve their skills in receptive phases and eventually lead them to higher skills in productive phases (Higuchi, 1998).

Furthermore, from the learner's viewpoint, authentic materials are motivating, interesting and useful, with content that does not cause them culture shock or discomfort (Young, 1980). Their rhetorical structure of authentic materials must be appropriate to learner's needs and learning purposes (Widdowson, 1980). Krashen (1982) suggests that the linguistic features of comprehensible input should be just a little beyond the learner's current linguistic competence. When learners read an authentic text, their prior knowledge, interest and curiosity make it easier for them to become engaged with it. To summarize, we can say that learner-authentic materials are mainly learner-centered, and that they can serve effectively to promote learner's interest in language learning. In cognitive terms, they can provide learners not only with a chance to develop their linguistic and communicative competence, but also with an awareness of conventions of communication, which will enable them to use appropriate styles in different communicative contexts (Bacon and Finnenman, 1990; Lee, 1995).

Potential Problems with Authentic Materials

Although, there are many positive factors that support the use of authentic materials with second language learners, there are some potential problems that should be considered if authentic materials are to be used to maximum effect. For example, linguistically, they tend to be more difficult, being unsimplified, with more complex syntactic patterns and vocabulary. In news stories, novels, and other authentic texts grammatical items show up unexpectedly, and without warning, which require students to have mastered a core knowledge of grammar, and this generally means more sophisticated understanding beyond the intermediate level of understanding (Higuchi, 1998).

Thus at lower levels even quite simple tasks, unless they have been very carefully selected for

lexical and syntactic complexity, and/or content familiarity/predictability, the use of authentic texts may not only prevent the learners from responding in meaningful ways but can also cause frustration, confusion, and, more importantly, can be demotivational (Guariento & Morely, 2001). Furthermore, Breen (1985) suggests that sometimes apparently inauthentic language-using behavior might be authentic language learning behavior. That is sometimes learner can learn basic language patterns and communication strategies from inauthentic sources.

Essentially, it is important to evaluate whether or not the students for which authentic material tasks are being developed for an appropriate audience. That is, are the students of a sufficient level of core knowledge regarding grammar? Can they work within the lexical and syntactic patterns? Are they familiar with the content? Basically can they respond in a meaningful way to the authentic materials in questions? If the answer to any of these questions is "no" then another task might be more useful for that group of second language learners.

Considerations for the Implementation of Authentic Materials

There are several factors to consider in the selection of authentic materials with appropriate tasks for second language learners. Breen (1985) suggests that there are four factors involved in establishing text and learner authenticity:

- What is an authentic text?
- For whom is the text authentic?
- For what authentic purpose?
- What is authentic to the social situation of the classroom?

Breen (1985) also suggests that we might choose those kinds of tasks for the classroom, which are congruent with how people best undertake learning and, simultaneously, engage the learner in authentic communication. Basically, tasks can be chosen that involve learners not only in authentic communication with texts and others in the classroom, but also about learning for the purpose of learning. This can often be one of the best activities; communication about how best to learn to communicate. In addition, the degree to which the learners know the text format or background information will suggest which texts to select, how to exploit them, and the nature of possible preparatory work. It is clear that acquiring knowledge of format and probable content is part of the cultural boundary crossing (Porter & Roberts, 1981).

Apart from the materials themselves, there are three other aspects to consider in order to

facilitate an interaction between learners and materials. In pedagogical terms, these aspects might be defined as text factor (individual differences), task factor (task design), and learner setting factor (learning environment). To this list we could add the teacher factor (the teacher's attitude and teaching approach).

Is the material textually authentic?

- Does it possess communicative potential?
- Does it have a realistic situation?
- Is the content relevant to learners' life experiences and future communicative needs?

Is the material compatible with the course objectives?

- Does it have content and construct validity, i.e. can it really improve the language skill(s) we want our learners to practice?
- Is it too short or too long?
- Does it target receptive or productive skills?
- Are the language styles and rhetorical structure relevant to the course objectives?

Is the material suitable for the teaching approach we adopt? (and) *Is the material suitable for the task/activities designed?*

If we want tasks to be accessible to learners then, like materials, they should be learner authentic (Learner authenticity refers to the learner's interaction with materials in terms of appropriate responses and positive psychological reaction). The task design stage is crucial when using authentic materials, and according to Lee (1995, p. 325), the following points should be considered:

- In real-life communicative situations it is very common to use more than one language skill to achieve different communicative purposes, and for this reason an integrated skills approach is recommended.
- Contexts have to be provided tasks, so that learners can practice the skills in a natural, meaningful, and relevant way.
- The task content should be related to the authentic materials selected so that students can use them as a springboard for the tasks.
- Whether the task is used as pre-activity, practice activity, or post-activity depends on the course objectives, the skill(s) to be practiced, and learners' preferences.

Authentic Task Activity Examples

It will be useful to look at two examples of activities used for authentic materials. First, there will be a discussion of activities used for the first part of Robert Zemeckis's film Back To The Future (Appendix 1). The second discussion will be about activities developed for use with a

newspaper article, “Old batteries, cell phones pose risk” (Appendix 2) from *The Daily Yomiuri*.

Back To The Future

This is a popular film directed by Steven Spielberg from 1985 that follows the adventures of teenager who goes back in time. The film is rated PG (Parental Guidance), has a relatively easy to follow plot, and some humorous scenes. There are ample opportunities to explore slang and colloquial expressions.

The first activity is a discussion that is designed to focus students’ attention on movies, and the idea of time travel:

> *“How often do you watch movies? What kind of movies do you like? If you could travel through time, would you go to the future or the past? Why?*
> *Which time period in the past would you like to visit? Why?”*

The next activity involves using visual cues to prompt English use and then predicting what is going to happen next in the film. The students watch the film’s introduction and describe five things that they see in the house and answer the following questions designed to predict concepts about the film:

> *“Who do you think lives in the house? Why?”* (and) *“What do you think is going to happen?”*

The third activity involves guessing the meaning of slang words/ new vocabulary in context. Students must match words like “nutcase” with its definition: “a crazy person.” The twelve words in this activity are: *nutcase, hang around with, tardy, amount to, don’t bother, audition, nickel, attitude, slacker, roster,* and *advice*. This also serves as a scaffolding activity because in the next activity they will hear these new words used in the film.

The final activity for the first part of the film is a cloze activity where students must fill in dialogue blanks with the new vocabulary. For example:

> ***Marty***: Hello, Jennifer.
> ***Jennifer***: Marty, don't go this way. Strickland is looking for you. If you're caught it'll be four _____ in a row.

The missing word should be “tardies”-the plural of “tardy,” a new vocabulary word learned in

the previous activity. They are using listening skills as well as visual clues from the film to activate the new vocabulary.

"Old Batteries, cell phones pose risk"

This news article is one of three to be used as a jigsaw activity after completing the worksheet in groups. The article is about the improper disposal of spent batteries and how unwanted cell phones pose a health hazard. Some toxic substances get into the food chain, which could be potentially hazardous for humans. The first activity is a Warm up discussion:

> *"Do you have a mobile phone? How often do you use it? Do you think mobile phones pose any health risks?"*

The next activity focuses on vocabulary matching the words on the left with definitions on the right:

disposal	stop working properly
contaminating	the process of changing from a liquid to a gas
malfunction	throw away
evaporate	pollute or poison
fetus	to decide or determine (a medical condition)
diagnosed	unborn baby

This is followed by a skimming exercise:

Who	
Where	
What	
When	
Why	
How	

At this point the students read the article: "Old batteries, cell phones pose risk." Then the students answer the following comprehension questions on the article:

"What kinds of health risks do waste mobile phones and batteries pose? What is responsible for the contamination and how does this affect people? How do most people dispose of old mobile phones in Thailand?"

Finally, students prepare for a group activity by choosing ten keywords or phrases to use to summarize the article and make three or four discussion questions based on the article. They then practice within their groups before getting into groups with students who discussed the other two articles to share their summaries and discussion questions.

Conclusion

Using authentic materials can be an effective tool in the arsenal of the ESL instructor. These types of materials can be highly motivating for students if they are at the proper level for the use of the materials. Consideration must also be given to how the materials will be used in the lesson. Authentic materials can also be effective in introducing real life communication examples to the students. Adapting authentic materials for classroom use can be a time consuming affair, however it usually can generate a big payback with the motivation and learning opportunities for the students who engage in the activities.

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Biographical Statement

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Appendix 1A

Before Watching

How often do you watch movies? What kind of movies do you like? If you could travel through time, would you go to the future or the past? Why?
Which time period in the past would you like to visit? Why?

Introduction

A. Watch the introduction. Write five things you see in the house.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Who do you think lives in the house? Why?

C. What do you think is going to happen?

D. Match the words on the left with the definitions on the right.

hang around with	a crazy person
nutcase	a list

tardy	a five cent coin
amount to	to try out for a part or role
don’t bother	outlook on life
audition	a lazy person
nickel	to spent time with some one
attitude	not try
slacker	recommendation
roster	to become
advice	to be late

Appendix 1B

Listen to the conversation between Marty, Jennifer, and the principle, Mr. Strickland. Complete the conversation using the words from the previous activity.

Marty: Hello, Jennifer.

Jennifer: Marty, don't go this way. Strickland is looking for you. If you're caught it'll be four _____ in a row.

Jennifer: Alright, come on, I think we're safe.

Marty: You know this time it wasn't my fault. The Doc set all of his clocks twenty-five minutes slow.

Strickland: Doc? Am I to understand you're still _____ _____ _____ Doctor Emmett Brown, McFly? Tardy slip for you, Miss Parker. And one for you McFly I believe that makes four in a row. Now let me give you a _____ worth of free _____, young man. This so called Doctor Brown is dangerous; he's a real _____. You _____ _____ _____ him you're gonna end up in big trouble.

Marty: Oh yes sir.

Strickland: You got a real _____ problem, McFly. You're a _____. You remind me of your father when he went here, he was a _____ too.

Marty: Can I go now, Mr. Strickland?

Strickland: I noticed your band is on the _____ for dance _____ after school today. Why even _____ Mcfly, you haven't got a chance, you're too much like your old man. No McFly ever _____ ____ anything in the history of Hill Valley.

Marty: Yeah, well history is gonna change.

Appendix 2A

A. Warm up: Discuss the following questions with your partners.

Do you have a mobile phone? How often do you use it?

Do you think mobile phones pose any health risks?

B. Vocabulary: Here are some difficult words that come up in the following news article. Match the words on the left with words or phrases on the right that have the same or similar meaning.

disposal	stop working properly
contaminating	the process of changing from a liquid to a gas
malfunction	throw away
evaporate	pollute or poison
fetus	to decide or determine (a medical condition)
diagnosed	unborn baby

C. Skimming: Skim the article below and try to complete the table below.

Who	
Where	
What	
When	
Why	
How	

D. Reading: Read the article below.

Old batteries, cell phones pose risk

Improper disposal of spent batteries and unwanted cell phones poses a health hazard leading to toxic substances getting into the food chain, health authorities warn.

These wastes contain two highly toxic substances, cadmium and lithium, which if buried in the ground will pollute underground water, the director of the Bureau of Non-Communicable Diseases, Kamjad Ramakul, said yesterday. Once in the water supply, the chemicals get into the food chain, contaminating plants and fish in the area.

Appendix 2B

"People eating cadmium-contaminated food can subsequently suffer from itai-itai disease, which leads to kidney malfunction or even kidney failure." " It can also cause bone disease, " Dr Kamjad said. Cancer is also a risk. The increasing amount of cell-phone waste could become a serious threat to public health as they are often disposed of improperly. Many people simply throw them into the nearest garbage bin.

"We may not see the harm from these wastes right now, but we will see it in the future," Dr Kamjad warned.

Besides the hazards of the battery waste, cell phones also contain lead and mercury. If burnt, the mercury will evaporate into the air and get into the ground and water with the falling rain.

The physical and mental development of children who eat lead-contaminated food will be slow. Children who absorb a lot of mercury could also develop Minamata disease that causes physical weakness, loss of body balance, lower intelligence and kidney problems. Pregnant women are likely to have an abnormal fetus. Like itai-itai disease, Minamata disease was first diagnosed in Japan.

There are currently an estimated 20 million cell phones in Thailand, with 40 million batteries. "These cell phone wastes are thrown away every day," Dr Kamjad said. "If this is allowed to continue for another 10 years, the problem could become unsolvable."

He urges people to return unwanted cell phones and batteries to mobile phone shops, which would then pass this waste on to the manufacturing firms for safe disposal.

E. Comprehension: Answer the following questions:

What kinds of health risks do waste mobile phones and batteries pose?
What is responsible for the contamination and how does this affect people?
How do most people dispose of old mobile phones in Thailand?

F. Summary: Choose ten key words or phrase that occur chronologically in the article and write them down on a separate piece of paper. Practice summarizing / retelling the article with your group members. Also decide on three or four discussion questions.

G. Group Activity: Form new groups and take turns introducing and summarizing your articles.

First introduce your article and topic, and then teach the words in the vocabulary section to your partners. Next summarize the article and then ask the comprehension questions in "E" above. Finally, lead a brief discussion on the topic.

Project-based learning: Challenges and recommendations

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Abstract

While teaching a course in a computer lab with the goal of giving "students advanced information retrieval and processing skills with the aim of improving their communication ability," the author chose to use a project-based learning approach. The students researched and created a multimedia document about a chosen country for the Foreign Country Project. The second semester the students maintained a class blog about Japanese culture called the Japan Information Communication blog. A project-based class that produced their own comics in English and research based project will also be discussed. Discussions of these projects are followed by an analysis of student perceptions of learning and potential problems with these projects. The conclusion suggests several organizational and structural changes that could improve student productivity and learning in project-based classes.

Introduction

Project-based learning (PBL) is a specialized task-based curriculum, in which students need to use information retrieval in order to construct a comprehensive study of a particular topic. Project-based learning can be an effective means for promoting English language acquisition for a number of reasons. These projects emphasize the use of the target language to accomplish tasks and are student centered in the vein of Experimental Language Learning (Brown, 1994).

Additionally, according to Eguchi and Eguchi (2006), project-based learning can offer English learners exposure to authentic materials, opportunities to use the target language, and motivation to learn, which are all considered to be essential conditions for language learning (Willis, 1996).

Nunan (2006) has stated that tasks pedagogically strengthen several principles and practices as a needs-based approach to content selection, the use of authentic texts in the learning situation, opportunities to focus on not only language, but also on the learning process itself, as well as linking classroom language learning with language outside the class among others.

The author has had the opportunity to utilize project-based syllabi in two courses and has successfully incorporated project-based tasks in several other courses that were not exclusively

limited to a project-based curriculum. In one course called Information Communication 2, the core curriculum was made up of two, one semester long projects: the foreign country project and a class blog, Japanese Information Communication (JIC) blog. In another summer intensive English course, a small-sized class created their own English language comic books. In addition, the author has had students complete project-based tasks in courses that had extensive reading, business, and listening based curriculums. A description and discussion of the positive and negatives aspects of these different approaches will prove instructive in the decision whether or not to employ a full or partial project-based curriculum.

Types of Projects

Overview of "Information Communication 2"

Information Communication 2 is a four-credit course that all English majors are required to successfully complete before graduation at a mid-sized private university in Tokyo. In order to take the course, the students must have successfully passed Information Communication 1, an introductory course for basic information retrieval and processing, and have a standing as a junior or higher. To be specific, the course description states: "the purpose is to give students advanced (more advanced than Information Communication 1) information retrieval and processing skills with the aim of improving their communication ability." There were four sections of this course. Each class ranged in size from 27 to 40 students starting from the Spring Semester of 2007 and ending at the completion of the Fall Semester 2008 over a period of 15 weeks per semester. The participants were 128 English majors. There were 111 students with junior standing and 17 students with senior standing. Overall, there were 87 female and 57 male students. The classes were subject to open enrollment, therefore, not tracked according to ability. The instructor chose to focus the research in this course in the area of culture. The first semester focus was on foreign cultures and the second semester focused on Japanese culture in English.

Foreign country project

In the first semester of the course, the students researched a foreign country of their choice and compiled data about different aspects of their country from weather patterns to the group values of that particular culture using texts, pictures, graphs and other images on a MS Word document created by each individual student (see Appendix A). Students were also responsible for orally presenting their research for one of the three parts of the Foreign Country Project.

The first several weeks of the first semester involved introducing the students to strategies for researching topics in English on the Internet. This included Boolean logic (Boolean logic refers to the logical relationship among search terms and is named after the British-born Irish mathematician George Boole) for searches. In addition, there was a discussion on what made some sites more authoritative than others and signs that identify whether or not the site constitutes a legitimate primary source. Also, a sample document was discussed and criteria for evaluation of the completed document and presentation were introduced before students began their research project after selecting the country of their choice (excluding their country of origin). There were three parts to the project. After every three-week cycle one third of the class was responsible for presenting the information that they had researched during the project cycle (see Appendix A).

Japanese information communication (JIC) blog

During the second semester student groups of three to five students selected topics about their own culture to compile posts for a class blog project. First, they created a plan to research and post entries on different aspects of their topic in English for a class blog. Then they used the Internet research skills for compiling information about Japan on the class blog. These topics ranged from Cuisine to Newspapers/Magazines, the blog can be seen at: http://patrickmccoy.typepad.com/jic/ (see Appendix B).

The second semester project, the JIC Blog, was designed to provide students a different medium to present research done in English about Japanese culture. Students were arranged in groups of 3 to 6 and chose categories to research. Once the categories were selected, students were responsible for creating a blog post plan from 9 to 12 posts depending on group size (some groups had only three members due to class attrition and poor attendance). The next three weeks were devoted to becoming familiar with other blogs and the possibilities for presenting information through researched text, images, and other media such as YouTube videos and hyperlinks. The students were also familiarized with the operation of making blog posts using the TypePad blogging program (which the instructor uses for his own personal blog-and hosted the class blog at no additional cost). Again students were informed of blog post requirements, proper citations of referenced material, and evaluation criteria. There were two deadlines for the blog posts to be evaluated, one mid-semester and the other at the end of the semester. Occasionally, there would be mini-lectures on common errors throughout the process. Student groups met with the instructor to receive oral evaluations and suggestions for their blog posts

after the mid-semester deadline.

English comics

In the first two classes of the summer intensive English course and students did introductory activities to introduce comics and some of its specific vocabulary. Some of these activities included: writing titles for comic strips, adding a panel to a comic strip, writing their own dialogue, completing a jigsaw, putting panels in order, as well as perusing samples of English language graphic novels and comics.

Then the class was divided into two groups of five and roles were assigned: researcher-writer/ penciller / colorist-inker / letterer-editor. Most of the logistics and structure were adapted from *Going Graphic: Comics at Work in the Multilingual Classroom* (Cary, 2004). Next the group collaborated on filling out a log line, which summarizes the story in a single sentence. The log line was then expanded by using a narrative template, which included: title, conflict/problem, plan/action steps, resolution/climax, and coda/moral. From there, the groups collaborated on page plots there were derived from the narrative template. In this case the groups chose to make stories between 8 to 11 pages long. In the next step, the students planned individual panels, 3 to 6 per page, for a total of between 25 to 50 individual panel descriptions. The penciller then proceeded to rough in, or lightly sketch, the panels from the panel descriptions leaving room for captions and dialogue. After the captions and dialogue had been added the pages were proofread for errors and continuity of pictures. The final stage involved lettering the text, inking in the drawings if the students so wished, and adding covers and coloring if they so desired (see Appendix C for Job Descriptions and Plotting).

Once the model copies were finished, the students photocopied the pages and assembled comics for distribution. On the last day of the intensive sessions the students gave every student who participated a copy of the two comics.

Research presentation project cycles

One of the syllabus requirements for English language study in the Law Department of another Tokyo area university is an opportunity to complete a research presentation cycle several times throughout the year. The research cycle is comprised of research gathered on a topic of the students' choice, note taking of the main points and re-organization of notes for use in presentation of the topic. Small groups of listeners (usually three to four) actively listen taking

notes and participate in a conversation on the topic in question. There is a lot of room for different approaches in this style depending on the class' ability. The extensive reading and business language classes in question were tracked with pre-intermediate students. A somewhat similar research presentation approach was used at another Tokyo area university with advanced level listening students.

The first presentation research cycle was simplified for scaffolding purposes. In the extensive reading course the students were required to research a contemporary person of interest, the examples ranged from John Lennon to Mother Teresa. In the business class the students chose to present on a company, CEO, or aspect of business like marketing or public relations. The second presentation was based on a social or business related topic. The presenters were required to create true/false statements, comprehension questions, and discussion questions related to the topics they presented. After the presentation, the listeners responded to the presenters pre-written true/false statements, comprehension questions, and discussion questions. The listening class would research information based on the listening chapters and make group presentations on their findings.

Challenges and Recommendations

Project-based learning as the sole component of a curriculum lends itself more to certain advantageous pedagogical factors or conditions. For example, in the case of the curriculum for Information Communication, there was the advantage of conducting the class in a computer lab with the explicit goal of "information retrieval and processing skills with the aim of improving their communication ability." The English Comics curriculum was also designed to be project based since the students were in a more traditional curriculum designed class in the morning sessions. Furthermore, students had a choice, as to which afternoon course they would take, which created built-in motivation, in addition. Student choice is also a key component in the research cycles, since students get to choose the topics they present.

However, research-based presentations are projects that can be incorporated into any curriculum. As mentioned before, research cycles were incorporated into an extensive reading and business English curriculums in classes in the Law department. In addition, students in an advanced listening class at another major Tokyo university have done presentations on topics from content studied in class as a means for activating new vocabulary and speaking patterns. As well as gathering further information in English on the topics presented. For example, the students

presented information researched after every two-chapter unit on similar topics: global business, art, psychology, and health.

One of the biggest problems in the Information Communications 2 class projects was monitoring student progress. This stemmed largely from the class sizes. Ideally, a class of this nature would be less than 20 students. However, the instructor felt pressure to accept as many students as possible since this was a course required for graduation. It was difficult during both projects to stress the importance of giving proper citations and references for information gathered from the internet despite lessons, handouts, and instruction on the proper procedure as well as constant reminding and monitoring. A smaller class would have allowed for more opportunities for one-on-one progress meetings with students about their research, which would have also allowed for personalized guidance and critiques. A cap of 30 students would be essential for future incarnations of a course of this nature in the instructor's opinion. It should be noted that many students worked well autonomously, but many more students fell behind, worked on projects for other classes, did the absolute minimum, and used their class computer time poorly. In addition, proper monitoring would also insure students were on task in English, that is using the target language for planning and research. Proper monitoring of the class, in general, in a class of this nature, is crucial for success.

Conclusion

Despite these concerns, the projects were effective for several reasons: access to authentic materials, creation of a real need to communicate and collaborate in English, and higher student motivation through student choice/interest in the subject being studied. Many of these projects were dependent on web-based research but a library or access to authentic English texts would suffice as well. Students needed to collaborate with each other in groups to organized and design blog posts or to create comics, but also needed to present their research on countries and other topics. Students seemed to be more motivated and enjoyed researching or presenting on topics of their own choice.

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Biographical Statement

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Appendix A - Foreign Country Project: Parts 1-3

Part 1

Page 1: Flag (illustration needed) / **Title Page** (include name, student number, day and class period) / **Facts & Statistics:** A. National Anthem, B. Country Capital, C. Largest Populated City, D. Official Language and Languages Spoken, E. Area of the Country, F. Population, G. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Per Capita, H. Currency

Page 2: Food (describe different types of food eaten for breakfast-lunch-dinner-snacks)

Page 3: Weather (charts of average rainfall and temperatures would be helpful)

Page 4: Famous People (please list at least five)

Page 5: Places of Interest (please list at least five)

Part 2

Page 6 & 7: *Culture:* Give information about your country's traditions in art (painting,

sculpture, crafts, architecture, film), literature (poetry, prose, drama) and music/dance (traditional, classical, tribal, etc.). Please describe their cultural traditions in these areas and profile the most influential artists, writers, and musicians. (You could cut and paste copies of famous works of art for visuals)

Page 8: *Holiday Customs / Celebrations:* Give information about your country's holiday customs (Are they religious? Cultural?) and how they celebrate at them (What do they do? What do they wear? Is there music and dancing? What do they eat or drink?). You could also give information about weddings, birthdays, christenings, and funerals as well as beliefs about hospitality.

Page 9: *Family:* What are your country's beliefs about child raising (children and teens), the responsibilities of children and teens, the role of family, and their attitudes toward age? (Do they value older members of the community?) Find out information in these areas and present the information.

Part 3

Page 10: *Individual Values:* What are your country's attitudes about personal space/privacy? What is the relationship between the public and private areas for the people of your country? What is this culture's concept of self?

Page 11: *Group Values:* What are the rules for polite behavior? What is their concept of fairness? Can you explain your country's ideas about the nature of friendship? What is their work ethic like? What is their concept of beauty? Can you explain the general worldview of your country's people?

Page 12: *Religion:* What are the religions your country's people believe in? What are the respective religious beliefs? Can you explain the rituals of these religions? Find out information in these areas and present the information.

Last Pages: *Reference Pages* (please continue to make electronic citations to identify where you found the information about your country and remember to keep page headings for all of the pages you are compiling).

Appendix B - Japanese Blog Topics

1. Cuisine
2. Religion
3. Values
4. Japanese Language
5. Visual Arts
6. Performing Arts
7. Clothing
8. Architecture
9. Education
10. Sports
11. Traditional Music
12. Popular Music
13. Literature
14. Film
15. Holiday Customs/ Celebrations
16. Manga/Anime
17. Television
18. Technology
19. Politics/Government
20. Business
21. Crime
22. Folklore
23. Customs/Etiquette
24. Samurai
25. Geisha
26. Historical Places
27. Historical Figures (People)
28. History: Edo (1603-1868)
29. History: Meiji (1868-1912)
30. Newspapers/Magazines

Appendix C - Making Comics: Job Descriptions

This is a collaborative project and all group members will do a little of everything. It is useful to have a group role that makes each group member responsible for a particular aspect of your comic.

1. Researcher/Writer: gathers background information for the story and checks facts/ drafts and reviews the script, all the comic's written text

2. Penciller: is the chief artist and does the roughing (first draft) and final versions of all pictures

3. Colorist/Inker: adds color to the penciled drawings/ traces over pictures with black ink, adds shading when necessary, and erases leftover pencil lines

4. Letter/Editor: prints the words in captions and dialogue balloons/ reviews all visual and written work for accuracy consistency.

Plotting

The writer begins with a log line, which summarizes the story in a single sentence, for example:

> A small village hires a band of samurai to protect the village from raids by bandits in the Edo period of Japan.

The log line is expanded by using a narrative template. A typical template includes:

- title (What the comic is about): orientation / time / setting / characters (introduced)
- conflict/problem
- plan/action steps
- resolution/climax
- coda/moral

The template serves two functions: (1) it reminds the writers of the key ingredients that go into a good story, and (2) it provides a basic plotting sequence for writer and penciller-what they write/draw for the beginning-middle-end of the story. We'll use an 8 page sequence.

Log line: _____

_____

_____

Title: _____

_____

Time: _____

_____

Setting: _____

_____

Characters: _____

_____

_____

Conflict/Problem: _____

_____

_____

Plan/Action Steps: _____

_____

_____

Resolution/Climax: _____

_____

_____

Coda/Moral: _____

_____

_____

Japanese Students' Perceptions of Native English Speakers: Does it and Should it Matter?

Maggie Lieb
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Abstract

This paper explores Japanese EFL students' perceptions of native English speakers and why this is important in English Language Teaching. Since many students' first experience with native English speakers is often with their English teachers, the role of Western teachers as ambassadors for the target culture, and promoters of integrative motivation is examined. The paper then explores the higher purpose of ELT which is to contribute to education for peace by generating cross-cultural goodwill and global solidarity. However, ELT practices that lead to negative perceptions of native English speakers, or create divisiveness between East and West, run contrary to this goal. A small-scale study which investigated Japanese student perceptions of Westerners is described. Results indicate that although perceptions appeared to be positive for the most part, there was a notable sense of separateness which should be addressed in order to generate cross cultural harmony, and achieve the higher purpose of ELT. For the purpose of this discussion, "Us" and "We" refer to native English speakers from Western countries.

Why should we care?

Ambassadors for the target language and culture

It is part of human nature to form impressions about other cultures based on people we meet. Since the first experience many Japanese students have with native English speakers is often with their EFL teachers, we bear the responsibility for creating a good first impression which is likely to last, and influence students' perceptions of so-called "Western culture." Therefore, it is vital to foster goodwill from the beginning and to be cognizant that students' impressions of us may become generalized not only to all English-speaking countries, but to other Western, non-English speaking countries.

Integrative motivation

Gardner's (1972) Socio-educational model categorizes language-learning motivation as either integrative or instrumental. Integrative motivation is defined as, "a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group" (Gardner & Lambert, p.132), and by Rubrecht (2006) as "a learner's desire to enter into the target language and interact with native speakers" (p.73). Some studies suggest that "integrative and personal reasons for learning

languages (are) preferred over instrumental ones" (Benson, 1991, p.34). Falk (1978) points out that, "students who are most successful when learning a target language are those who like the people that speak the language, admire the culture, and have a desire to become familiar with or even integrate into the society in which the language is used" (cited in Norris-Holt, 2001, p.3).

Integrative motivation also encapsulates student attitudes towards the context of language learning. Spolsky (1989) stresses the importance of student attitudes towards both the teacher and the course. Most would agree that positive associations with teachers often translate into positive views of the subjects they teach. Furthermore, Shimizu (1995) points out that, "negative attitudes towards teachers could adversely affect student motivation, not only in the classroom, but also in terms of a student's desire to continue learning the language" (p.2). If our goal is to inspire lifelong language learning, this is an important consideration.

Therefore, it is inherent upon EFL teachers to "Promote integrative values by encouraging a positive and open-minded disposition towards the L2 and its speakers" (Dornyei, 2001).

With this in mind, consider the following excerpt from a Japanese high school English textbook, currently in use, which portrays English dogs as disciplined and restrained, and Japanese dogs as rambunctious and playful. The explanation given for this perceived difference is as follows:

> *". . . (This is) . . . due to the great difference in the way the English and the Japanese view relations between humans and animals. The Japanese do not regard domestic animals... as beings that are totally under humankind's rule or obedient to humankind . . . The English, on the other hand, believe domestic animals should be completely under humankind's rule, virtually without independence. The English practice of killing with their own hands dogs that are unwanted or terminally ill is based on their belief that the life and death of such animals should be completely controlled by human beings, the master" (Suzuki & Miura, in Milestone, 2003, p.102-103).*

Three concerns emerge from reading this excerpt. First, it calls into question the underlying belief system of those who prepared this material and their rationale for teaching English. Second, one wonders what affective and attitudinal outcomes could result from exposure to this material. In particular, what messages would students (who have had little or no contact with

foreigners) receive about the target culture. Lastly, this is a reminder to ELT teachers everywhere to re-examine our rationale for teaching English, and to seek a higher purpose beyond the economic and commercial demands of globalization. This is perhaps the most critical reason to be concerned about students' perceptions.

The higher purpose of teaching English

This author contends that ethical English Language Teaching necessitates consideration of the "Big Picture", the context in which we conduct our educational practice, as "Language acquisition is meaningful only when it is viewed as part of the human condition" (Sampedro & Hillyard, 2004, p.5). Linguapax situates ". . . language education within a wider framework of education for peace" (Marti, 1996). Linguapax also advocates a linguistic response to world problems through the use of materials and methodologies that integrate global solidarity "while eliminating stereotypes and negative prejudices" (Marti, 1996). "Given that language and thought are directly related . . . language (is) a natural vehicle for fostering cross cultural, cross boundary understanding" (Sampedro & Hillyard, 2004, p. 6).

Cultural diversity

EFL teachers are therefore entrusted with "enhancing mutual understanding, respect, peaceful co-existence, and cooperation among nations" (Marti, 1996). This can be accomplished by teaching appreciation for cultural diversity which offers opportunities for learning about "values that might serve to construct happier, more humane societies . . ." (Marti, 1996). Learning a foreign language is ". . . a particularly good way of exploring each culture's values, its universe of symbols, its desires and creativity" (Marti, 1996). This author contends, however, that fostering international goodwill must also incorporate awareness of cross-cultural commonality. Since personal friendship is based on what people have in common this also applies to international friendship. Failure to emphasize commonality runs the risk of generating divisiveness, as is the case with Othering (Lieb, 2008).

Othering

It is not in the teaching of "Big C" or achievement culture that problems arise, but in the teaching of "Little C" or behavior culture that is often treated "in an anecdotal, peripheral, or supplementary way, depending on the interest and awareness of teachers and students" (Tomalin & Stempleski, 1993, p.7). Most would agree that it is difficult to teach about cultural differences without making one culture seem superior to another. This is known as Othering, defined by

Johnson (1999) as "When a group is described in a way that makes that group seem inferior to or different from one's own". The above textbook excerpt demonstrates how Othering can "create and perpetuate rather than reflect cultural differences" (Kubota, 1999, p.16).

In Asian ELT, Othering manifests itself as both Orientalism and Occidentalism, depending on the "weltangshaung" or world view of the practitioner. Said (in Susser, 1998) defined Orientalism as "representing Japan as the Other, limiting what we can know of Japan, and in some cases, expressing prejudice or hostility" (p.49). On the other hand, Occidentalism has been defined as "stereotyped and sometimes dehumanizing views on the so-called Western world, including Europe, the United States, and Australia . . ." (Buruma & Margalit, 2004). It could be argued that the four characteristics Said attributes to Orientalism, can also be attributed to Occidentalism. These are Othering, Stereotyping, Representing, and Essentializing (in Susser, 1998). Such characterizations exist both explicitly and implicitly in certain ELT textbooks, in some teaching methodologies, in research on cross cultural learning, and sometimes in ELT discourse communities.

Examples of Othering

Polarizing characterizations of Western and Asian culture that exist in certain ELT discourse communities include the juxtaposition of so-called Western values such as individualism, human rights, and result orientation with alleged Asian values such as collectivism, acceptance of status and harmony orientation respectively (Lewis, 2007). Similarly, Western and Asian communication styles are often contrasted as Talkative versus Reserved; Extrovert versus Introvert; Half listens versus Listens Carefully (Lewis, 2007). Furthermore learning styles have been categorized as Socratic versus Confucian, where the former is intrinsically motivated and sees the teacher as facilitator; while the latter is extrinsically motivated and respects the authority of the teacher (Flowerdew & Miller, 1995, in McKay, 2002).

One drawback to these characterizations, is that while they may contain grains of truth, they can also be demeaning to either culture. They also ignore the fact that, "National identities are not monolithic" (Kramsch, 1993, p.83, in McKay, Ch. 4). Another problem is that depictions of Confucian and Socratic learning styles are not supported by extensive classroom observation (Kubota, 1999). Furthermore, they can lead to "ideas of otherness and foreignness" (McKay, 2002, p. 106), and are ultimately contrary to UNESCO's goal of "promoting languages as a means of dialogue and international integration" (2007). According to Said (1978), "When one

uses categories like 'Oriental' and 'Western' as both the starting and end points of analysis . . . the result is usually to polarize the distinction – the Oriental becomes more Oriental, the Westerner more Western – and limit the human encounter between different cultures, traditions, and societies . . . this division itself is an expression of hostility." (in Susser, 1998, p.50)

The Japanese Context: A Special Case

Japan is a relatively homogeneous society where less than one percent of the population is foreign-born (2000 Census, in Hammond, 2006). A "largely self-induced 'island mentality'" known as the "Uchi-Soto" (inside-outside wall) exists which emphasizes an inherent difference between the Japanese and the rest of the world" (Yoneoka, 1999, in Yoneoka, 2000, p.11). According to Lewis (2007) this sense of "separateness" was derived from Japan's remoteness over two millennia, and period of complete isolation up to 1853. In this context, therefore, there is an even greater need to emphasize commonality between Japanese students and foreigners to foster cross-cultural friendship. Emphasizing only differences runs the risk of exacerbating pre-existing ideas about separateness.

Avoiding Divisive ELT

Since all pedagogical practice yields affective and attitudinal outcomes, teachers must devote careful attention to these outcomes. Reflective teaching and awareness of our "weltangshaung" (world view) are critical. Hammond (2006) recommends teaching from the perspective of critical pedagogy, or an awareness of how educational practices may be ". . . shaped by wider, socio-political forces, and in the interests of dominant social groups" (p.549). Such self examination may be useful for the English teacher who recently described English Language Teaching as, "A stealth crusade . . . A form of a Christian mission . . . A cultural bomb . . . (that) has the capacity to colonize the mental universe of the people on whom this language is thrust" (Khan, 2008). If this kind of inflammatory rhetoric characterizes a teacher's "weltangshaung," and is adopted into the students' core belief system, it dims the likelihood that they will achieve any cross-cultural friendship. However, practitioners who approach ELT with the goal of generating global unity, are more likely to achieve positive outcomes.

The Small Scale Study

To investigate student perceptions, the author devised the following three research questions.

(1) How do students feel about communicating with foreigners?

(2) What are students' perceptions of foreigners?

(3) Do students perceive themselves as more similar to or different from foreigners?

Method

A questionnaire was prepared in English and administered in Japanese to 90 EFL students at a small Japanese university. The students were spread over six classes (four classes of English majors, one class of Law majors, and one class of students studying Chinese), and exhibited a wide range of English proficiency and motivation. They were assured that participation was voluntary, that their responses would be kept confidential and would have no impact on their grades. Students were asked to answer "Yes", "No", or "Unsure" to each statement and to elaborate in Japanese on any "Unsure" answer. They were told that for the purposes of the questionnaire, the word “foreigner” would refer to native English speakers who reside in Japan. Written comments from completed questionnaires were translated into English by a Japanese EFL teacher.

Results

The complete questionnaire results are included in Appendix A. With regard to communicating with foreigners, about half of the students (51%) admitted feeling stressed or nervous when talking to foreigners, but a large majority (86%) - especially among the English majors - claimed they enjoy talking to foreigners and 87% would like more contact. Fifty percent of students reported not having foreign friends (chiefly among the law students). At the same time, among the 46% who claimed to have foreign friends, the highest percentage was among the 3rd and 4th year English majors, most of whom had been on study abroad programs. A little more than half the students (57%) said they feel comfortable if a foreigner asks for help, such as with directions, information, etc. Among the 43% who said they do not feel comfortable or are unsure, the majority were Chinese and Law majors.

Responses to perceptions of foreigners were notably consistent. The majority rejected the idea that foreigners were too individualistic (80%), rude (71%) and too casual/informal (80%). A smaller majority (57%) agreed that foreigners were open-minded and tolerant. While 69% disagreed that foreigners were too direct, a sizable minority (18%) felt that they were too direct. A significant number (80%) did not think that foreigners should behave more like Japanese people.

Finally, with regard to similarities and differences, only 22% felt more similar to than different

from foreigners, 44% felt more different and 22% were unsure. At the same time, 74% did not feel that cultural differences would impede close friendships with foreigners.

A complete list of student comments is included in Appendix B.

Discussion

It appears that most of the students polled enjoy communicating with foreigners and would like more contact with them. This is notable given their relatively limited contact with foreigners and the possibility that they may have been exposed to unfavourable stereotypes. The stress or nervousness felt by many students when talking to foreigners appeared to be related to their English ability (particularly among law students) rather than to a negative perception of foreigners in general. There seemed to be a general willingness to help, and pleasure at being asked. A Chinese major commented, "I'm glad to be asked, and I want to help, but I'm unsure whether my English is good enough to be understood." That almost all the English majors said they enjoy talking to foreigners could possibly be related to the university English program which offers them opportunities to study abroad and have contact with native English speakers. This speaks to the value of study abroad programs not only for enhancing language fluency, but also for cultivating cross-cultural friendship and mutual understanding. The fact that the Law and Chinese majors did not have such overseas experiences may allow them to maintain a perception of difference or separateness, which may also lead to nervousness in communication. However they too, for the most part, said that they enjoy and would like more contact with foreigners. This underscores the value of integrative motivation in ELT.

Positive perceptions of foreigners and apparent acceptance of so-called "Western" qualities as individualism and "being casual/informal" could be indicative of students' tolerance and open-mindedness. An English major commented that "Individualism is not so bad because personality is important." This suggests that students may have overcome negative stereotyping to which they may have been exposed. Another comment, "I think they are casual and informal, but not overly so," suggests that the supposed "differences" between Western and Asian values and behaviour are not as pronounced as some discourse suggests (Lewis, 2007). Based on this, it could be argued that over-emphasis of these "Western" qualities could adversely affect students' perceptions of foreigners and impede cross-cultural friendship.

On the other hand, a significant minority felt that foreigners are too direct. This could be

explained by the differing linguistic structures and pragmatic rules of English and Japanese. That most students felt that foreigners should not try to behave like the Japanese suggests an appreciation of diversity and an openness to new ideas and influences. However, a possible negative explanation could be that students would prefer that foreigners not try to integrate into Japanese society, allowing the "uchi-soto" (inside-outside) wall (Yoneoka, 1999) to remain intact.

Perhaps the most notable finding from this study is that most students appear to perceive themselves as more different from than similar to foreigners. This could be attributed to a lack of contact with foreigners. To quote one student, "I don't know because I haven't had a chance to meet a lot of foreigners." Another student commented that, "I think the way of thinking is very different". A third student acknowledged the cross-cultural commonality by saying, "We may have some commonalities because we are human beings, but we may also have differences due to different ways of thinking." This would seem to support the contention that the main differences among peoples are superficial, but beneath the surface, we are united by our common humanity. However, that so many students felt more different from than similar to foreigners could be attributed to Japan's alleged "separateness" mentality. Interestingly, however, this perception of difference does not appear to influence how students feel about friendship with foreigners suggesting that perceived "difference" may actually contribute to cross-cultural friendship. However, there is no way to determine whether or not friendship would endure after the "novelty factor" wears off.

Conclusion

Students' positive perceptions of foreigners speaks to the value of study abroad programs and university EFL programs that facilitate contact between Japanese students and native English speakers. This allows students to discover commonality essential for cross-cultural friendship. Students' perceptions of difference suggest that the Japanese "separateness mentality" could be exacerbated by emphasizing difference to the neglect of commonality. It seems counter productive to erect cultural barriers after breaking down language barriers. The chief caveat, however, is that although young people, by nature, tend to be open to new ideas, as they mature, their perceptions naturally evolve. Nunan and Lamb's "Garden Model" theory (1996) contends that when seeds of learning are sown, they will later sprout and grow. In this case, 10-20 years into the future is the time when seeds of divisiveness could potentially sprout, grow, and bear fruit. Therefore, it is essential to engage in reflective, ethical teaching practices, incorporating

appreciation of cultural diversity as well as cultural commonality. After all "The key to mutual respect and tolerance for cultures and people throughout the world is the recognition of our differences, while acknowledging the underlying universality of mankind. Both types of acceptance are necessary - either one alone is bound to lead to discrimination and ethnocentrism" (Yoneoka, 2000, p.11). This, in the author's view, is why student perceptions of us does and should matter.

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Appendix A: Intercultural Communication Survey Results (N = 90)

In the following questions, the word “foreigner” refers to native speakers of English from America and other Western countries, who reside in Japan.

	Total Response		
	Yes	**No**	**Unsure**
(1) I feel stressed or nervous when I talk to foreigners.	51%	44%	4%
	46	40	4
(2) I enjoy talking to foreigners.	86%	8%	6%
	78	7	5
(3) I have foreign friends.	46%	50%	4%
	41	45	4
(4) I would like to have more contact with foreigners.	87%	10%	3%
	78	9	3
(5) I feel comfortable if a foreigner asks me for help.	57%	22%	21%
	51	20	19
(6) Cultural differences would prevent me from having close friendships with foreigners.	12%	74%	13%
	11	67	12
(7) Foreigners are too individualistic.	9%	80%	11%
	8	72	10
(8) Foreigners who live in Japan should try to behave more like Japanese people.	10%	80%	10%
	9	72	9
(9) Foreigners are open-minded and tolerant.	57%	18%	25%
	51	16	23
(10) Foreigners seem rude to me.	6%	71%	22%
	5	64	20
(11) There are more similarities than differences between foreigners and Japanese.	22%	44%	33%
	20	40	30
(12) Foreigners are too casual and informal.	8%	80%	16%
	7	72	14
(13) Foreigners are too direct.	18%	69%	13%
	16	62	12

Appendix B: Comments from Students Who Chose "Unsure"

Note: The majority of the following comments were translated from Japanese into English by a Japanese EFL teacher. In cases where students wrote comments in English, these were not edited. In cases where several students made the same comment, the comment is followed by the number of students who made it.

(1) I feel stressed or nervous when I talk to foreigners.

- I'm anxious about expressing myself in English.
- It depends on the time and the situation.

(2) I enjoy talking to foreigners.

- I'm anxious about expressing myself in English.
- Conversation depends on the person.
- It depends on the person.
- Because you cannot speak with foreigners if you don't know English.

(3) I have foreign friends.

- I have some foreigners I say "hello" to when I meet them, but I'm not sure I can call them "friends".
- I have a foreign friend who got Japanese citizenship.
- I have acquaintances.

(4) I would like to have more contact with foreigners.

- By meeting foreigners, I can learn a lot. But I cannot speak English, so I don't have many chances to meet them.
- I want to make some friends, but if I have too many foreign friends, I may get nervous.
- I don't have a chance to meet them. If I had, I would think so.

(5) I feel comfortable if a foreigner asks me for help.

- Because if I don't know the answer, I can't explain.
- I don't exactly feel comfortable, but I may feel comfortable if it leads to a friendship.
- I am glad when I can answer by myself, and not glad when I can't.
- You can agree or disagree too much.
- Being asked for help with directions may be good practice, but I get embarrassed if I hear many unfamiliar words.
- Because I'm worried that I might confuse them even though I want to help them.
- I'm glad to be asked for help, but I doubt that I can explain well.
- I'm glad to be asked, and I want to help, but I'm unsure whether my English is good enough to be understood.
- I'm glad to be relied on, but I'm unsure whether I can solve it by myself.
- I'll feel uncomfortable if I'm asked something I don't understand.
- At the present time, if I am asked for help, I cannot answer, but I would like to help as much as possible.
- I'm glad to be asked, but I'm worried if I will be understood because of my English ability.
- I feel neither happy nor sad.
- I don't feel glad when I'm asked for help when they're having a problem. I feel sorry for them.
- It depends on the person.
- I'm glad, but there are many times I cannot communicate very well, because I can't speak English very well. If they come to Japan, I want them to study Japanese a little before they come. They appear a little "put out" when my English isn't good.

(6) Cultural differences would prevent me from having close friendships with foreigners.

- It doesn't matter.
- It depends on the person.
- In my experience sometimes foreigners come on a homestay to Japan. Some of them try to make their own culture look good. I feel embarrassed. Considering this, cultural differences may prevent friendship, but I think teachers at our university are not like that.
- It wouldn't just be cultural differences that would prevent it.
- Culture or where someone is from doesn't matter. If we understand each other's feelings and have empathy, that is more important than any language barrier.
- Because there are cultural differences, having communication is fun.
- You cannot generalize.

(7) Foreigners are too individualistic.

- Individualism is not because of nationality but because of personality.
- It's each person.
- It depends on the person (2).
- Individualism is not so bad because personality is important.
- Because I have not had a close relationship with foreigners.
- It's good to have your own opinion, but isn't it important to have harmony?
- We can't generalize because people are all different.

(8) Foreigners who live in Japan should try to behave more like Japanese people.

- Not everyone should, but some people may.
- Maybe Japanese people seem unique because they hide their emotions.
- Because I'm not Japanese.
- Because they are in Japan, I think they can behave like Japanese, or they can be themselves. It depends on the person.
- I think foreigners who live in Japan should or can live as they are accustomed to, while adapting to Japanese culture.
- It depends on the person.

(9) Foreigners are open-minded and tolerant.

- This is not because of nationality but because of personality.
- It depends on the person (13).
- I don't know because I haven't had a chance to meet a lot of foreigners.
- I've not thought so.
- We cannot make general statements about foreigners.
- I can't say either because the category "foreigners" is too broad.
- Because I have not had a close relationship with foreigners.
- Because I don't know very well.
- It doesn't matter whether they're foreigners or not.

- We can't generalize because people are all different.
- There are many different kinds of people.
- Not all foreigners are open-minded and tolerant.
- You cannot generalize.
- Because I don't think all foreigners are tolerant, and actually I have a foreign acquaintance who is unaccepting.

(10) Foreigners seem rude to me.

- This is not because of nationality but because of personality.
- It depends on the person (9).
- I think the word "rude" is not correct.
- You can agree or disagree too much.
- We cannot make general statements about foreigners.
- Because I have not had a close relationship with foreigners.
- Because I don't know, but they're not as likely to change their opinions as Japanese people. Japanese people's opinions are influenced by other people depending on who they are.
- Some foreigners (like Japanese) care about the little things, and some don't. Whether they are rude or not, I cannot say.
- We can't generalize because people are all different.

(11) There are more similarities than differences between foreigners and Japanese.

- This is not because of nationality but because of personality.
- I don't know (4).
- I think the way of thinking is very different.
- It depends on the person (4).
- I don't know because I haven't had a chance to meet a lot of foreigners.
- There are some similarities and differences.
- I have not thought about it very much.
- We may have some commonalities because we are human beings, but we may also have differences due to different ways of thinking.
- You can agree or disagree too much.
- Because I'm not Japanese.
- There are similarities and differences even among Japanese. It depends on the person. We are the same human beings, so we may have many similarities. But I'm not sure if I can detect the similarities and differences in terms of "Japanese" and "foreigners".
- Because I have not had a close relationship with foreigners.
- It's natural to have cultural differences, because the country is different. Also there are personal differences.
- I don't really think so.
- It doesn't matter whether they're foreigners or not.
- We can't generalize because people are all different.
- There are both differences and similarities.
- Because there is the same number of similarities and differences.

- You cannot generalize.
- I'm not aware of it.

(12) Foreigners are too casual and informal.

- I think they are casual and informal, but not overly so.
- I think so, sometimes.
- I don't understand the meaning of the question.
- It depends on the person (5).
- it is not possible to disagree with this because being casual is also being more relaxed.
- It doesn't matter whether they're foreigners or not.

(13) Foreigners are too direct.

- I think they are more direct than Japanese.
- I don't know very well.
- It depends on the person; sometimes being direct is good, sometimes bad.
- It doesn't matter whether they're foreigners or not, it depends on the person.
- We can't generalize because people are all different.
- Not all foreigners are too direct.
- I don't have an opinion.
- Because I think there are people who are not too direct.
- It depends on the person (2).

Slang: Breathing Life Into English

Jon Lieb

Japan Ground Self Defense Force

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to argue for the inclusion of slang in the ESL/EFL classroom and textbooks. Slang is realia and authentic and should therefore be taught to students who want to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of the English language as spoken by native English speakers. Many English language learners often express frustration at not being able to follow the slang, jargon, colloquialisms and idioms ubiquitous in the conversations of native English speakers. Therefore, logically, it seems, an attempt should be made to introduce students to some of the more common slang expressions used by native English speakers.

What is Slang?

Dalzell & Victor (2008) define slang as ". . . slangy jargon, a colloquialism, an acronym, an initialism, a vulgarism or a catchphrase. In all instances, an entry imparts a message beyond the text and literal meaning" (p. ix). A colloquialism is a slang term that makes its way into the mainstream. In other words, it is a subculture term that is now in wide usage. An example would be the word "cool." Some researchers say slang originated as a secret language = slanguage (American Webster Dictionary, 2000), particularly among subcultures concerned mostly with crime, sex, drugs and music. War, especially unpopular wars, also appears to breed slang terms. In short, slang or slanguage as it is known among linguists – perhaps they could be called slanguists – in all likelihood began with the beginnings of English itself and stems from the desire to amuse and abuse. Some linguists suspect the name is derived from the Scandinavian word slengenamn. The Oxford English Dictionary discounts this based on dates and early associations (Harper, 2001).

Not all slang words are derived from unscrupulous activities. Music, sports, and many forms of entertainment have also been rich sources of slang. How often have we heard the phrase "hitting a home run" to talk about one's performance on a test? There is no denying the value of slang. Slang serves different purposes:

- It's fun. *It's got oomph, zip, zap and zing. One can high step it.*
- It's amusing. *It's got razzle. One can yok and yak. It cops the laughs.*

- It dares to be different. *It is not from this joint. One can get all hot for it.*
- It paints a picture. *It ups one's game.*
- It's surprising, even shocking. *It's a spine-tingler, or a snorter.*
- It's to the point and refreshing. *It's not as daft as one looks.*
- It beautifies the language. *It angels the gobbledegook.*
- It gives scope and description, solidifying abstractions. *It's in the groove, not hell west and crooked.*
- It plays down the seriousness of a situation. *It makes everything all fine and dandy.*
- It creates intimacy. *It rubs the gonads. It plays with one's mojo, dig?*
- It's inclusive. *It makes one a part of the crew, the wise guys, the firm, the push, a made man.*
- It's fashionable. *It makes one a cool cat, a hipster.*
- It can be a hidden language all its own. *It can whitewash, keep the peep.*

Slang is generally associated with oral rather than written speech; however, there are exceptions. For example, some linguists have argued that SMS texting is a type of slang (Slang, Wikepedia, 2009). Informal letters and emails among friends are also frequently characterized by slang. That said, for the most part, it could be argued that writing tends to be governed by more formal conventions and rules than the spoken word.

Neglect of slang in the EFL Classroom

Among Teachers

No doubt some English teachers will wince at the idea of including slang in English language teaching, adhering, instead, to the belief that English is being corrupted, and that it must maintain structure and formality, and operate within the bounds of what is well-established. However, this fails to take into consideration how English has evolved. None of us today speaks in the words of Shakespeare: “Here thou I go forth.” Today we would say, “Let's go” or “I'm leaving” or “I'm outta here” or “Let's make tracks.”

In Textbooks

English textbooks often fail to take advantage of informal English and slang and steer too often into the realm of proper, sober English. Too often sterile, stagnant language is the norm:

"Hello, Mary. How are you?"
"Hello, Frank. I am fine. Are you going to the concert tonight?"
"Yes, Mary. I am going. Will I see you there?"
"Yes, Frank. I will be attending around 7 p.m."
"I am delighted to hear that, Mary. Take care. Good bye."

American teenagers would be full of scorn and reprehension for such a conversation because it is stiff, guarded and unnatural. It is not authentic. Yet this is what many textbooks offer second language learners. Even if the sentence structures are correct, they sound wrong to the ear of a native language speaker. A more realistic conversation would go something like this:

"Hey, Mar, what's up?"
"Hey, Frankie. Not much. You catching the show tonight?"
"Yeah, wild horses couldn't drag me away. I'll be there at seven."
"Cool. See ya there. Ciao."
"See ya, Mar."

This is real. This is authentic. People talk like this. This is what is heard in movies, not that clapboard drivel in staid textbooks. But slang can be difficult to teach. Different social strata use different slang, not to mention regional varieties in slang from country to country. It is imperative for ESL/EFL teachers to cater to the needs of their students and tailor the slang to be taught in their classrooms. One can begin with the most common slang expressions used in a society or in the targeted subculture.

Emphasis on written English

The problem is further exacerbated because some teachers teach written forms of English as conversational English, failing to take into consideration that conversation involves many factors. Guest (1998) addressed this problem by saying:

> *"If one is purporting to teach 'conversation,' it is therefore necessary that written forms not be used as models of the spoken language. To do so would be simply out of place, since spoken forms often employ unique and distinct means of realizing various interpersonal functions of real-time discourse (attitudes, highlighting, evaluative markers, personal relations, repair, etc.) or allow one to more accurately identify or utilize a specific genre (narrative, language-in-action, etc.) of speech. It is not as if spoken and written forms are parallel systems separated only by degrees of register."*

Carter and McCarthy (1994) expressed concern at the lack of realia in textbooks and in classrooms and suggested that many teachers are producing L2 speakers who are unable to cope

with natural English. In effect, the students graduate speaking unnatural English.

Some teachers may balk at teaching slang because it can be time consuming, requiring some advanced preparation. Others may insist on it not being standard English and refuse to teach it. But like it or not, there is no denying that we all use slang one time or another and often every day, in his or her own way. The beauty of it is that it is not the same as written English. Spoken English is generally simpler, much less complex than written English. That is because we often leave out words, using ellipses, which we would not do in written English (Guest, 1998).

Why include slang in the EFL Classroom?

Motivation

Including slang in the EFL classroom can have a positive impact on student motivation. The best indicators for overall success, according to Naiman, Frohlich, Stern, and Todesco (1995), are ". . . attitude and motivation." According to Gardner's (1972) language learning motivation can be categorized as integrative versus instrumental. Instrumental motivation is related to the functional use of language - as a tool - to accomplish certain objectives. Integrative motivation is characterized by a genuine interest in integrating with the speakers of the target language (Gardner & Lambert, p.132). This is reiterated by Rubrecht (2006) who refers to it as "a learner's desire to enter into the target language and interact with native speakers" (p.73). Learning slang can help accomplish both of these objectives.

Relevancy and Authenticity

Another way in which slang positively affects motivation is that it offers both relevancy and authenticity, both of which are directly linked to student motivation. If students feel that what they are studying is relevant to their everyday lives, and usable when communicating with native speakers, they will be more motivated to study. Students also desire to go beyond the textbook and speak real, living language. Slang allows for them to do this as it has real world application. It is the way native English speakers speak when speaking with friends and coworkers. If we want to motivate our students to excel, where they can put what they are learning to work, then teaching slang is an ideal way to do it. As many of us know, home stay programs are an integral part of the L2 experience. It is no coincidence that L2 learners return with a deeper appreciation for English than their counterparts who haven't spent time abroad. Research done into home stay programs where students who are immersed in the L2 achieve higher levels of fluency than those exposed to traditional textbook learning alone. Students

achieve a higher degree of speaking fluency because of their exposure to native English speakers using natural English – not textbook English (Bodycott & Crew, 2000).

The Affective Domain

Learning slang can be a motivator because it taps into what students want to be part of the group or the in-crowd. Its more colorful and descriptive terminology – far more than formal language – begs for inclusion. It engages minds through humor and sarcasm and cynicism. Young people especially revel in the creative expressionism which is on display – just listen to rap or hip hop. Research shows that if students find learning fun and engaging, then they are more likely to succeed, and they have a better chance of remembering more of what they learn. In other words, success breeds success (Bandura, 1977). This is tied to the affective domain, the emotional part of the brain. In his affective filter hypothesis, Krashen (1982) maintains that optimal learning takes place when a positive attitude is present, as negative emotions lead to a strong affective filter that can serve as an impediment to learning. Researchers like Mori (1999) show that student attitudes and beliefs are predictors of success. So if the students find value in what they are learning, then they will have a greater potential for success. Hence the importance of connecting what they need to learn to what they want to learn.

Demonstrating the evolution of language

Teaching slang demonstrates to students that English is not a stilted and stale language. It is forever changing, evolving to suit the needs of its users. Slang, in particular, breathes new life into the language and makes it vibrant and living. We need look no further than the differences between generations. Teenagers are notorious for wielding words and forming new euphemisms, especially when it comes to sex. For example, sexual intercourse becomes horizontal dancing. Things that are good are called bad.

Enhancing informal communication

Slang serves several purposes, but the main one seems to be to enhance informal communication. In many cases, it makes conversations more informal and enables the user to more closely connect with others in the group. According to the Concise New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English: “We have considered for inclusion all unconventional English that has been used with the purpose or effect of either lowering the formality of communication and reducing solemnity and/or identifying status or group and putting oneself in tune with one's company” (Dalzell & Victor, 2005). It could be argued that

this is particularly valuable in the Japanese ELT context where group membership is highly valued.

To Supplement English for Specific Purposes

The case could be made that slang also has value similar to English for Specific Purposes programs. Some have even put forward the idea of English for Conversational Purposes (ECP) as a distinct subdivision of English language study, on a par with ESP (Campbell-Larsen & Cunningham, 2009). Slang would be an integral part of ECP. While all native English speakers habitually use slang (some of it gaining wide use among the general public), it also could be utilized when studying language patterns of certain social strata or subcultures. This researcher has personal experience teaching military English to the Japanese Ground Self Defense Forces, a program that necessitated the inclusion of military slang in addition to general English.

To Supplement TOEIC and TOEFL

While the TOEIC test is suitable for the workplace, and the TOEFL is indicative of a student's academic suitability for admission to an overseas university, neither test gives a quantifiable scoring of a student's ability to mesh with different social groups in natural settings. Thus, inclusion of slang in English language teaching helps bridge the gap between what students have to learn to pass tests and what they need to learn to be naturally communicative in English.

Cultural Considerations

Halliday (1990) describes spoken language as being nearer "the ideational bone" of language and is therefore easier for non-native English speakers to understand. In the case of Japanese English language learners, he says that, structurally speaking, spoken Japanese is closer to spoken English than it is to written English. Halliday calls for more attention to be paid to spoken English, which to be complete, should include slang.

Caveats

Some linguists have cautioned that slang should meet certain criteria before being defined as slang. Dumas and Lighter (1978) suggest that slang may lower ". . . the dignity of formal or speech or writing." They say that the speaker needs to be well-versed in the subject matter and that slang must be recognized as a ". . . taboo term in ordinary discourse with speakers of high social status or greater responsibility." Finally, they say that it must be made clear that slang is a substitute for ". . . a well-known conventional synonym." In other words, the teaching of slang

must also incorporate clear instruction on its correct pragmatic usage.

Slang can be taught much the same way conventional vocabulary is taught. Movies, in particular are an extremely rich source for slang. This author believes that film scripts can be used to enhance the learning experience in the L2 classroom, as well as films with and without subtitles. The most popular films can be analyzed for their slang value and serve as discussion points.

Conclusion

Slang has real world application in today's L2 classroom. It is realia. It is authentic material. It is a pragmatic, living, breathing part of the English language. Slang can be a motivational tool, providing color, humor, and intimacy where there was none before. It breaths life into English. It fosters communication. Slang does this by lowering the affective filter. Slang appeals to students studying English, bringing immediacy and inclusion to conversation, and sometimes breaking down the walls that surround taboo subjects. It should be taught because it is not only an integral and intimate part of the English language but because it fosters an understanding not yet frequently found in mainstream textbooks and materials. It serves a purpose that years and years of studying for the TOEIC or TOEFL cannot.

Biographical Statement

Jon Lieb has degrees in journalism and international relations and has been associated with Teachers Helping Teachers since 2005. He teaches English in the Japan Ground Self Defense Forces language immersion program. Prior to teaching English in Japan, he was a California high school teacher, a journalist and a businessman.

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Appendix A - Slang IQ Tests

Numerous sites on the Internet provide the opportunity for students to test their coolness. Below are just a handful of sites that offer the opportunity to test student slang IQs:

American slang: http://www.schandlbooks.com/AmericanSlangTest.html

Teen slang: http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/family/teens/test-teen-slang-quiz

Australian slang: http://www.helloquizzy.com/tests/the-australian-slang-test

London slang: http://www.helloquizzy.com/tests/the-can-you-speak-london-slang-test

Drug slang: http://www.newswise.com/articles/view/524609/?sc=dwtp

Sports slang: http://yahoo.australiatests.com/quizteaser/slang/

Cyber slang: http://www.kdz.com/slangtest.htm

English slang idioms:
http://www.english-test.net/esl/learn/english/grammar/ii385/esl-test.php

Expanding Vocabulary Through Repeated Exposures

Jon Lieb

Japan Ground Self Defense Force

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to make the case for expanding student vocabularies through repeated exposures, and to offer suggestions for implementation of such an approach. Fluency in English is not achieved without building a good vocabulary. This in turn requires time, patience and repeated exposures to aid recall. Research studies show it just does not happen overnight.

Why focus on vocabulary?

Focusing on vocabulary acquisition has many benefits for students and teachers. As students increase their vocabularies, they become better and better communicators. Students can use new words almost immediately. This generates a lot of student satisfaction and builds self-confidence, critical to language learning and motivation. Learning vocabulary also has attainable outcomes. Students are acutely aware of their expanding vocabulary, and this, in itself, is highly motivational (Lieb, 2006). Often, progress in language learning is a nebulous and immeasurable construct. However, vocabulary acquisition can be measured. We can test speaking, listening, reading and writing vocabularies. And the results are rapid. We can give students something to aim for.

Theoretical background

What does it mean to know a word? It is not enough to just know its meaning or definition. We must know its form, "the arrangement of the (word), any rules which govern it, and any special difficulties which it presents" (Analyzing language, 2006). We also need to know its function, "the purpose(s) for which (it) is to be used and the contexts in which it is used, by whom and in which situations" and its phonology, "its sounds, . . . stress, . . . intonation and rhythm, all of which help learners understand spoken English and make their own speech more natural, comprehensible and meaningful (Analyzing language, 2006).

Vocabulary Learning Hypothesis and the need for repeated exposures

The Vocabulary Learning Hypothesis (Nagy and Herman, 1985) states that "Most vocabulary is learned gradually through repeated exposure to new and known words in various contexts" (p.16). They point out that when students first meet a word, they have only a 5 – 10 % chance of

remembering it. It may take 10-12 exposures to the word, generally in a variety of contexts and over time, before a new word is finally committed to memory. For this reason, repeated encounters with new vocabulary is essential for effective vocabulary acquisition.

From passive to active vocabulary

Hinkel (2007) makes a clear distinction between passive and active vocabulary. Many language learners, especially in Japan, have large, latent stores of passive vocabulary - words they have encountered but cannot recall for active use. Active vocabulary, on the other hand, consists of words that are easily recalled and readily usable by students for speaking and writing. Hinkel (2007) points out that "a large passive vocabulary does not necessarily result in a better . . . active vocabulary" (p.6). Thus, vocabulary must transition from passive to active if it is ever to become available for productive use. Speaking and writing help activate passive vocabulary. "To increase the range of (active) vocabulary . . . explicitly and directly activating passive vocabulary is requisite" (Hinkel, 2007, p.6). This suggests that in order to foster active vocabulary acquisition, new words need to be encountered in meaningful contexts, through a variety of receptive and productive activities, and that focusing on a specific topic or theme will give students ample practice with a targeted topic-centered vocabulary. This is the value of multiple exposures.

Generative vocabulary use

Most educators would agree that new learning is successful when students can relate it with what they already know. Wittrock's (1974) Generative Learning Theory states that "Learning occurs when students create relationships". This includes relationships among external stimuli as well as relationships with what was learned before. This also applies to learning new vocabulary. Learning a word in a textbook is meaningless unless students have an opportunity to use that word for their own purposes, and thus see its value for their daily lives. Multiple exposures can help accomplish this objective by providing students with opportunities to use new vocabulary in a variety of different contexts. Deepened understanding takes place through comparisons and contrasts, and it helps learners to adapt to new and challenging situations.

Nation (2007) theorizes that ". . . the more generatively an item is used, the greater the strength and chance of learning." He states that vocabulary imprinting has four phases: The first is receptive retrieval, where a student hears the definition and must retrieve the word. The second is productive retrieval, where a student hears the word and must then give the definition. The

third is receptive-generative use, where the student uses the word in a specific situations. And the fourth is productive-generative use, whereby the student uses the vocabulary word in new ways and in new situations. The key is that generative use (or active use) of new vocabulary leads to better recall than retrieval alone. This should be kept in mind when designing and planning instruction.

Multiple Intelligence Theory

Howard Gardner, eminent development psychologist, writes in his book The Theory of Multiple Intelligences that everyone possesses not one, but multiple intelligence types and how we learn is influenced by our particular intelligence type. Not every tree bends the same direction. While most individuals show a tendency towards a particular intelligence type, we draw upon many different types of intelligences such as visual, musical, kinesthetic, and mathematical. Gardner suggests that taking advantage of these multiple pathways to the brain optimizes and maximizes learning. Engaging students through different intelligences can heighten sensory reception leading to a greater likelihood of memory retention. Applying this theoretical framework to vocabulary acquisition would suggest that teaching new vocabulary in a multitude of different ways is preferential to one particular method, as each different type of exposure can engage a greater variety of intelligence types. In other words, multiple exposures activate multiple intelligences.

The affective filter

Krashen (2003) talks about the importance of the affective domain, involving our attitudes and emotions, and its effect on learning. He suggests that an environment where students feel safe is most conducive to learning. If students feel threatened, then an affective filter which blocks incoming information, is raised. Make learning fun and the affective filter is lowered and more information reaches to the brain. If learning is tedious and boring – or worse, unpleasant – than the affective filter is also raised, information is blocked, and the ability to retain new words is greatly reduced. Do this simple test: Think back to when you were in school. Try and remember your elementary school teachers. Which do you remember? Chances are you will remember the teachers who made learning fun. And chances are you may remember the teachers who behaved like ogres. But do you remember the teachers who were tedious and boring? Chances are you won't. That is because the affective part of the brain – the emotional gatekeeper – was activated. And odds are that you only remember those teachers who made an emotional connection. Repeated exposures to new vocabulary, in a variety of simulating and interesting

situations can be an effective way to lower the affective filter and expand L2 vocabulary.

Practical activities

Taking advantage of different pathways to the brain through repeated exposures would suggest that different methods for retention of words be introduced. Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling can make an abstract word become more concrete and more meaningful.

Topic-centered lessons

Vocabulary acquisition should be topic-centered. For example, the teacher supplies a topic, something such as "Hair and Beauty." Then the teacher has students generate a list of related vocabulary and classmates offer their definitions. The teacher adds noteworthy vocabulary items, if necessary. Students copy down the words and definitions (receptive-retrieval). After that they test each other (productive-retrieval). This is followed by readings and discussions incorporating the hair and beauty vocabulary (receptive-generative or productive-generative).

Paired and group readings

Paired readings, where students must read aloud while alternating sentences or paragraphs, helps students to stay on task, and is beneficial not only to improving their pronunciation but also to their understanding of new words in different contexts. This is because they are seeing and hearing the words and it is more likely that new words will be retained. Having students discuss the unknown words with their partners and then guessing at their possible meanings will further foster critical thinking skills and will increase the likelihood of retention. After the students have read and discussed the passages, the teacher can than review the readings, adding clarity – and at the same time – providing more reinforcement with multiple exposures. Students can test each other, first giving definitions, then asking their partners to produce the words. Then flip-flop, with one partner giving the word and the partner having to produce the definition. The teacher could write several questions on the board using the new vocabulary and asking the students to discuss situations they have been in while using the new vocabulary. Future reinforcement could take place through jeopardy style games. Class readings, with each student reading one word or sentence, can be utilized in much the same way, forcing students to stay focused while the teacher listens and monitors pronunciation. This has benefits in classroom management too, with peer pressure helping to keep students on task. Teachers could ask students to go back and underline any words they did not comprehend. Classmates could step in and render answers, inducing student-centered learning while the teacher acts as facilitator and monitors the learning

environment.

Teacher handouts

The teacher could provide handouts which show vocabulary in different contexts. If the teacher were doing "Hair and Beauty" they could add in some body collocations. These are useful because students will encounter vocabulary in a different context (productive-retrieval). Provide the definitions and have students draw on what they know. Teachers may provide a word bank and a list of definitions that they must match. For example:

> *chin / eyes / feet / hands / nails / eyebrows / face / hair / legs / nose*
> *sharp/ polished/ incredibly long/ chewed* _____
> *The missing word is: nails.*

Having students test each other on the body collocations would be employing productive-retrieval skills. Putting students into pairs or groups and having them describe what they like or what puts them off? about hair and beauty would be productive-generative. The teacher may also give them a list of questions. A generative-retrieval technique that is fun involves having students sort out garbled sentences and put them into the correct word order. For example:

> *nose the legs check that and stubby pierced girl out with*
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Conclusion

In light of the above discussion, we can conclude that educators should give due consideration to repeated exposures of new vocabulary. Repeated exposures are beneficial for building and strengthening vocabulary. Students learn best when they create relationships that they can identify with. Active vocabulary is key. Speaking and writing help activate passive vocabulary. Taking advantage of the multiple pathways to the brain optimizes and maximizes learning. An environment where students feel safe is most conducive to learning. Vocabulary acquisition should be topic-centered. Student-centered learning in pairings and groupings with the teacher monitoring would be most beneficial.

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Biographical Statement

Jon Lieb has degrees in journalism and international relations and has been involved in THT since 2005. He teaches English in the Japan Ground Self Defense Forces language immersion program. Prior to teaching in Japan, he was a high school teacher, journalist and businessman.

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Attracting and Maintaining Volunteers: A Case Study

Dr. Patrick Dougherty
Abu Dhabi Men's College, Higher Colleges of Technology
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

> For you, what are the intrinsic benefits of the THT volunteer experience?
> *Professional development, friendship, community, learning, moments of pure joy.*
> - A Teachers Helping Teachers Volunteer

Abstract

Colleges, schools, communities, charitable organizations, all require the services of volunteers to maintain operations. Indeed, in the case of the United States, in 2008, 61.8 million Americans, or 26.4 percent of the adult population contributed nearly 8,000,000,000 hours of volunteer service (Sounding, Listening Post Project, 2009). Volunteers are essential to most non-profits, either as support staff, or, as is the case of the organization, Teachers Helping Teachers (THT) which is the source of the first-person data for this report, the structure of the entire organization. Examining the benefits of volunteering, and exploring what compels people to volunteer, will assist charitable and non-profit organizations to recruit volunteers and maintain them as part of the organization. It will allow THT to augment and maintain its all-essential legion of volunteer teacher trainers.

Background: Teachers Helping Teachers

Teachers Helping Teachers (THT) is a grassroots organization founded by members of the Himeji chapter of the Japanese Association for Language Teaching (JALT) in 2004. THT declares in its literature that it is dedicated to the aid and assistance of fellow educators and students in the developing nations of the Asia Pacific region. It fulfills this mission by providing teacher-training workshops that "*exhibit practical, student and teacher friendly approaches to English education that are informed by current research in the field*" (Dougherty, 2005, p. 2). As a report on a program put on in 2008 in Mindoro Oriental, the Philippines, described the methodology of a THT set of workshops, most programs are based on *". . . presentations that mix theory with practice and keep the interests and needs of working teachers always in mind*" (THT Website, 10/29/08). THT teamed with JALT in 2008 as a Special Interest Group for the purpose of obtaining non-profit status in Japan (Dougherty, 2008, p. 1).

THT has a formal membership of approximately thirty members, meaning that members have

paid a membership fee to both JALT and THT. Formal membership is not requisite to volunteer to participate in a THT conference, however, and approximately fifty individuals have volunteered to conduct workshops and seminars. Volunteers have mostly been language teachers (English, Spanish, Japanese, and German) who reside in Japan, but their nations of origin have included Germany, Argentina, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United States, Great Britain, Russia, as well as Japan. As the normal language of presentations at a THT conference is English, all THT volunteers are expected to be reasonably fluent in English.

The author was one of the founding members of the organization, and for two years its president and, in those capacities was continually involved in volunteer recruitment; hence, identifying the benefits of volunteering also identifies reasons for volunteering that can be offered to potential volunteers and, it is speculated, increase the chances of individuals offering to volunteer. Further, identifying what motivates an individual to offer to volunteer is essential if the process of volunteer recruitment is to bear fruit.

Data Collection

The core data was compiled from an internet survey and articles written by volunteers for the organization's quarterly newsletter. This was supplemented by research reports from the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Findings

The internet survey of volunteers, begun October 15, 2009 and completed November 14, 2009, forms the core of the discussion of findings. It has been supplemented by information from interviews, newsletters, and research reports.

The first question of the survey asked respondents to identify how many THT programs he or she participated in out of the fourteen programs that have been held up to that point. The findings showed that one volunteer had participated in nine programs; one in eight, one in six, one in five, five in three, two in two, and four participants had participated in one THT program. Though not asked to do so, several of the respondents listed the countries visited, and that information gave the researcher justification to say that the pool of respondents had members who visited each of the five countries THT has been active in -- Bangladesh, Vietnam, Laos, the Philippines, and Kyrgyzstan.

The second question of the survey asked participants to state how they heard about THT. Findings showed that five of the respondents were introduced to THT at national and local conferences in Japan, three through colleagues, and the remainder (seven) through meeting or knowing the founder of the organization. In one report written by a volunteer who had attended a program in Bangladesh, she explained that she attended her first program with a "*colleague and dear friend*" who was going on her second trip to Bangladesh with THT at the time (Brown, 2009).

According to a report by the Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS), personal invitations to serve are more appealing to possible volunteers (CNCS, 2009). According to the report, 43.7 percent of volunteers made the decision to volunteer in response to a direct request by a friend or family member. As explained in the report, "*A common theme underlying current volunteers' entrée into volunteering was that a friend or family member asked them to serve* (CNCS, 2009, p. 3)."

Question three asked what had attracted the volunteer to THT. Responses were varied, but the theme of sharing came up in many of the responses. One response was typical:

> *Mainly the possibility of sharing ideas and material with colleagues in different countries and, if possible, leave materials, propose ideas, try to help in the sense that, if many of those colleagues cannot attend international conferences, THT seminars can offer a good opportunity to them.*

Two responses mentioned a professional interest in teacher training. One theme came up in six responses, the attraction of travel. This was often teamed with the idea of travel not just to travel but, as two respondents put it, to "*travel with purpose*," and to travel and "*not be a tourist*."

Question four of the survey asked participants to reflect on what "compelled" them to join THT. Three of the respondents pointed out that their friendship with the leadership of THT influenced them to participate, one mentioned wanting to travel to one of the host countries and to do so in a way that would provide more than the regular tourist-like experiences. Two respondents offered that they felt motivated to assist teachers in developing countries. Of the two, one wrote, "*I had been looking for an opportunity to help teachers in developing countries, but also the presentation in which several past THT volunteers told about their experiences made it seem really interesting and worthwhile*." The other responded, "*The possibility of organizing workshops where we can have more extensive and intensive interaction than what we can have*

in one-way presentations given at conferences where interaction is more limited."

The fifth question of the survey asked each participant who had participated in more than one THT program to explain what it was about his or her first experience at a THT event motivated him or her to sign up for another THT volunteer experience. As statistics from a CNCS report explain, 35.5 percent of volunteers drop out of service each year (CNCS, 2009). Another study showed that, of the 61.7 million people who volunteered their time to a host of charitable activities in the United States in 2006, fully 21.7 million, or about one-third did not donate any time during the next calendar year (Eisner, et. al., 2009). Such a high turnover rate can impact the effectiveness of any organization, and THT, as it requires a high level of independence and flexibility on the part of volunteers, is best served by delegations that have a core of returnee volunteers who understand the system and philosophy of THT.

Regarding the question, thirteen of the respondents offered comments and, in each comment, the enthusiasm of the seminar audiences and the positive feedback from participants was offered as one of the major factors in causing the volunteer to decide to join another THT program. This was summed up by one respondent:

> *My first THT experience was in Bangladesh (March 2006). I met warm people, (and) a large hard-working audience that made me feel that they appreciated what I had prepared, and encouraging and supportive THT volunteers. After a few minutes of my first workshop I thought: it is really worth spending time and effort to prepare all this material. Actually, I did not think what or why, and simply decided that I wanted to go on participating in the THT seminars.*

Other comments cited the support of the THT delegation leaders, the "*camaraderie*" of the fellow THT volunteers, and the "*general atmosphere*" of the experience. According to CNCS (2009), one of the chief reasons cited by focus group participants for volunteering again was the show of appreciation that volunteers received for their service. One first-time volunteer, reflecting on his service, stated that he felt it was a worthwhile experience and that he hoped to join another THT program in the near future (McCoy, 2009, p. 4).

Question 6 asked participants to reflect on the intrinsic benefits of the THT volunteer experience. One of the respondents mentioned the sense of being valued as a professional; another discussed the chance to reflect on their own situation in light of the difficulties experienced by the teachers in the host countries. There was also a sense in some of the responses that the chance to give

back to the profession or society was greatly satisfying. One respondent went into detail:

> *Quite a few. It's much more rewarding to present at THT than at a regular conference because of the participants' eagerness to learn and gain new expertise. I made friends with Bangladeshi teachers. I learned a lot of about Bangladeshi education and also culture, which I've been trying to expand after I returned home by reading. Also, it was my first visit to a developing country and I gained the confidence that I can survive and teach outside of my comfort zone. It's also good to remember that Japan is pretty cushy gig for an English teacher, when held up against the global standard.*

Another respondent focused on renewing his appreciation for his own work environment, as he stated, *". . . seeing the conditions of other teachers made me appreciate my own situation more (a mere 40 students in a class is nothing!!).*

These responses correlate with studies that examine the connection between volunteering and social psychological factors such as the volunteer's ability to build social networks that decrease social isolation and also to factors that deal with "role theory." Role theory argues that increasing the number of social roles that an individual has, i.e. parent, student, teacher, volunteer, provides the individual with a sense of meaning and purpose, enhancing the integrity of self-worth and self-confidence (CNCS, 2007). As argued in one study, volunteer activities led to stronger social ties that, in turn, led to a sense of social-psychological security during difficult times and to a greater sense of self-worth and trust. Hence, volunteering can give an individual a purposeful social role (CNCS, 2007). As one participant recounted in her report on the experience, *"The enrichment grained from participation far outweighs one's own meager contribution* (Brown, 2009, p. 3)."

The seventh question asked respondents to focus on the extrinsic benefits of the THT volunteer experience. Most of the participants mentioned the opportunity to travel in an in-depth manner, being *". . . shown around a new place by nice people . . . visiting the homes of local people . . . .* " or "*experience(ing) a culture first hand*." Others mentioned the chance to add presentation experience to their resumes or journal articles to their CVs (THT has a yearly academic journal). In an article about her experience, one volunteer mentioned that she was happy she went due to the "*unforgettable*" set of experiences that she enjoyed, everything from "*the wonderful sight-seeing tours of Dhaka and Sylhet to the Bengali/English sing-along with BELTA (Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association) members, it was a series of unforgettable experiences* (Howard, 2009, p. 5)." Another volunteer, interviewed for an article

on the Bangladesh THT program stated that he felt that the teachers he worked with in Bangladesh were some of the most enthusiastic and active he had worked with (Dougherty, 2009, p. 1). This was mirrored by another volunteer reflecting on his experience in Vietnam (Palmer, 2009). Still another volunteer stated that the participants he encountered were so enthusiastic that he was challenged to match their energy in his own work (Wolfe, 2009).

Networking was stated as an extrinsic benefit by several of the respondents. In at least four cases, THT volunteers where invited back as individual scholars-in-residence or researchers, invitations that probably would not have been offered had the host institutions or members of the audience not met the individuals at THT sponsored programs. Another volunteer explained how witnessing how the officers of THT organized the seminars gave her insight on how she could better construct and organize her own programs as an officer of a Spanish language teachers association. One participant, breaking the mold, chose to focus on the extrinsic benefits the volunteer experience had on the greater community. In other words, how the volunteers, and their experience, could benefit society. As stated,

> *Ideas and information flow to a wider group. Teachers in host countries that are struggling to keep up with more developed countries are able to learn and share useful information with their own colleagues. A wider dialogue can be created. Hopefully the quality of English language teaching in host countries will be enhanced in the long term. Improved English skills among the general population of host countries means improved opportunities across the board in an increasingly competitive global context. THT programmes can, therefore, go some way to improving the balance between privileged and less privileged nations. Ongoing collaboration increases the motivation for peaceful co-existence between all kinds of people.*

This sentiment was mirrored by one of the hosts of THT, who commented that the host institution was grateful to the THT team for contributing to the professional development of teachers in Bangladesh. She admired what she identified as the "*voluntary spirit, enthusiasm and exemplary commitment of the THT forum to help teachers in developing countries.*" (Dougherty, 2009a, p. 2)

Question 8 asked respondents to imagine that they were making a case to a friend or colleague to join a THT program. The question required the respondents to detail how they would "advertise" the benefits of the volunteer experience to encourage the friend or colleague to join THT. One respondent referred to an occasion when she had been able to encourage a colleague to join a THT program, as she explained, "*I actually managed to convince a colleague to*

participate in the last program . . . I mentioned the enthusiasm of the participants and the fact that you can make much better connections with people than you can by traveling." Many of the survey responses were elaborate and colorful. One such is below:

> *Do you want to be more than a presentation number, off in a cold dark corner of a huge conference center, giving your presentation to three people who didn't have anywhere else to go that afternoon? If so, join THT, give the first plenary of your career, be astounded by the support and encouragement of hundreds of attendees, all wanting to hear you and to share their own stories.*

Question 9 asked participants whether the THT volunteer experience benefited them at work. Approximately three-fourths of the respondents said yes, that there were some direct benefits for them at work. Some cited publications being generated from the experience, other said that their departments at their universities viewed such volunteer work positively, and two respondents stated that they felt that the experience, and documentation from it in the form of a letter of recommendation, or citations on resumes, influenced their hiring or re-hiring at their current work places.

Question 10 asked if volunteering to present at a THT program benefited the respondents outside of work. Fourteen of the respondents said yes in a few or many words, and one was unsure. One of the more succinct responses said simply, "*It's given me a sense of fulfillment*." A more elaborate response had a great weight in ideas and reasons, and is quoted in its entirety, as a summary would not do it justice:

> *I think have a greater understanding of the needs and aspirations of a wider range of people. I think I understand a little more about the world as it is today. I have a wider circle of friends and acquaintances, and I feel I am spending my time and using my skills in a way that brings some benefit to other people. My training and experience is not being used solely for enhancing my own career or maintaining my own lifestyle, or just the betterment of my own small group of students. By having input into the professional life of fellow teachers, I have the chance, through them, to contribute (hopefully positively) to the lives of a greater number of people.*

Question 11 asked if the respondents had maintained contact, post-program, with audience members or hosts. Fourteen said yes, and the majority of them stated that they had maintained e-mail contact, Facebook entries, and three of the respondents have made additional, non-THT visits to the host countries either as tourists or as guest lecturers.

Question 13 offered the respondents a chance to add additional comments concerning the

benefits of volunteering for a THT program. Eleven of the respondents offered further comments and thoughts. One focused on the fact that, not only does a volunteer offer wisdom from his or her own experience in the classroom, but the volunteer also gains insight from the experiences of others. Another respondent said the experiences were *". . .great conversation starter(s) for the language teaching profession*." Finally, one respondent said that it helped you to remember that it isn't about "*you*," it's about "*them*."

Conclusions

Two main points regarding recruitment may be distilled from the research. They are adumbrated thus:

(1) Use current volunteers to recruit new volunteers.
(2) Emphasize the positive aspects of the volunteer experience to encourage participation in volunteer programs.

To attract volunteers use those who have volunteered. They can make that important personal invitation to service. This is suggested by CNCS, and has worked for THT. Six THT volunteers have given presentations to their peers at workshops and conferences in Japan, Korea, and the UAE. Others have spoken to friends and colleagues about the program and even brought new volunteers with them on programs (Brown, 2009).

Also, as cited in CNCS documents (2009) and supported by THT volunteer comments in the survey, newsletters, and interviews, both attracting and influencing current volunteers to repeat their service, an organization should emphasize the positive aspects of the volunteer experience. In the case of THT, this can be to give the first plenary address of one's career, give presentations to hundreds rather than the typical few attendees at most conferences, have an opportunity to go beyond the usual tourist experience and get to know the locals and the community, or, on the practical level, the chance to build on one's skill set, as one volunteer stated in the survey, participation gave him, *". . . a chance to extend (his) professional skills and to learn from a wide range of other teachers that I would otherwise never meet*." When asked, as part of the survey, to give an imaginary pep talk to potential volunteers, a volunteer stated that the experience was

> *. . . the best investment you could ever make. The amount of time, money, and work a THT volunteer invests is returned a thousand fold. The people in country are an inspiration. While THT volunteers are, at least to some degree, presented as*

visiting experts, they are not - and they know it. They are mirrors for the teachers in-country, helping them to come up with their own solutions and ideas.

So, to summarize, the best impetus to volunteering and encouraging repeat volunteers is grounded in making personal appeals through friends and colleagues that center on issues of positive self interest that overlap with community concerns and needs. Have volunteers work as a spokespeople for the organization, seeking out new volunteers from their networks at work and in society. Have them explain both the practical benefits and the community benefits of the volunteer experience, and in so doing, encourage participation. This will allow an organization to attach new volunteers and maintain a cadre of "repeaters," those volunteers who continue to give of their time, energy, sweat, and treasure.

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Appendix A

Internet Survey Results

Survey: Teachers Helping Teachers (THT) and the Benefits of Volunteering
15 respondents took this survey.
Question Summary

	Question	Question Type	% of Respondents Submitting
Details	Question 1	Free response	100.00%
Details	Question 2	Free response	100.00%
Details	Question 3	Free response	100.00%
Details	Question 4	Free response	100.00%
Details	Question 5	Free response	86.67%
Details	Question 6	Free response	100.00%
Details	Question 7	Free response	100.00%
Details	Question 8	Free response	100.00%
Details	Question 9	Free response	100.00%

Details	Question 10	Free response	100.00%
Details	Question 11	Free response	100.00%
Details	Question 12	Free response	100.00%
Details	Question 13	Free response	80.00%

top

Question 1 (Free response)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

How many THT programs have you participated in, and in which countries?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
1 - in Laos	1	6.67%
1-Bangladesh	1	6.67%
2	1	6.67%
3 Bangladesh, Vietnam and Laos	1	6.67%
3 - Laos, Phillipines, Bangladesh	1	6.67%
5--Vietnam 2, Laos, Philippines, and Bangladesh	1	6.67%
6 events in 3 countries (1 in Vietnam, 2 in Laos, 2 in the Philippines, 1 in Kyrgyzstan)	1	6.67%
I have participated in 8 programs (Laos, 3 times; Bangladesh, 3 times; Vietnam, 1 time; Philippines, 1 time)	1	6.67%
Nine	1	6.67%
one - bangladesh	1	6.67%
One programme in Bangladesh (2009)	1	6.67%
Three in Laos.	1	6.67%
Three Programs 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Hue/Vietnam Seminars	1	6.67%
two, both in Bangladesh	1	6.67%
Vietnam (Maggie's helper), Laos (Maggie's helper) and the Philippines (Presenter)	1	6.67%
Total	15	100.00%

top

Question 2 (Free response)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

How did you hear about THT?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
A friend of mine introduced me to Bill at Jalt 2005 and he explained the THT project to me. From the very beginning I thought there was a fine combination: a great academic project and Bill’s modesty and encouraging personality.	1	6.67%
At a presentation for JALT 2006	1	6.67%
Bill Balsamo	1	6.67%
Bill Balsamo was a close friend	1	6.67%

From Bill.	1	6.67%	
I learned about it at a JALT conference.	1	6.67%	
JALT	1	6.67%	
Presentation by Bill Balsamo, Pat Dougherty, Aya Dougherty at Peace as a Global Language 2005 (at Kyoto Sangyo University?)	1	6.67%	
Through a colleague I work with who is a member.	1	6.67%	
Through Bill Balsamo	1	6.67%	
Through Bill Balsamo.	1	6.67%	
through JALT	1	6.67%	
Total	15	100.00%	

top

Question 3 (Free response)

Total	15	100.00%

top

Question 4 (Free response)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

What propelled you to join your first THT program?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
A chance to see Bangladesh and help out there.	1	6.67%
A strong interest in Vietnam	1	6.67%
An opportunity to make a contribution.	1	6.67%
As I mentioned above I had been looking for an opportunity to help teachers in developing countries, but also the presentation in which several past THT volunteers told about their experiences made it seem really interesting and worthwhile.	1	6.67%
Bill's invitation, a longstanding desire to go to Bangladesh and the idea that I could perhaps be helpful	1	6.67%
Bill's spirit and energy to help people in developing countries further their educational experiences and his personal enlightenment.	1	6.67%
I had already booked a flight to Hanoi for a week's vacation. It was fairly easy to change my plans. I just booked a flight from Hanoi to Laos for the duration of the THT program there.	1	6.67%
I had never been to Vietnam before and the idea of giving something back.	1	6.67%
I happened to be be in Laos at the time and wanted to do something that might have been of benefit to local people in Laos.	1	6.67%
I wanted to go to Laos but not as a tourist.	1	6.67%
My friendship with Bill and the desire to help him put on a good program. Plus, I had family connections with Bangladesh.	1	6.67%
See above	1	6.67%
see above, plus it fitted with my work schedule	1	6.67%
The fact that THT aims to support teachers, who in many cases have limited professional development opportunities. The opportunity to learn about how English language teaching/learning is being conducted in other parts of the world and the chance to meet and discuss issues with like-minded colleagues. The fact that this takes place in parts of the world I would otherwise not have a chance to visit is also an attraction, but is not the main reason I participate.	1	6.67%
The possibility of organizing workshops where we can have more extensive and intensive interaction than what we can have in one-way presentations given at conferences where interaction is more limited.	1	6.67%
Total	15	100.00%

top

Question 5 (Free response)
13 of 15 respondents answered this question.

If you have been involved in two or more THT programs, what about the first experience made you want to join another program?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Definitely the good reception we get from the participants and the various host institutions.	1	7.69%
Great team to work with, great individuals, the extreme enthusiasm of the participants, caring and competent leader (Pat)	1	7.69%

Meeting students and volunteers and the general atmosphere	1	7.69%
My first THT experience was in Bangladesh (March 2006). I met warm people, a large hard-working audience that made me feel that they appreciated what I had prepared, and encouraging and supportive THT volunteers. After a few minutes of my first workshop I thought: it is really worth spending time and effort to prepare all this material. Actually, I did not think what or why, simply decided that I wanted to go on participating in the THT seminars.	1	7.69%
n/a	1	7.69%
NA (yet)	1	7.69%
People's enthusiasm; colleagues I enjoyed getting to know	1	7.69%
The camaraderie, the feeling of making a contribution, the appreciation for what we do and the opportunity to live an adventure.	1	7.69%
The experience of learning from others and helping them at the same time.	1	7.69%
The fact that the program was held in a location where I spend a lot of my vacation time plus the fact that I really really enjoy working with Lao students and educators.	1	7.69%
The participants	1	7.69%
The sheer excitement and support of the Bengalis who attended. I had done international conferences before, but this was amazing. I was exhausted but enlivened spiritually by the experience.	1	7.69%
The work of the first experience--doing the actual workshops--was quite rewarding since I got very positive feedback. However, I was really sick my last day in Dhaka after all the other participants had left and that wasn't particularly positive. So I didn't want to leave Bangladesh with bad memories and I wanted to go and have a positive experience (which I did).	1	7.69%
Total	13	100.00%

top

Question 6 (Free response)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

For you, what are the intrinsic benefits of the THT volunteer experience?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
All of the above, but also what I learn from student participants.	1	6.67%
An opportunity to help promote English education in countries that are developing and have limited resources and opportunities for educational advancement. It is a chance to help out less fortunate people.	1	6.67%
Being a teacher for many years, it feels that my knowledge and expertise reaches further through these activities. Instead of reaching one class of students, you might be influencing several classes through those who participate in you workshop/seminar.	1	6.67%
Being involved with high schools in Laos was one of the high lights of my THT experience. The local teachers struggle against great odds to bring a quality of education to their students and the students in turn value their teachers. Seeing this has been an enlightening and positive experience for me and left me with the feeling that I might be able to offer something positive at a grass roots community level.	1	6.67%
Combining volunteer work with research/travel. Seeing how other countries' English education systems work.	1	6.67%
feeling you are helping other teachers in a tiny way, seeing the conditions of other teachers made me appreciate my own situation more (a mere 40 students in a class is nothing!!)	1	6.67%
I'm writing this in Vientiane, Laos. Because of the THT trip to Laos, I got to know Ginny Van Ostrand, and she invited me to return if I could. With the help of the Asia Foundation, both in 2008 and this year I have been spending a month at Lao American College, both teaching content in American Studies and working with teachers who have relatively little experience. And this is rewarding.	1	6.67%

Many benefits, I will mention three of them. One: I am fond of literature and I am really enjoying the preparation of workshops based on literature of the countries where we go. Two: At the university, as an English student, I did not do a good job in Phonetics and thought: someday I will do something about it. Now I want to do my best in THT and that made me start taking classes to improve pronunciation. Three: I have been teaching Spanish at beginning level for years … so I find particularly enjoyable to prepare workshops for teachers in practice and students in training courses, always a highly motivated audience. Thus, I learn a lot and come back to my office willing to go on studying.	1	6.67%
Meeting the Lao teacher and being welcomed into her classroom, and into her home, was priceless. My preconceptions melted immediately after the first hour or so. Also, gaining first-hand experience of the Lao culture was an absolute honor. I was even invited to join the family for the 5:00 a.m. tradition of giving alms to the monks.	1	6.67%
Opportunities to help other people in other countries who do not have access to further educational programs or people with much experience in this area.	1	6.67%
Professional development, friendship, community, learning, moments of pure joy	1	6.67%
Quite a few. It's much more rewarding to present at THT than at a regular conference because of the participants' eagerness to learn and gain new expertise. I made friends with Bangladeshi teachers. I learned a lot of about Bangladeshi education and also culture, which I've been trying to expand after I returned home by reading. Also, it was my first visit to a developing country and I gained the confidence that I can survive and teach outside of my comfort zone. It's also good to remember that Japan is pretty cushy gig for an English teacher, when held up against the global standard.	1	6.67%
The sense of being valued as a professional. I did not get that alot in my work in Japan.	1	6.67%
to interact with people of different cultures; to share the joys of poetry; to feel satisfied about helping as a volunteer.	1	6.67%
To me, a chance to extend my professional skills and to learn from a wide range of other teachers that I would otherwise never meet. For the participants, the chance to upskill their professional skills and knowledge without having to meet the expense of travelling outside their home countries. Creating a stronger network with fellow ESOL / EFL teachers and academics and building personal relationships is a privilege.	1	6.67%
Total	15	100.00%

top

Question 7 (Free response)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

For you, what are the extrinsic beneftis fo the THT volunteer experience?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
A chance to meet other like minded participants, experience a culture first hand, travel to an exotic location, and prepare presentations/papers for professional development.	1	6.67%
Because I wanted to represent THT well, I had to revisit some themes so as to better articulate presentation material. This rethinking, of one particular method, has helped me develop material that I intend to present on at an international conference this winter. I may not have been so motivated had it not been for the THT experience.	1	6.67%
getting to be shown around a new place with by nice people seeing things you wouldn't see as a tourist e.g. visiting the homes of local people getting new ideas from other participating teachers making new friends and meeting interesting and dedicated people	1	6.67%
I believe that I might have been making some ripples in a pond that would have a positive effect on the lives of the people whose paths I crossed.	1	6.67%
I had conferences I could put on my cv and publication records. I submitted journal articles. I was able to	1	6.67%
I really can't separate the intrinsic and extrinsic	1	6.67%
I shared several moments with Bill, one of the most encouraging persons I have ever met. I shared several moments with Pat, one of the best-organized persons I have ever met (not to mention his high academic level and energy for work) I am in the company of nice and interesting people in the	1	6.67%

high academic level and energy for work) I am in the company of nice and interesting people in the countries where seminars are held. I used to observe Bill and then Dr. Pat to learn how to organize groups and seminars (this is useful for my work in the Spanish association) I met Jeremy Harmer!		
I'm a teacher trainer in Japan, so I gained some expertise about situations for language teachers that I can pass on to my students. I also have students who want to do volunteer work internationally and I'm able to talk to them about my experience.	1	6.67%
Ideas and information flow to a wider group. Teachers in host countries that are struggling to keep up with more developed countries are able to learn and share useful information with their own colleagues. A wider dialogue can be created.Hopefully the quality of English language teaching in host countries will be enhanced in the long term. Improved English skills among the general population of host countries means improved opportunities across the board in an increasingly competitive global context.THT programmes can, therefore, go some way to improving the balance between privileged and less privileged nations.Ongoing collaboration increases the motivation for peaceful co-existence between all kinds of people.	1	6.67%
Learning about English education in Asia	1	6.67%
Networking, chance to improve my C.V. Travel subsidised by my uni.	1	6.67%
Opportunities to Publish. Opportunities to develop speaking skills. Opportunities to build on your resume.	1	6.67%
Seeing that we've really made a valuable contribution to the lives of others.	1	6.67%
This kind of overseas work is not that common among my colleagues and is thus highly regarded.	1	6.67%
Would the above be extrinsic? I certainly don't need these experiences for a c.v. . . One additional benefit: getting to know the wonderful student who was my aide and guide in Hue. I hope to be able to keep up a connection with her.	1	6.67%
Total	15	100.00%

top

Question 8 (Free response)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

If you were encouraging a friend or colleague to join a THT sponsored program in any country we are involved in, what would you say?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
"It's like the Peace Corps, only for teachers." "The hardest job you'll love."	1	6.67%
all the above it's a great way to spend a holiday Bangladesh is a beautiful country and for people who are nervous about visiting that kind of poor country, it is a gentle way to try it, as you are so well-looked after and treated like a VIP. The Aristocrat Inn is the nicest western style hotel I have stayed in for ages. After japanese western hotels it is like paradise.	1	6.67%
Do you want to be more than a presentation number, off in a cold dark corner of a huge conference center, giving your presentation to three people who didn't have anywhere else to go that afternoon? If so, join THT, give the first plenary of your career, be astounded by the support and encouragement of hundreds of attendees, all wanting to hear you and to share their own stories.	1	6.67%
Go! Be prepared for program changes, unexpected situations, etc., so be flexible. But you will return energized and very happy that you participated.	1	6.67%
Here's a wonderful opportunity to make a real difference where it matters.	1	6.67%

I would say regarding the Lao experience that it is possible to both offer your skills as a teacher and as a mentor and that in turn you may well end up being taught and mentored by the local people. Many of the education professionals working in Laos are innovative and have an energy and vitality to bring to their work that is exciting and energizing to be around.	1	6.67%	
It is a great way into a culture by helping people and it also provides an opportunity for professional development.	1	6.67%	
It's the best investment you could ever make. The amount of time, money, and work a THT volunteer invests is returned a thousand fold. The people in country are an inspiration. While THT volunteers are, at least to some degree, presented as visiting experts, they are not - and they know it. They are mirrors for the teachers incountry, helping them to come up with their own solutions and ideas.	1	6.67%	
That you will get more out of the experience than you could ever give.	1	6.67%	
This is a great opportunity to travel not as a tourist but as a professional. Many of the teachers who attend these events have very few opportunities for professional development and are both eager and grateful.	1	6.67%	
You can share your research with a large responsive audience You can help colleagues in other countries by sharing your ideas and preparing material You can learn to become flexible and enjoy that You can publish	1	6.67%	
Total	15	100.00%	

top

Question 9 (Free response) 15 of 15 respondents answered this question.			
Has volunteering to present at a THT program benefited you at work? If so, how has it done so?			
	Number of Respondents	Percent	
I have been involved in Faculty Development and the THT events add credence to these efforts. These activities may have also influenced the hiring committee when applying for my current position.	1	6.67%	
I plan to publish tow papers base don presentations given at the conference. These will be included			

Yes, it always gives me new ways of looking at my classes and opens up new possibilities. Plus I get refreshed from the excitement of the THT programs. Also, it makes one very flexible.	1	6.67%	
Yes, it has certainly benefited me at work. The current president of THT, Dr. Pat, wrote a beautiful letter of recommendation and no question that it helped a lot to be hired again at Tohoku University. Besides, not only some of the theory I read and ideas I gather for my THT presentations but also the ideas I hear in presentations by other volunteers, can be adapted and used in my Spanish classes.	1	6.67%	
Yes, it has helped me establish myself as a staff development specialist.	1	6.67%	
Total	15	100.00%	

top

Question 10 (Free response)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Has volunteering to present at a THT program benefited you outside of work? If so, how has it done so?

	Number of Respondents	Percent	
all the above	1	6.67%	
As above, in "intrinsic benefits"	1	6.67%	
I have been able to establish links with countries that have allowed me to pursue my own reserch interests.	1	6.67%	
I met some great people.	1	6.67%	
I think have a greater understanding of the needs and aspirations of a wider range of people. I think I understand a little more about the world as it is today. I have a wider circle of friends and acquaintances, and I feel I am spending my time and using my skills in a way that brings some benefit to other people. My training and experience is not being used solely for enhancing my own career or maintaining my own lifestyle, or just the betterment of my own small group of students. By having input into the professional life of fellow teachers, I have the chance, through them, to contribute (hopefully positively) to the lives of a greater number of people.	1	6.67%	
I think so as Lao people are just exceptionally pleasant to work with. This pleasantness and hospitality reminds me of the value of these attributes and the importance of taking time to smell the roses and value the colleagues and students whom I have the privilege of working with.	1	6.67%	
Is there anything outside of work? I think it's helped make me a better person, but becoming a better person is the most important part of becoming a better teacher.	1	6.67%	
It has changed many aspects of my life and I have good friends in Vietnam and a much stronger interest in the Philippines	1	6.67%	
It has helped me to understand other cultures better and to become more humble.	1	6.67%	
It has provided me with a wonderful experience that I will never forget.	1	6.67%	
It has widened my realm of intercultural experience and in general given me a greater sense of accomplishment by thriving in various cultures.	1	6.67%	
It's given me a feeling of fulfilment.	1	6.67%	
Not sure.	1	6.67%	
Outside of work, I am grateful for the people I meet in each THT adventure, hosts and THT volunteers. Among many enjoyable things in the THT events I particularly like the chance of interacting with local people and sometimes, even being invited to their houses.	1	6.67%	
See above.	1	6.67%	
Total	15	100.00%	

top

Question 11 (Free response)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Have you maintained contact with our hosts, or host country attendees, after completing a THT program? If so, how have you done so (later visits, exchanges, e-mails, etc.)?			
	Number of Respondents	Percent	
Conducting guest classes, hosting visiters from THT countries.	1	6.67%	
Definitely, in Laos.	1	6.67%	
Email exchanges.	1	6.67%	
Have been in contact with a few participants and helpers from host institutions. Mostly through e-mail and Facebook.	1	6.67%	
I helped Dr. Rubina Khan with a presentation she gave at the Asia TEFL conference in Thailand. I am Facebook friends with some of the people I met in Bangladesh.	1	6.67%	
I keep in touch with several participants through Facebook.	1	6.67%	
Mostly with volunteers, one of whom is now an new lecturer at Hue University	1	6.67%	
Sorry to say I Haven't been in touch with any of the host countries.	1	6.67%	
The teacher with whom I was matched with in Laos has emailed me several times.	1	6.67%	
Yes Emails	1	6.67%	
Yes I have through visits and e-mails. This for me has been a great benefit of the program.	1	6.67%	
Yes, eventually with some of the attendees, by e-mail.	1	6.67%	
Yes, I have been in e-mail contact with various hosts and participants, and I have become very close with my first student facilitator in Vietnam.	1	6.67%	
Yes, mostly through Facebook and e-mail.	1	6.67%	
Yes. I keep in touch by visiting on further visits and through e-mail exchanges quite frequently.	1	6.67%	
Total	15	100.00%	

top

Question 12 (Free response) 15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Yest	1	6.67%	
Total	15	100.00%	

top

Question 13 (Free response) 12 of 15 respondents answered this question.			
Do you have any thing else to add in response to this survey concerning the benefits of volunteering for a THT program?			
	Number of Respondents	Percent	
I am actively promoting it among my colleagues.	1	8.33%	
I am proud of being part of a community of educators and researchers. I loved our work in Mindoro: no tech! I know that work in rural areas requires a particularly careful organization for both parts, the THT coordinator and the host. I like to observe and learn how to organize people, time and places, and also consider many many details. My home-stay in Vientiane (March 2009) allowed me to observe how other people do their best at teaching, studying and living in difficult conditions. I can do without technology but I still have to learn how to do without lots of color handouts, copies and material in paper: in many places paper is expensive and there is no copy machine. That is my homework.	1	8.33%	
I hope THT continues for a long time to come and the number of participants grows. On the other hand, if the world were a fairer place, wouldn't it be great if there was no longer any need for such organisations.	1	8.33%	
I'm sorry I haven't been in a position to aid THT, but I hope the Japan-based people and others like you, Pat, can keep it going. Not only does it continue Bill's work, it is valuable. Here at LAC I continue to hear enthusiasm about the THT program.	1	8.33%	
Just to say that it is a win/win situation no matter how you look at it.	1	8.33%	
None that I can think of.	1	8.33%	
Not only is it an opportunity to share what we've learned teaching, but it's an opportunity to learn from the participants. It's meaningful.	1	8.33%	
Pat I would like to sincerely thank you for carrying on the programs Bill started and preserving the integrity, caring, and sensitivity which was the hallmark of how Bill so successfully originally set up these programs.	1	8.33%	
THT activities are a great conversation starter for the language teaching profession. These activities also give volunteers some insight into language teaching in different contexts as well as more general areas of life in host countries.	1	8.33%	
THT programmes help you to remember that it's not about you, it's about them. Volunteering for a THT programme will benefit your soul - even if you don't believe that you have one.	1	8.33%	
THT programs are always exciting adventures that demand flexibility and are rewarding in so many ways.	1	8.33%	
We need to be able to say what the benefits of each particular visit is since they are so different	1	8.33%	
Total			

Approaches to Lesson Planning: A Workshop

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Abstract

One of the most fundamental challenges for instructors is creating lesson plans on a regular basis that truly facilitate learning for students. One common model of lesson planning is to find a template and stick to it. The problem is that lesson plans tend to become an inhibiting framework and work to the detriment of course goals if viewed uncritically. One possible solution is to evaluate other lesson planning models, even those at first counterintuitive to the instructor, which may help to establish a number of creative plans to suit a range of teaching contexts. Periodically reevaluating which ingredients should go into a class is a process of reflection acting as a mirror to foster self-development as a teacher. This paper introduces such an experimental process by discussing a variety of lesson plan models, all of which have been considered appropriate and effective by teachers at particular times and in particular places. Given the diverse student populations encountered by participants in the workshop, it seems that such questioning of hitherto unchallenged assumptions about lesson planning may prove valuable.

Introduction

This paper introduces a series of lesson plans and instructional models that have been experimented with by the author over a number of years. Whilst not all of the models introduced may appear at first sight to be a template-style plan, the intention is to demonstrate that a rigid plan of action is not always the best or only approach to take before entering a classroom. The lesson plans have been introduced in a number of teacher training seminars, and were most recently adapted for use in the inaugural THT Seminar at Bishkek Humanities University in Kyrgyzstan.

The workshop began simply by explaining common assumptions about lesson planning, such as the process is frequently conceived as a series of steps that take place before entering the classroom. By signing up to that notion, gauging the suitability of a language-focused plan will necessitate instructors weighing up the pros and cons of particular exercises and activities. Teachers also need to have an awareness of the interactions and dynamics which feed into classroom management, such as keeping students engaged throughout the whole flow of the

class. Participants began experimenting with a range of lesson plans, to see how far the process of questioning would take them. One of the aims was to have participants realise that some of their own assumptions might need revising, in the sense that the plans they conceived several years ago might not accurately reflect the kind of teaching they were now doing in the classroom.

CELTA RSA Lesson Plan

Lesson planning undergoes changes as research uncovers more about the learning process. A point in case is that the explicitly language-based focus of lesson plans which were formerly prevalent in training courses such as the CELTA RSA are themselves undergoing changes. By way of example, consider the emphasis of lesson planning as taught on the International House, London RSA in the mid-nineties (from the author's own notes):

LESSON PLAN
AIMS
Identify noun phrases; describe modifiers and quantifiers
SUBSIDIARY AIMS
Think about & discuss topic; understand gist of news
ASSUMPTIONS
Students (S) are familiar with concept of noun phrases
ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS
word stress in nouns; producing and using noun phrases
SOLUTIONS
model/drill stress patterns; contextualise meaning; information gap/matching activity
TEACHER (T) AIDS
board; grammar card game; picture on p. 19; hand-out

TIME	PROCEDURE	AIM	FOCUS
5 minutes	Ask S to imagine flying. Ever had a bad experience?	Create interest & establish theme.	T to S
	Ask/answer in pairs.	Personalise & elicit.	S to S
	Collect ideas.	Check concept.	S to T
5 minutes			

It is easy to see how this kind of lesson perceives language learning, and exactly how it

considers learning must take place, accomplished through a strict and non-negotiable presentation, practice and production (PPP) sequence. In fact, such a plan may work very well with teachers who have reasons for not giving up too much control in a classroom yet do not wish to have a grammar-translation class that inhibits efforts at communicative language teaching (CLT).

Edinburgh School of English Lesson Plan

At first sight, the approach to lesson planning adapted from materials used at a language school in Scotland in the year 2000 (Edinburgh School of English, author's own notes) appears to be a more analytical framework. Here, teachers are advised to consider constructing their lesson plans around a series of questions:

(1)	**Conceptualizing the lesson**	
	What do I want to do?	AIMS
	What am I going to use to do it?	ACTIVITY
(2)	**Getting the materials together**	
	How should the materials be organized so students can follow it?	
	What am I going to use?	AIDS/MATERIALS
(3)	**Thinking about your audience**	
	What do I know about the students' abilities?	ASSUMPTIONS
	What language will students need to do the task?	
	Does the task give students a communicative purpose?	
	Does the task offer students a definable outcome?	
(4)	**Troubleshooting**	
	What contextual limitations (individual, class, institution, culture, etc.) are there?	
	What problems (vocab., grammar) might students have with the material?	ANTICIPATING
	How do I have to prepare to address these problems in the class?	PROBLEMS
(5)	**Execution**	
	How am I going to do it?	
	What are the main stages?	
	How long will each stage take?	
	What working groups will I use?	PROCEDURE
	What instructions will I need to give?	
	How about the pacing of the activities?	
	How will I keep students engaged?	

Despite the conceptual framework that appears to encourage analysis of key areas, there are a number of unresolved issues. The lesson plan sequencing is logical in one sense, but only if the

assumption is made that language learning takes place along one plane, and that language is the determiner of the class to which other aims are subjugated. Though partially centred on the student as learner, most of the decisions and control rest with the instructor.

Planning Lessons and Courses: Three Lesson Plans

A look at the literature on the subject offers up lesson planning as conceived of by Tessa Woodward (2001). The book's cover asserts that, "Planning Lessons and Courses provides a step-by-step approach to lesson planning." Those steps appear fairly broad, including the following chapter headings:

- *Who are the students?*
- *How long is the lesson?*
- *What can go into a lesson?*
- *How do people learn and so how can we teach?*
- *What can we teach with?*
- *How can we vary the activities we do?*
- *Getting down to the preparation*
- *What are our freedoms and constraints?*

(Woodward, 2001:viii - xiv).

The editorial decision here is evidently in favour of widening the scope of the book, which may broaden its appeal and relevance to teachers starting out in lesson planning. How people learn languages, for example, is included here and is without doubt an associated theme since it forms part of the body of assumptions under which lesson planners work; but more space devoted to such background issues as this means less devoted to planning. Here, there is a heavy concentration on the whos, the whats and the hows, omitting other seemingly fundamental concerns such as why such an approach is desirable when planning lessons. Moreover, while ostensibly seeking to frame lesson planning as a sequence of questions, the author only turns to the making of lesson plans in the penultimate chapter. By then, the key process of asking questions has been abandoned in favour of the straightforward, 'Getting down to the preparation.' There is a sense of determinism in the process, with teachers likely to fall back on linear plans that constrain their teaching and their students' ability to learn effectively.

Traditional Lesson Plan

The book's structure notwithstanding, Woodward's work on lesson planning does help teachers to cast a more critical eye on lesson plans devised by themselves and others. A positive contribution is to identify clearly the limitation of ideas prevalent in lesson planning as it has

been conceived in the past. She describes what she calls 'the traditional view' lesson plan, one in which

> *. . . you will want to find out what your students can do, specify broad and detailed goals, break these down into a 'logical' order, select learning activities and materials which are designed to bring about change, put these in place, and then test to make sure that the changes have occurred. This is the view of language and learning presented on many assessed training courses, which is understandable since working with teachers this way makes assessment of their teaching easier! (Woodward, 2001:185).*

The warning is clear: teacher trainers have their students make lesson plans that are easy to assess, but these plans do indeed act as an artificial constraint on their trainees. As teachers gain classroom experience of the classroom, they need to break free from the grip of their preliminary training courses.

Student-Centred Lesson Plan

By way of contrast, Woodward provides examples of a "student-centred lesson plan" and "content-based lesson plan." In the student-centred lesson plan, the linearity and teacher control is replaced by a more organic, fluid interplay between instructor and learners, where the students are placed at the heart of the learning process.

Extract from a student-centred lesson plan:

> *Students will have just come from a swimming lesson and will straggle in so...*
> *1 Early birds finish their dialogue journals.*
> *2 When everybody's in and settled, Carmela's group asks the others their review questions on the last lesson.*
> *3 Pairs brainstorm all the words associated with the topic they've chosen for this lesson.*
> *4 Student on poster duty writes them up asking for help with spelling, stress marking, collocation and meaning, if unsure.*
> *5 Give student on cassette recorder duty the cassette of two people discussing the topic. The class says when the student should stop, rewind, play the tape, etc.*
> *(Woodward, 2001:188).*

There is an emphasis on flexibility, with the instructor showing awareness of issues that exist outside the classroom and that might impinge on what takes place within its walls,

Content-Based Lesson Plan

In this case, the focus on language ostensibly gives way to a focus on content. Yet anyone expecting content to be placed firmly at the centre of this plan will be sorely disappointed.

Extract from a content-based lesson plan:

> *Language area: hesitation and stalling devices*
> - *Ask a couple of students some hard, fast questions in target language. Wait for slight embarrassment and pauses.*
> - *Be reassuring! Switch to mother tongue and do same again, then asking what sorts of noises, phrases, etc. students would use in mother tongue if put in the spotlight in this way.*
> - *Explain that today's lesson will be about what to say and do in the target language when you don't know what to say and do.*
> - *Ask students to prepare some questions for me that they think I won't know how to/want to answer.*
> - *Students shoot questions at me. I field them. This activity is called the 'Hot seat game'.*
> - *Students repeat back to me as many of my phrases as poss.*
> - *Oral practice and written phase.*
> - *Hot seat game played twice more, with a student in the hot seat instead of the teacher.*
> - *Explain hot seat will be a 5 min thread in future classes.*
>
> *(Woodward, 2001:189).*

In essence, it is hard to shake off the belief in a language-based plan for many instructors. Witness how the term content in this plan merely involves a trick played on the class to encourage them to form questions. Effectively, it is still about as far as away from a content class as it is possible to imagine.

Non-Language-Centred Planning - The Australian Language Levels (ALL) Lesson Plans

Just as instructors would normally reevaluate their lesson plans and make them more sophisticated over time (internal pressure), particular sets of circumstances pertaining to societal changes (external pressure) serve to stimulate developments in new directions. In multi-cultural Australia, striving to teach a variety of languages to students from diverse cultures and linguistic backgrounds, language teaching moved quickly beyond the model of instructors imparting knowledge, always determined ('planned') in advance, involving a view of language as merely discreet items or building blocks. According to Vale, Scarino & McKay (1991), emphasis at the planning stage should be placed on completion of an achievable task binding the whole class together. An instructor could combine ideas highlighted in the Pocket ALL with others that

reflect their own teaching preferences, such as form-focused instruction or error correction, but these elements would not dominate the lesson plan.

Vertical and Horizontal Brainstorming Lesson Plan (see Fig. 1: Suggested module)

Note that the emphasis here is increasingly on connected units of work, laid out in this example as a template for horizontal or vertical brainstorming. Ideas can be filled into the template working downwards in a list or across the categories, to create a lesson plan integrated on more than one plane. Indeed, one outcome of the THT lesson planning workshop was that experienced teachers were able to compare their own experiences of lesson planning with others to see if they were working along a simple continuum (e.g. a language focus, imparting knowledge, top-down, along only one learning dimension, etc.) or managing to straddle the complexities of interaction that reflect the classroom experience (language focus within context in which learning takes place taking account of psychological factors affecting learning and natural flow of the class, etc.).

Figure 1: Suggested module. (adapted from Vale et al:48-49)

TABLE 10: Suggested module pro forma

SPECIFIC GOALS:

GENERAL OBJECTIVES:

ORGANISATIONAL FOCUSES FOR UNITS OF WORK:

OTHER LEARNING EXPERIENCES

ACTIVITIES

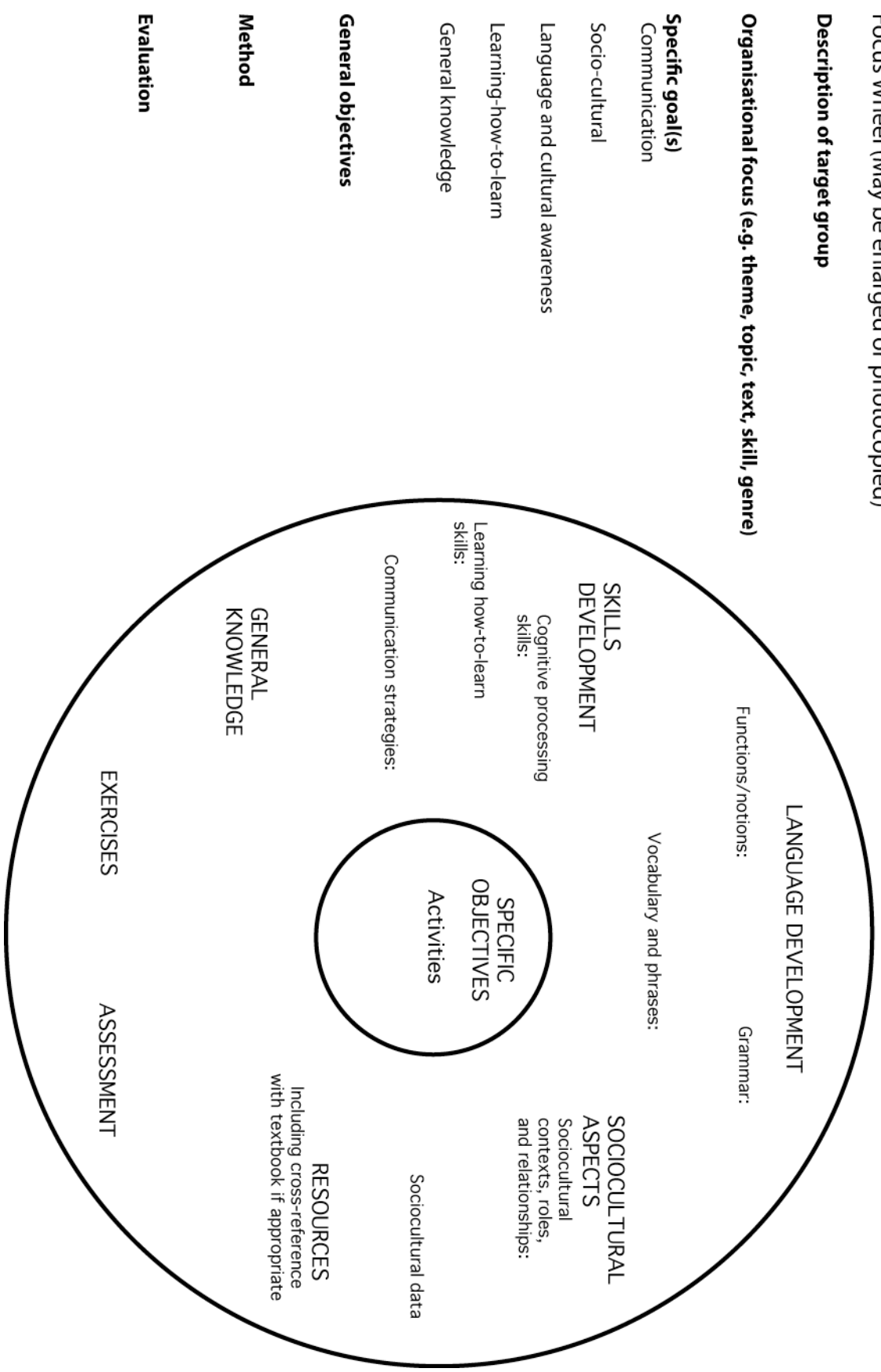
INTERPERSONAL		**INFORMATIONAL**		**"AESTHETIC"**	
L and S skills (conversation), or R and W skills (correspondence)[1]		L, S, R, W skills	S or W skills	L, S, R, W skills	S or W skills
Activity-type 1	Activity- type 2	Activity-type 3	Activity-type 4	Activity-type 5	Activity-type 6

[1]L, S, R, W stand for Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

Mind Mapping Lesson Plan (See Fig. 2: Focus Wheel)

The alternative lesson plan forces instructors to think outside the box: here, linear-based lines of thinking are replaced by a mind map or a connected circle. There is no longer a beginning or end to the process, but an intricate web of interdependent connections. Although the elements of the lesson plan are virtually indistinguishable from the previous example, the emphasis has been changed by looking at the plan in a different way. By reformulating the plan and hence the direction of the class, the instructor is able to reevaluate the flow in which learning takes place, and numerous new possibilities open up, such as surrendering some control in exchange for learner involvement, autonomy, and increased student-student interaction. It can be seen as part of a scaffolding process, where a hands-on plan with lots of support and direction gradually gives way to less support and student initiative and responsibility for one's own learning.

Figure 2. Focus Wheel (adapted from Vale et al: 56)



Context-Based Lesson Plan

Since it can be broadly agreed that a lesson plan, by virtue of its planning function, describes actions conceived before the class takes place - as opposed to a retrospective description of what exactly did take place - it follows that Bax's (2003) contribution to the context-base teaching debate must be of particular relevance to THT seminars. Bax asserts that a lesson plan should not be isolated from the context within which learning takes place. The nuts and bolts of the lesson (methodology, language items) are informed by the context at the planning stage, not the other way round. What he proposes is an assault on CLT plans that place language before all else. For many of the participants, it helped to give voice to some of the inherent frustrations they had experienced as a non-native instructor of English conducting classes exclusively in English (because they believed the teacher training orthodoxy that English only was the one way to teach English as a second language).

From Bax (p.287), one might extract this kind of sequence at the planning stage:

- *looking at and analysing the learning context*
- *taking account of individuals (learning styles, strategies)*
- *taking account of classroom culture (group motivation, school environment)*
- *taking account of local culture (regional differences, status of teachers and students in the community)*
- *taking account of national culture (politics, religion)*
- *dealing with a teaching approach (methodology, materials, methods) to accomplish those aims*
- *considering a language focus (lexis, phonology, grammar).*

Language has thus been relegated to a much lower position on the list of planning priorities.

Instructional Design: Domain-Informed Lesson Plan

The next example builds on work by developmental psychologists such as Vygotsky, who saw learning as a social activity. Such thinking attacks the notion of the language classroom as a place primarily to study language or else to study in isolation, and re-posits it as a milieu where social interaction is at its core. At the planning stage of a class informed by instructional design, the current state and needs of the learner are identified, the end goal of the learning process is defined, and the teaching acts as an intervention in order to help the transformation from needs

to outcome. Bloom's Taxonomy later helped to classify educational objectives for students. If it can be agreed that learning is a holistic process, it follows that the currently defined four learning domains are paramount through the stages of the lesson. Such a lesson plan is based on a spread of domain-based activities, with a variety of delivery considerations and assessment techniques (Vinson, 2009). In fact, it is much less a plan than a design, where a balance across the domains is key (Table 1).

Table 1. Learning Domains and Delivery of Instruction. Vinson (2009)

Learning Domain	Activities	Delivery Considerations	Assessment
Cognitive	Self-check quizzes Case studies Drill and practice Short answer essay Project or problem-based activities	Web-enhanced materials supplementing classroom lectures Hybrid course with cognitive content on the web Multimedia simulations of challenging and key concepts	Project based for higher cognitive skills Multiple choice or short essay questions Case Studies
Affective	Goal setting Self-reflective writing in a journal Practice tutorials designed for student success	Face-to-face meetings Motivational videos Streaming audio explanations and encouragement Interactive video, web casts, conference calls	Self-assessment using check-list Pre/post attitude survey related to course content Retention/success in course
Psychomotor	Practice of desired skill with feedback Arranging sequences of an activity in correct order	Face-to-face demonstrations Demonstration videos Pictures with audio and text explanations Interactive video demonstrations	Performance of skill matches set standard as observed by an instructor or designee
Interpersonal	Structured team projects with debriefing Analyzing video models and identifying correct from incorrect performance	Face-to-face small group coaching and feedback sessions Check lists, examples, videos and other cognitive support material presented online	Team, instructor and self assessment measures Analysis of video taped student performance of desired interpersonal skill

Blended/Hybrid Learning Lesson Plan

The final example is from the author's own work (with Graeme Todd) on blended or hybrid learning (iZone, 2009), and reflects new interconnected contexts and generational changes. Here, the interaction and communities of learning exist both face-to-face and online, while self-study is from the written textbook as well as online. Learning takes place in multiple locations, such as

in class with or without a computer, on campus, off campus, and via a mobile device with any browser that connects to the online learning material. Hence the lesson plan has to transcend the dimensions of in-class, directed learning. There are a number of steps to keep the structure and flow of activities, but much less direction about language items. Considerations about context are left up to the individual instructor to determine n collaboration with the learners. It is online, downloadable, accessible at any time. Here is a sample of the structure and headings, taken from iZone Level 1, Unit 1:

iZone 1 Unit 1 Lesson Plan

iZone 1 Unit 1 Small Talk

Unit Overview:

MyiZoneLab (pages 14–15)

Before students go online
After students have completed the assigned online activities

iZone in class (pages 16–21)

Listen and respond (page 16)
Pre-listening
Activity A: Listening
Activity B: Listening
Activity B: Extension
Activity C: Brainstorming
Activity C: Interviews

Strategy in action (page 17)
Communication strategy
Warm-up
Activity A: Pre-listening
Activity A: Listening
Activity B: Pair work
Activity B: Extension

Language in action (page 18)
Introduction
Warm-up
Activity A: Reading and listening
Activity A: Extension
Activity B: Pronunciation
Language note
Activity C: Substitutions
Activity C: Extension

Communication task (page 19)
Introduction
Step A: Listening
Step B: Listening
Step C: Speaking
Step C: Classroom management

Activity zone (page 20)
Step A
Step B
Step C
Step C: Extension

Video extras (page 21)
Warm-up
Step A
Step A: Extension
Step B
Step C

The teacher's notes then explain the timing of the components. The fluidity or organic nature of the blended or hybrid model, where learning takes place face-to-face with an instructor and fellow students in a classroom, and via e-learning, and in a variety of locations interacting online or with the textbook for self-study, is truly reflected in this kind of plan. It is a world away from the tightly controlled language lesson with which this paper began.

How long does it take to complete a unit of iZone?

An entire unit of iZone takes approximately three hours to complete, although this varies due to the inbuilt adaptability of the course and the environment within which it is being employed. The Online sections can be given as homework or completed in a suitably equipped classroom and if all sections are assigned will take most students between 80 and 100 minutes. Below are estimated times for each section.

Online Prepare

Video clip:	3 - 5 minutes
Language zone:	15 - 20 minutes
Strategy:	25 - 30 minutes
Role play:	10 - 15 minutes

Online Extras

Video zone:	5 - 10 minutes
Writing task:	10 minutes
Game:	10 minutes

Excluding Video extras, the in-class component of the course takes a similar amount of time, although much depends on the individual teacher's approach. If the Video extras and extension activities suggested in the lesson plans are taken advantage of, the in-class section of a unit will take considerably longer. Below are estimated times for each section.

Myizonelab:	5 minutes
Listen / Read and respond:	15 - 20 minutes
Strategy in action:	10 - 15 minutes
Language in action:	15 - 20 minutes
Communication task:	20 - 25 minutes
Activity zone:	15 minutes
Video extras:	30 - 40 minutes

Clearly, flexibility of this kind needs to be built into lesson plans when the generation studying and learning is no longer tied to fixed seats in an immovable classroom or physical location. The 'individual teacher's approach' and the student as an individual are placed firmly at the centre of the learning process.

Conclusion

The workshop was thought-provoking in the sense that several participants came to realise how they too had been moving along the lesson planning continuum in the single plane outlined in this paper. They took away from the session the notion that their teaching had outstripped the limitations of the plans they were commonly using, and that they could help their learners more by considering alternative plans. They felt the mismatch between the agenda they were setting for their classes and the realities within the classroom, and it helped give voice to some of the frustrations and contradictions they had felt in their professional development. It is hoped that the ideas presented here are a starting-point for a kind of transition: there are no answers, but there are firm pointers. Teachers who embrace the complexities and sophistication of lesson plans that work seamlessly on a number of levels are more than likely to stretch out a hand to their learners. The students as individuals within the group are then better placed to reach their own potentials. Rather than a language-focused straitjacket, lesson plans are opportunities for creativity and growth.

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Biographical Statement

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Study Tips for Language Learning: Students and Teachers

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This paper introduces ideas for helping develop independent study and organizational skills. Students at various levels need a certain degree of coaching on how to study successfully. This is evident in the early grades of elementary school and this support is often provided by the parents and teachers. However, this support is more limited from grades six through eight when students seem independent. However, it is at this time that help may be needed most.

The place of study can have a large impact on the learning of the student. Having a desk or table big enough to spread out books is highly preferable. However, when this is not possible, it is always possible to make due with a space on the floor or ground large enough to spread one's books out. Having essential supplies in the place of study, something to write on or record data in is preferable. If a desk or table is available, then a sturdy chair that is the right height so the arms can rest on it and so the person can sit straight up will provide good posture and increase the time of concentration on the topic of study. If not possible, students can sit on the ground and perform their studies.

Working with your students to make the most of their time is very important. In general, most people study best in the morning and are very tired in the afternoon after lunch. If we can place emphasis on areas of our studies that require greater concentration into those times we are generally more alert, we can become more efficient learners.

Productivity of an individual can be greatly affected by distractions such as the phone, e-mail, television, video games, and messaging programs. If we set aside specific times for these activities separate from our studies, it is much more likely our study time will be more productive. There are various studies that show that outside distractions interfere with the brains activity to recall information.

Developing a system of organization is also very helpful in recalling information. If folders or binders are available to organize information, these are highly recommended. Separating assignments and notes into different folders will make them easier to access when you need them such as reference materials for tests. Likewise, setting aside one place for all materials that

need to be turned in is greatly helpful.

Making a planned schedule will help a student organize their thoughts and efficiently work through all the material they are expected to learn. Students should make out a plan and follow through with it. Waiting till the last minute to complete something usually results in an assignment submission that is not well thought out or organized.

Reading and note taking strategies are very good ways to process information. First, students review material and get an idea of what it is all about. They should formulate questions on the material. Furthermore, they should focus on the questions that will help them to concentrate more on the material as they read it. Second, during the note taking, they should think about the purpose of the reading. This can be done through keeping post-its or note cards handy for questions as they arise. If they keep the themes, often the subject headings, in mind while reading a passage it helps them to concentrate on the topic. While reading, students can think of the key words that lead to questions that would guide them through the reading and attempt to answer those questions. A student should be willing to adjust their questions and thinking as they learn more. Third, after reading, students should evaluate what they have read, organize their ideas (i.e. outlines, flowcharts), and possibly create flashcards for vocabulary.

In conclusion, teaching students how to study for a test is very important. Teachers should encourage students to think of potential essay questions and outline them. Also, if a teacher can help students learn to apply the concepts it can help students learn techniques for solving problems. Likewise, active learning through highlighting notes, use of post-its, marking key textbook passages, making study cards, mapping and diagramming concepts, can greatly enhance a student's awareness of test items. The use of memory techniques; mnemonic strategies such as mind maps, acronyms, and mental pictures are also highly useful.

Biographical Statement

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Looking For Lev In All The Wrong Places

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Abstract

This paper attempts to bring together concepts and frameworks from several diverse sources that will be of use to language teaching professionals. Some of these ideas are making their way into the mainstream of our craft, but others are not yet on the radar of most teachers, material or curriculum developers, or program coordinators. Our point of departure in offering this collection is the work of the Russian educational psychologist Lev Vygotsky, especially his work related to social cognition and the zone of proximal development. Our destination is a list of prescriptive advice for our profession.

Introduction

Language teaching as a profession continues to evolve through the efforts of dedicated and creative individuals in a variety of contexts. Growth often comes in predictable areas such as the fields of educational psychology, second language acquisition (SLA) and instructional design. Other times, however, we are lucky enough to stumble upon stimulation in places where we least expect it. This paper introduces some unexpected sources of inspiration and encouragement that might offer hints for how to strive and survive in our profession.

The title of this paper and the presentation it is based on have their roots in a mini conference hosted several years ago by the Osaka chapter of Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT). The theme (and title) of this mini conference was What's Lev Got To Do With It? The organizers had invited several speakers to introduce the work of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, especially as it relates to the fields of language education and second language acquisition. While acknowledging that much of Vygotsky's work dealt with educational psychology and childhood development, the presenters made a strong case for applying key concepts and findings from his extensive writings to our second language teaching contexts. Besides being attracted by the catchy title of the mini conference (a pun on Tina Turner's hit song), I was impressed by how far ranging Vygotsky's works actually were, and how the presenters had used these ideas as a lens through which to look at our own profession.

Although the current paper will not go into much depth regarding the findings of Vygotsky, we

will use some of the above-mentioned key concepts as a point of departure for looking at other works that may inform us as second language educators. We will start with some concepts and ideas that are gaining acceptance in SLA circles and then move into some other areas that may not be so familiar. Our journey will hopefully lead us to a working list of prescriptive advice to help second or foreign language teachers, curriculum and materials developers, and program coordinators.

Lev

Vygotsky broke ground in several key areas of psychology but his work on the influences of culture and interpersonal communication have been cited as his biggest contributions (Santrock, 2004). The influences of culture and social interactions on an individual's cognitive development seem especially important for teachers of second or foreign language, i.e. the milieu in which we teach is at least as important as what we teach, and development cannot be separated from its social context. Other key influences on our profession are Vygotsky's belief that language plays a central role in mental development, and his concept of zone of proximal development (ZPD), or targeting our instruction at the area between the level of independent performance and assisted performance. The reader is encouraged to keep these key concepts in mind as we continue on our journey.

Flow Theory

Most readers will have at least heard about Flow Psychology (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990) and the pioneering work of Mihály Csíkszentmihályi. Wikepedia (2009) defines Flow (in psychology) as ". . . *the mental state of operation in which the person is fully immersed in what he or she is doing by a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and success in the process of the activity*." Csíkszentmihályi, psychologist at University of Chicago, was interested in what makes people happy and developed a research protocol to investigate when people are most engaged and experience high levels of satisfaction and enjoyment. Based on his findings, he theorized that people experienced flow when presented with tasks that were challenging, in relation to the skills they possessed, but not overly so (Fig. 1).

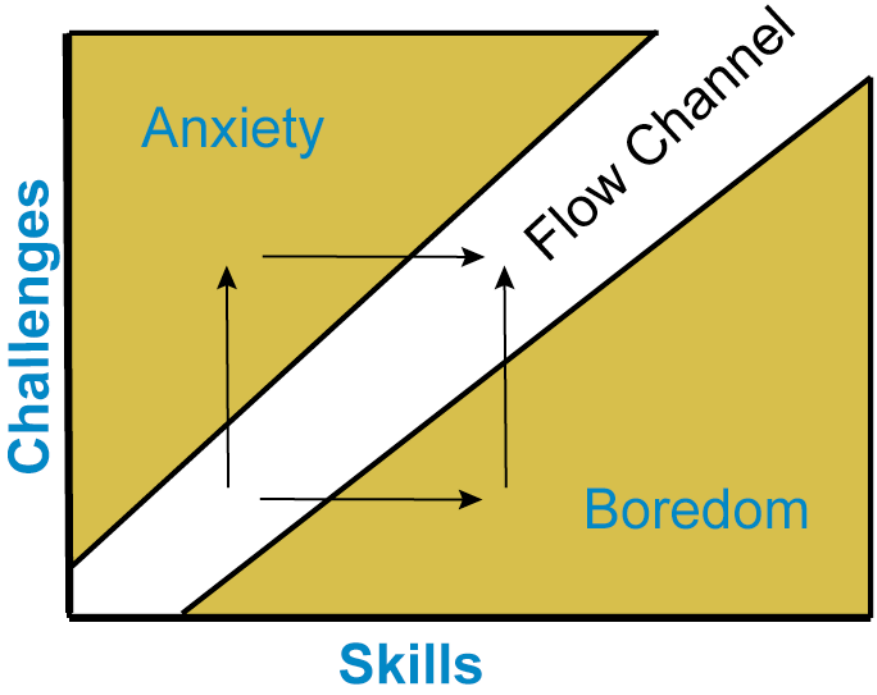

Fig. 1. Conceptualization of the Flow Channel (adapted from Csíkszentmihályi, 1990)

Looking at the arrows in Fig. 1, we see that as the level of the challenge increases, greater individual skills are required. As the level of skills increases, more challenge is needed to maintain a state of flow. Please think about your own experiences. You will likely realize that with the right balance of challenge to skills we become completely absorbed in an activity. There is no excess psychic energy to spare for anything else and we become so involved in the activity that our actions become spontaneous. This is FLOW.

We can see in this discussion of Flow a connection to Vygotsky's ZPD. Teachers need to be vigilant about finding challenges that are not too difficult (frustration level) or too easy (boredom level) in relation to the current skills possessed by students. Lowering the level of the challenge or raising of skills can both be accomplished through scaffolding. The following two lists (where can we find flow and path to flow) can thus be added to our language teachers' framework.

Where can we find FLOW?

- Challenge requiring skills
- Joining of action and awareness
- Clear goals and feedback
- Sense of control
- Loss of self-consciousness
- Transformation of time

- Concentration (focused attention)

Path to Flow

1. Make the task a game. Establish rules, objectives, challenges and rewards
2. Have a powerful goal
3. Focus your attention (no distractions)
4. Let go (enjoy the process)
5. Put everything into the activity
6. Push your limits (creativity, skills, energy)

A Whole New Mind

Moving away from mainstream SLA research we arrive at the doorstep of Daniel H. Pink, who wrote A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future. In this book (2005), Pink outlines historical developments through the agriculture age (farmers), industrial age (factory workers), and information age (knowledge workers), to where we find ourselves now, the conceptual age. In this age, he argues, right-brain qualities (inventiveness, empathy, meaning) will be in much higher demand. He uses the left-brain, right-brain dichotomy as a metaphor for understanding changes in the economic and business landscapes.

The argument runs that until now left-brain thinking has dominated, but a shift to right-brain is occurring. Table. 1 offers a synopsis of what are believed to be the differences between left and right-brain thinking.

Table. 1. Comparison of left and right-brain thinking.

The LEFT side of the brain	The RIGHT side of the brain
- controls the right side of the body	- controls the left side of the body
- is sequential	- is simultaneous
- specializes in text	- specializes in context
- analyzes the details	- synthesizes the big picture

Although Pink is writing more for a business audience, there are many nuggets of wisdom to be gleaned by the language teaching professional. Specifically, his list of six essential senses for what he describes as “High Concept, High Touch.”

Design - Moving beyond function to engage the senses.

Story - Narrative added to products and services - not just argument. Best of the six senses.

Symphony - Adding invention and big picture thinking (not just detail focus).

Empathy - Going beyond logic and engaging emotion and intuition.

Play - Bringing humor and light-heartedness to business and products.

Meaning - the purpose is the journey, give meaning to life from inside yourself.

Experience Economy

A bit further off the beaten SLA path, we find the work of Joseph Pine and James H. Gilmore. The work of these two gentlemen on the concept of an experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999) created quite a buzz in business circles and has taken up a central position in many business programs. Basically, the authors tell the story of how different company offerings fall somewhere on a value scale from commodities to products to services to experiences and eventually transformations where the customer is the product (Fig. 2).

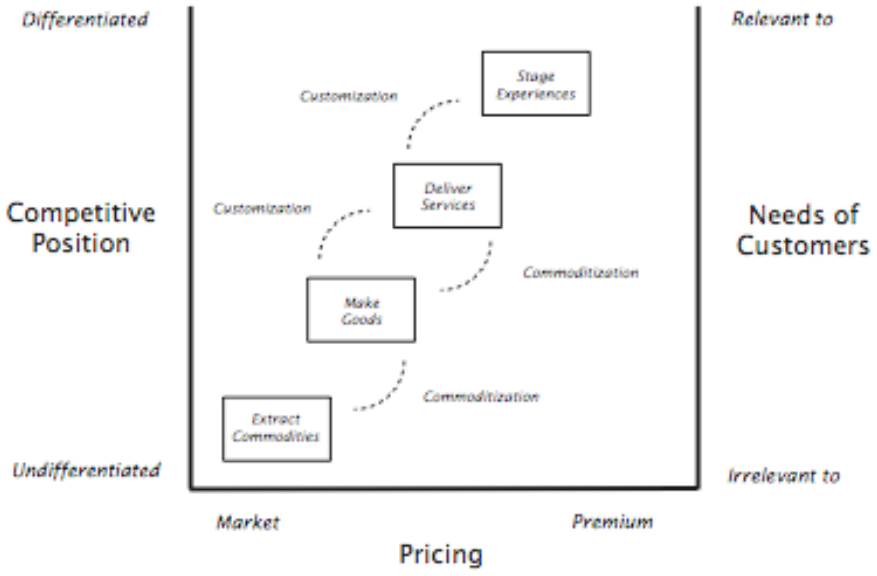

Fig. 2. Progression of Economic Value (Pine & Gilmore, 1999)

They offer the example of coffee. Raw coffee beans are one of the world's big commodities. Buyers are interested in quality, but the competition is usually over price. Per cup of coffee, this commodity is worth only about 2 or 3 cents. If someone roasts this coffee, grinds it and puts it in a bag, the value goes up . . . Maybe 10 or 20 cents. Then, if someone buys this coffee, brews it and puts it in a cup, we have a service . . . up to one dollar or more per cup. Now, can coffee be

an experience? There is a place called Café Florentine in Venice where people pay more than ten dollars for a cup of coffee. But are they paying that much for the coffee . . . or the experience? The answer should be evident.

Several aspects of their theory can be seen in Figure 2. The progression up the economic value ladder occurs on a number of dimensions. The competitive position of offerings progresses from undifferentiated to differentiated (left vertical axis). At higher levels, offerings are more relevant to the needs of customers (right vertical axis). There is also a progression from market price to premium pricing (horizontal access). Finally, the authors stress that offerings can move both up the scale (customization) as well as down (commoditization).

As language teaching professionals, I feel we should be trying to make each meeting with our learners an experience. This takes a new way of thinking, but it is necessary if we want to avoid commoditization, i.e. movement down the economic value ladder to where price is more of a consideration than value. Hints for how to move our offerings up the scale toward experiences (and even transformations) are sprinkled throughout this paper.

Pine and Gilmore (1999) also talk about four experience realms: entertainment, educational, escapist and esthetic (Fig. 3).

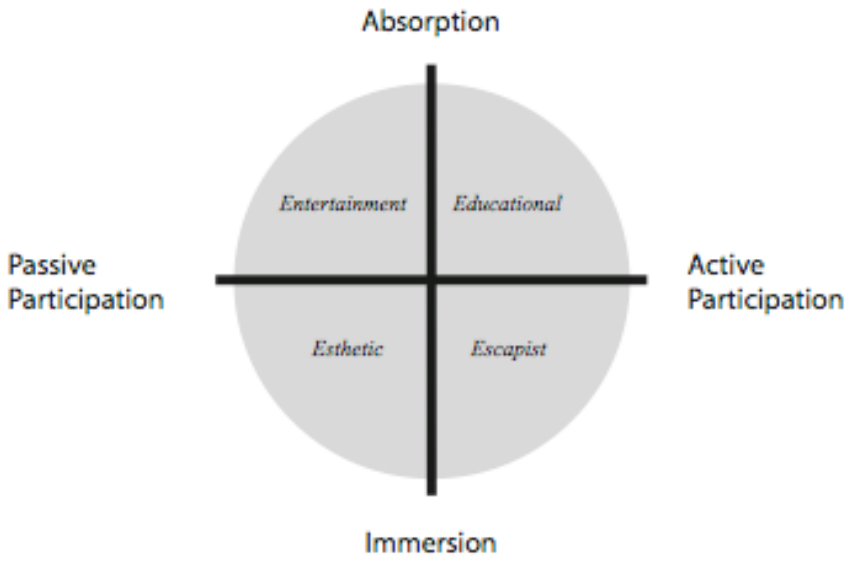

Figure 3. The Experience Realms (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

We can recognize that businesses higher on the scale of economic value concentrate their offerings on one or more of these realms. The authors stress that the richest experiences encompass aspects of all four realms, and offer Disney as an example of a company that excels at offering just such experiences.

I do not want to suggest that we turn our language classes into Disney-like experiences, but targeting various experience realms when designing curriculum, activities and materials might make for powerful language-learning experiences. Prescriptive advice we can glean from this work can be summarized as follows:

- Set the stage by exploring the possibilities of each realm.
- The first step is envisioning a well-defined theme.
- Theming an experience means scripting a participative story.
- Experience stagers eliminate anything that distracts from the theme.
- The more sensory the experience, the more memorable it will be.
- Look for ways of shifting up the progression of economic value.

While not directly related to the work of Vygotsky, these ideas can strengthen our framework for providing language learners with rich cultural and social interactions ala Lev.

Made to Stick

Next stop on our journey, we find the work of Dan and Chip Heath related to stickiness (Heath, C. & Heath, D., 2007). These author brothers introduce several stories and case studies to explain why some ideas or concepts are memorable (and thus stick) and others are doomed to oblivion. They draw on a variety of sources including urban legends, folk tales, marketing and advertising.

Their definition of sticky is something that is "*understandable, memorable, and effective in changing thought or behavior*." Here we have another lens through which to view Vygotsky's work related to cultural and social interaction. The question is how can these ideas inform our decisions in the language classroom.

Looking at the findings, they identified key elements or characteristics that can help make an idea "sticky." They use the acronym SUCCESs as follows (see Appendix 1 for the authors'

description):

Simple — find the core of any idea
Unexpected — grab people's attention by surprising them
Concrete — make sure an idea can be grasped and remembered later
Credibility — give an idea believability
Emotion — help people see the importance of an idea
Stories — empower people to use an idea through narrative

We need to acknowledge that much of this is common sense. Still, the Heath brothers have done us a great service by bringing these ideas together. Here again are more useful items for our language professionals' checklist or framework.

Together, the SUCCESs framework helps people to

- Pay attention
- Understand and remember
- Believe and agree
- Care
- Act

Do-It-Yourself Customers

Now we are venturing into areas way off the language teaching and SLA maps. Honebein & Cammarano (2005) explore the co-production revolution, and offer much anecdotal evidence to support the notion that business success (and I believe language teaching success) will increasingly hinge on our ability to educate customers (or students) how best to make use of our services. This, I believe, will be especially true as we pursue more and more blended-learning environments and platforms.

Figure 4 outlines the authors' concepts of how to enhance customer performance, and thus satisfaction. The starting point is helping customers to clarify their vision of what a successful interaction with your offerings is. The next steps are to educate customers on how to access our offerings, provide incentives for successful interactions with our offerings and disincentives for failures, and finally develop expertise and thus groom expert customers.

Fig. 4. Customer Performance Wheel (Honebein & Cammarano, 2005).

Tactics in these endeavors can be summarized as follows (Honebein & Cammarano, 2005):

Tactics for improving the customer's vision focus on:

- Appropriate goals for what customers should accomplish
- Clear customer expectations describing the measurable outcomes of activities
- Succinct plans that provide customers a script upon which they can act
- Fluid feedback that lets customers know how they are doing

Tactics for facilitating customer access focus on:

- Articulating company policies that establish rules for customer performance
- Specifying procedures that affect customer experiences
- Identifying the people, both employees and customers, who are best suited for the experience
- Developing tools that enable customers to do more work
- Designing interfaces that make the work customers do easy
- Creating information customers need to make decisions
- Coordinating nuances that influence the customer's natural reflexes

Tactics for structuring customer incentive focus on:

- Conceiving rewards that encourage desirable behaviors
- Crafting punishments that discourage undesirable behaviors

Tactics for enhancing customer expertise focus on:

- Creating basic tools to orient customers to goods and services
- Planning problem tools to hand-hold customers during usage
- Developing premium tools to teach customers high-level skills
- Publishing support tools to guide choice and usage
- Integrating embedded tools into goods and services themselves

We can see some definite hints of behaviorism in this discussion, but again we also have another lens through which to view Vygotsky's concepts of cultural and social interactions. The twist is that many of these interactions will be increasingly conducted online, on-demand and just in time.

Conclusion

We have covered quite a bit of scholastic ground on our journey, but where does all this leave us? Hopefully we have gained some insight along the way and have a few more pieces of the teaching philosophy puzzle in place. The prescriptive advice I have gleaned from these meanderings can be summed up as follows:

- Offer learners real-life challenges that are closely matched to their current skills.
- Don't limit ourselves to left-brain activities and thinking.
- Wrap everything in an experience.
- Make use of the power of story.
- Design in "stickiness."
- Teach students how to be better consumers of our academic offerings.

Each teacher has their own unique teaching philosophy and assumptions, and these intimately influence how they think about our profession and what they do in the classroom. It is hoped that readers will go away with a least a few seeds for thought that may blossom into full grown convictions that expand our profession and promote better language learning among our students.

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A Whole New Mind www.danpink.com/wnm.html

Appendix. Made to Stick (Chip Heath & Dan Heath)

PRINCIPLE 1: SIMPLICITY

How do we find the essential core of our ideas? To strip an idea down to its core, we must be masters of exclusion. We must relentlessly prioritize. The Golden Rule is the ultimate model of simplicity: a one-sentence statement so profound that an individual could spend a lifetime learning to follow it.

PRINCIPLE 2: UNEXPECTEDNESS

How do we get our audience to pay attention to our ideas, and how do we maintain their interest when we need time to get the ideas across? We need to violate people's expectations. We need

to be counterintuitive. For our idea to endure, we must generate interest and curiosity. We can engage people's curiosity over a long period of time by systematically "opening gaps" in their knowledge — and then filling those gaps.

PRINCIPLE 3: CONCRETENESS

How do we make our ideas clear? We must explain our ideas in terms of human actions, in terms of sensory information. Naturally sticky ideas are full of concrete images because our brains are wired to remember concrete data. In proverbs, abstract truths are often encoded in concrete language: "A bird in hand is worth two in the bush."

PRINCIPLE 4: CREDIBILITY

How do we make people believe our ideas? Sticky ideas have to carry their own credentials. We need ways to help people test our ideas for themselves — a "try before you buy" philosophy for the world of ideas.

PRINCIPLE 5: EMOTIONS

How do we get people to care about our ideas? We make them feel something. Research shows that people are more likely to make a charitable gift to a single needy individual than to an entire impoverished region. We are wired to feel things for people, not for abstractions. Sometimes the hard part is finding the right emotion to harness.

PRINCIPLE 6: STORIES

How do we get people to act on our ideas? We tell stories. Firefighters naturally swap stories after every fire, and by doing so they multiply their experience; after years of hearing stories, they have a richer, more complete mental catalog of critical situations they might confront during a fire and the appropriate responses to those situations. Hearing stories acts as a kind of mental flight simulator, preparing us to respond more quickly and effectively.