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From Classroom to Campus to Community

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In this paper I describe a selection of activities which were conducted in three courses at Nanzan Junior College and Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan. Taking the knowledge learned through English in the classroom, students then went outside the classroom to conduct surveys, display their advertisements at a public event, and help to educate the general community about the growing public health problem of HIV/AIDS. Students' feedback showed great interest in the subject matter and heightened awareness about their peers' knowledge about HIV/AIDS. This paper offers suggestions on how teachers might coordinate two or more courses so that students collaborate on a project outside of the four classroom walls.

名古屋の南山大学と南山短期大学の3コースで行われた活動について説明します。授業で学んだことを学生達は外に出て調査したり公共のイベントで、一般社会で広まりつつある健康の問題エイズ、について宣伝などをしました。学生達がこのことにとっても興味があること、同世代のエイズに対する知識の現実を調査することで理解し、それを教えてくれました。この論文には先生達が、2つまたはそれ以上のコースの学生達がクラスの外で一つのプロジェクトをする方法を進めます。

This paper reports on how three different courses at two college campuses in Japan were coordinated around a central theme. The study concluded with a community event in which students were invited to participate and share with other students their knowledge and the work they had produced in their individual courses. The courses at Nanzan Women's Junior College were Creative Writing, focusing on advertising, and Human Research, focusing on creating and conducting surveys. The course at Nanzan University was an Oral Communications course for first year English majors, which concentrated on the development of speaking skills.

This project was conducted in November, 2001, and centered around the topic of HIV/AIDS. This theme was chosen due to its timeliness, as World AIDS Day occurs on December 1st. HIV/AIDS is also a relevant topic for our students given that the rate of HIV infection among young people is on the rise (Mizoguchi, 2002).

Many teachers report high student interest in the topic of AIDS (Phillips & Haynes, 1998, Welker & Houston, 1999, Haynes, 2001) citing that students become more active learners when dealing with this topic. Nunan (1999, p. 235) notes that content which students can relate to their own experience is one precondition for effective student motivation. Perhaps interest in HIV infection stems from college-aged students' natural

curiosity about sex, or from insufficient AIDS education in junior and senior high schools (Haynes, 2001). Teachers can use this intrinsic motivation to promote language learning through a topic such as AIDS.

I will briefly describe the courses involved in this project and will then show how the students were able to go beyond the classroom to interact with students at other campuses and the community at large. Interspersed are comments from the students themselves about their experience.

Creative Writing: Advertising

This creative writing course conducted at Nanzan Junior College focused on methods of persuasion used in advertising. Students were shown various forms of advertising in the printed and television media and became adept at recognizing the “gimmicks” used to sell products. These same advertising techniques are also used by charities such as WWF and UNICEF in order to raise funds for their organizations. After analyzing these ads, we then spent two 1 1/2 hour lessons studying about HIV/AIDS. Student interest was high during these two weeks.

Students were assigned homework that involved planning the design of an AIDS poster that would target a specific audience (e.g. Japanese teens or the English-speaking foreign community in Nagoya) and convey enough information for someone to understand the point quickly. They were to think about how layout relates to the effectiveness of the advertising. Then, in class, we created the posters and discussed them in terms of their possible effect on the target audience.

Human Research: Survey preparation

This course was also conducted at Nanzan Junior College. In addition to discussion about current topics of interest to the students, the course presented various ways to conduct surveys and questionnaires. Formats such as basic yes/no, short answer, multiple choice, Likert scale questions, and open-ended questions were covered. Students used topics such as dating, shopping, and housework and gender roles to practice designing some simple questionnaires that they then administered to other students in class.

About half-way through the course, we spent two classes studying about HIV/AIDS. Using the information they learned through this study, the students, in groups, focused on one aspect of the AIDS issue and produced survey questions. We talked about the effect that certain wording might have on the person answering the survey, and how to tactfully phrase delicate questions. For example, a question such as “Do you ask your boyfriend to always use a condom?” might be so direct that the person interviewed would be quite embarrassed in answering. In asking survey questions it is important to not make the informant feel uncomfortable as this could affect the honesty of their answers. Another problem with such a question as this is that there are assumptions that the question writer should be aware of, i.e. that the informant has a boyfriend, that the informant is heterosexual (students assumed the informant to be a woman for this question), or that the informant did have sex with the boyfriend. They then rewrote any questions they thought could be improved. For the question above, students might write “Do you feel it is important to talk to your partner about using a condom?” and “Would you consider asking your partner to use a condom before having sex?”

Conducting the surveys on the university campus gave these students the opportunity to gather information about a peer group outside their own campus, to gain experience in conducting surveys, and to practice English outside the classroom walls. It should be noted that when the students approached university students who did not wish to participate in English, they were allowed to conduct the survey in Japanese, but conversation to and from the junior college, and their subsequent report on their findings were conducted in English.

Oral Communications—English majors

Students in the Oral Communications (OC) course at Nanzan University meet three times a week for forty-five minutes, primarily to develop their speaking skills. The first part of the course we spent getting to know one another, building vocabulary and building confidence in speaking. By the second semester, the students were ready for a bigger challenge. Because of their interest in the terrorist attack in New York, we studied the country of Afghanistan in depth. The responses of the students in their action logs (Woo & Murphey, 1999) showed that they enjoyed this style of study, looking at one topic in detail rather than only touching on many different topics. Through questionnaires and action log entries I learned one topic they were interested in was AIDS.

The last two weeks of November we studied HIV/AIDS through videos, worksheets, newspaper articles, and a board game. The second week, for a homework assignment, I asked the students to talk with their friends and family about HIV/AIDS. Many had already done so. They developed their own questionnaires and came back to class ready to discuss the results. In general, they found that most people knew a little

about AIDS, but not many details.

I interviewed my seniors at Nanzan. I asked, “What’s the difference between AIDS and HIV?” “What does HIV stand for?” “What does AIDS stand for?” But they didn’t know them at all. *- M.O.*

Some of the students had been to the campus health center to ask what information is available to students and staff. Others went to the administration to ask which courses covered the topic of HIV/AIDS.

I went to Health Center and asked what’s available for students. We can get some brochure about AIDS and HIV. Also, we can watch some video there. But we can’t test if we have HIV or not. We can’t even apply for the test. Even though we can’t test, we can have counseling there. And once a year, they have a lecture about obstetrics and gynecology. In the lecture, they refer to HIV problems. They also have a lecture for the students who are studying abroad. In that lecture, they also refer to HIV. *- S.O.*

HIV/AIDS [is covered] in courses [course number] “Life Sciences.” “There have been no HIV people in Nanzan. But we’re ready for it,” a nurse said. *- K.S.*

Figure 1. In-class activities and interaction among students in the three courses and in the community

	Oral Communication	Advertising	Human Research
CLASSROOM	Study about AIDS through articles, video, game, self-reflection, discussions with classmates.	Study about AIDS. Draw posters using the “gimmicks”. Identify target audience and gimmicks used in each poster.	Study about AIDS. Develop a survey based on your knowledge of HIV/AIDS.
CAMPUS	Ask friends, family. Do campus research: AIDS in curriculum, campus health office.		Conduct a survey at Nanzan U. Report on findings (presentation)
COMMUNITY	Volunteers worked on preparations for World AIDS Day	Posters designed in class on display at World AIDS Day event.	
	(Volunteers participated in conversation in English with students from other campuses at AIDS education event in downtown Nagoya)		

World AIDS Day

The culmination of the AIDS study was a World AIDS Day event held on December 1st in downtown Nagoya. At this event, the posters that the Creative Writing class produced were displayed. Student volunteers from all the courses had the opportunity to meet each other and other English majors from Aichi Prefectural University who had also studied AIDS the previous week and were invited to join the event. Before the event began, the group of about fifteen volunteer students engaged in a short discussion in English about World AIDS Day and the day's event. Students then walked in pairs through the downtown streets, distributing AIDS information provided by the Aichi Prefectural Government. That evening, there was a candlelight memorial walk at which several participants from the community gave speeches in English and Japanese. The students were asked to translate for those who were not familiar with a particular language. Several students commented on this experience in their action logs the following week.

I took part in W.A.D. event, and handed out the booklet to passers-by. But almost of all people didn't take it! What is worse, when I said, "Today is the World AIDS Day," people put back their hands. I'm not sure, but I think so. I think people have no interest about AIDS.
- M.S.

In fact, I didn't feel so close about HIV-AIDS in last 2 week classes. But, yesterday, I took part in the march, I had excellent and curious experience. HIV and AIDS came close to me or next to me, I think.

Everyone who came to the Candlelight Walk last night said "It was good for me," and they want to join next year! I also think so. I want to help.

Student responses to this type of study

Students in the OC course were asked to write their reactions to the two weeks of study about HIV/AIDS. The comments were well considered observations on their learning experience. The majority of the reflections were positive. A few students expressed a bit of discomfort at first, but this did not prevent them from comprehending the information and the enormity of the situation:

First of all, I would never know about AIDS in detail if you didn't teach me. In fact, I didn't know even the difference between HIV and AIDS before. However, I know about them better than before now. When I found that I couldn't learn about AIDS without sex, I felt uncomfortable very much, because I was too shy. Yet, I wanted to know about HIV virus and AIDS. Learning about AIDS basics helped me a lot to understand the problem, and they were really important. What most impressed me was the article "Haves and Have-Nots." I was really shocked to know that developing countries suffering from many problems suffer from AIDS, too. It was beyond my comprehension. Discrimination against the people who has HIV virus is, of course, serious. But the situations going in developing countries are miserable.
- M.S.

Two students rather eloquently discussed their reactions to the level of AIDS education in Japan:

Through the studying about HIV/AIDS, I've got much information I've never known. I had thought "I know about HIV/AIDS enough" before the classes. It's true that I know much more information than other class mates, but there's much information I didn't know. And at first, I was so surprised that there's a few people who think AIDS is the same as HIV. And I think it reflects how low education level about HIV/AIDS Japanese Government has, and it causes misunderstanding and increasing number of the people who infected with HIV/AIDS. And it foments discrimination against the HIV/AIDS people to have few knowledge about HIV/AIDS. I think Japanese Government should adopt the HIV/AIDS educational week like we've taken for a week, and let children or students know about HIV/AIDS. - *S. O.*

I found a tendency of the knowledge of Japanese from the research. It is that they are taught some information to protect them from AIDS, but they don't know the system to infect HIV or what should they do if they have fear to infect HIV. I think this point is a fault of Japanese education. - *A.S.*

At the end of the junior college courses, students completed anonymous course evaluations. Again, there were no negative comments about our study of HIV/AIDS. In fact, as with the reactions from the university students, comments from the junior college students were equally positive:

I enjoyed to make advertising about AIDS in this class with classmates.

We were shy to do survey in English [at the university] but they were very friendly and we did.

I learned about AIDS. This class was very important for us. It was good for me. I wanted the teacher to teach about AIDS more, but I enjoyed this class.

I enjoyed discuss about HIV. In Japan, we don't have opportunity to talk about it so I loved to know it.

Adapting this idea to other community issues

HIV/AIDS is only one of many topics that can be raised in the EFL classroom, and then taken out into the community for students' further collaborative research. Such topics as the homeless, NGOs (Palisada, 2000), gender roles, helping the elderly, domestic violence, environmental issues, and teaching peace (see Welch & Welch, 1998, and Riley, 2001) provide a context for such student-led investigation outside the classroom.

Although this project was broad in scope, it took no more time to prepare than it would have had I prepared materials for separate topics for each course. In a way, it was actually easier as some of the materials overlapped. However, for many teachers there may be several problems with coordinating more than one course. Logistics may prevent some teachers from implementing a project such as this. In certain cases teachers will need to contact NGOs directly and Japanese skills, or an interpreter, may be required. The distance between campuses located miles away

from each other will obviously be an impediment. Approval from administration may be necessary before students are allowed to conduct surveys. A solution to these problems might be to work with another EFL teacher who is willing to cover the same issue (recycling, for example) and ask that your students be allowed to survey that teacher's students for part of one class. Using e-mail is another possibility for surveying students on campuses that are far apart. The students and teachers could then arrange a date to make a visit to a recycling center, or to do a clean-up of a city park, and report back on the experience.

Conclusion

Taking English outside the classroom walls provides students with a fresh experience in their language learning. It enables them to encounter English as a means of communication, not only as a course they need to graduate. Teachers can give the fundamental structures, vocabulary and background information for topics that arouse students' interest – topics that are related to the students' own lives. The learners can then use their linguistic and subject knowledge to investigate the attitudes of those outside their immediate group. Producing a poster in order to educate the general public, taking this project as an example, stimulated students to consider the issues very carefully, which encouraged critical thinking. This type of education shows students that English is a medium through which they can experience, and hopefully improve, the community around them.

AIDS Resources Available to Teachers

- Japan AIDS Prevention Awareness Network (JAPANetwork) offers free HIV/AIDS teaching materials for EFL students, worksheets, games and quizzes, teaching ideas and more. Contact aidsed@gol.com for further information <http://www.japanetwork.org>
- Japanese Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (statistics in Japan) http://api-net.jfap.or.jp/mhw/survey/mhw_survey.htm
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/dhap.htm>
- UNAIDS <http://www.unaids.org/>
- In Our Own Words (video produced Media Works, Inc. P.O.Box 15597 Kenmore Station, Boston MA 02215, tel. 800-600-5779)

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Appendix 1: Examples of student writing

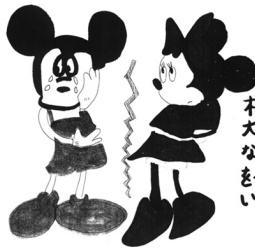
Umbrella & Helmet
protect you!!

Condom also
カサもヘルメットもコンドームも



My girlfriend has broken
up with me!

because I didn't use a condom.



コンドームは
あなた自身
を守ります。
相手を本当に
大切に思うの
ならコンドーム
を使用して下さい。

Any person who has sexual intercourse
can get infected with HIV

You have to protect yourself.

How can you believe
you are NOT infected with HIV
without any check?

検査もしないで、どうして自分はエイズじゃないって言われる？

Ask for information Health Center

If you can't!
エイズじゃないなら、まずは保健所
にお電話ください。



人権情報センター
052-831-2228

旅行には...

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| <input type="checkbox"/> はがらし | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> コンドム |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 下着 | <input type="checkbox"/> カメラ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> チケット | <input type="checkbox"/> 地図 |



WHEN YOU TRAVEL

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| <input type="checkbox"/> TOOTH BRUSH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> UNDERWEAR |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TICKET |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONDOM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CAMERA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MAP |