



Using media and drama to promote global awareness

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This paper discusses the design and teaching of a set of class activities containing the following elements: the use of media in English Language Teaching (ELT) to create an authentic English environment; the use of drama to facilitate the development of students' communicative competence; and the use of global issues in the context of content-based teaching. To ensure more effective use of authentic DVD media, which is often considered too difficult for ELT classrooms in Japan, we present an approach which focuses on the use of drama as an introductory pre-viewing stage. This enables the teacher to introduce difficult words, expressions and concepts from the DVD in the script and serves to assist student comprehension of the content and subject matter. This paper describes two experimental classes using this approach and its perceived effectiveness. At the end, we discuss the implications of this approach for class design.

この論文は、著者が日本での英語教育において主要と考える、次の3点に着目したクラス・アプローチを紹介する。第1に、英語を使う実践的な環境の提供をねらった、メディア教材を使用する英語授業である。第2に、コミュニケーション能力の向上をねらった、ドラマ・アクティビティを取り入れた英語授業である。そして第3に、英語の授業において、語学スキルの習得をねらう教育と、内容をより重視したグローバル教育との両立を図る。これらのクラス・アプローチをベースに取り入れた授業を、中学校と専門学校において実施し、それらの成果を検証する。

English language teaching and global education

Foreign language teachers shoulder the responsibility of raising students as global citizens, since foreign language learning (FLL) involves the promotion of cross-cultural understanding (Cates, 1990). Accordingly, one challenge for English instructors is to develop classroom approaches which combine global education (GE) and English language teaching (ELT). Based on the above, this paper describes the design of a set of ELT activities based on global issues content which aims at enhancing Japanese students' English language skills while promoting global awareness.

In designing our lesson, we developed our approach from a set of two theories: an English language teaching theory and a global education theory. Our ELT theory is based on an experimental study by VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) which demonstrated that input-based instruction was more effective than production-based instruction for second language learners. The results of this study suggest that input-based instructions induce learners' consciousness-raising (Ellis, 1997, p. 85), which then facilitates their learning. We modified the model of "Processing instruction in foreign language teaching" by VanPatten and Cadierno (p. 227) (Figure 1), and set out the following four stages: *input*, *intake*, *development* and *output* as our ELT theory for Japanese learners (see Appendix 1).

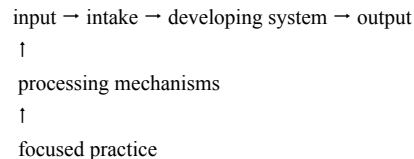


Figure 1. Processing instruction in foreign language teaching (VanPatten and Cadierno, 1993, p. 227)

Our global education theory was modified from the assertion by Cates that students must know about world problems and acquire necessary skills such as "communication skills, critical and creative thinking, empathy, multiple perspectives, co-operative problem solving, non-violent conflict resolution and informed decision-making" (1990, p. 3-4). Based on this, we set out the following four stages: *knowledge*, *attitude*, *skills*, and *action* for this class design as our global education theory for Japanese learners.

Drama method

As English language teachers, we strongly believe that our goal of teaching is not only to help students master English language skills, but also to help them acquire communication skills so that they can function effectively in English. On the other hand, it is not our intention to make our students abandon their native characteristics such as conformity and reserve stemming from Japanese culture in favor of traits found in Western culture such as individuality and candor.

Rather, it is to combine these characteristics to help students effectively express their opinions in English.

Accordingly, we suggest that it is necessary for Japanese learners of English to establish a persona or “second-self” when speaking or communicating in English. This way, their anxieties about performing in English will be diminished without impeding their true nature or Japanese cultural identity. In this regard, drama is an ideal ELT method. Students can naturally learn to “act” when they communicate in English.

Moreover, drama enables learners to experience “*the ‘real’ real world*” (Rodriguez & White, 1983) through stories, so that they can internalize the pragmatic functions of their lines and understand embedded contexts (Heldenbrand, 2003). Accordingly, they can increase their empathy for the content of the issues (Richard-Amato, 1996). Also, learners, especially children, can obtain “sensory input” (Brown, 2001, p. 89) through physical activities such as gestures.

Above all, we believe that the experience of play-acting enables Japanese learners to overcome their “Japaneseness” and become more fluent communicators of the English language.

Media-assisted instruction

We decided to use audio-visual material in designing this class for two reasons: 1) it can transform students’ passive language knowledge into active language knowledge, if used with an effective teaching approach; and 2) it creates an authentic English communication environment.

Referring to *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*, active language knowledge is “the ability of a person to actively produce their own speech and writing” as opposed to passive language knowledge (p. 9). Accordingly, students need to acquire active rather than passive language knowledge in order to generate spontaneous, creative communication. Therefore, transforming knowledge from passive to active is a necessary process in the students’ English language learning. In this regard, it is the teacher’s responsibility to give adequate instructions that facilitate this process.

We believe that providing an authentic English communication environment for students is crucial for ELT in a country like Japan. Opportunities to use English for real communication are rare here, as the dominant language is Japanese. Quock (1997) describes video as an “accessible, practical and logical” (p. 46) resource in ELT, suggesting that learners can be exposed to quasi-real-life situations through video which contains a wide range of verbal and non-verbal authentic communication.

Moreover, when used well, video can promote students’ active production of English during class. Unlike artificial speaking tasks, the content of authentic video invites spontaneous utterances from students (p. 49). Bransford et al. (2000) explains that cognitive learning occurs because audio-visual (AV) information helps people learn “difficult-to-understand concepts” (p. 207). People memorize more effectively through AV information as it stimulates their process of thinking. Anderson (2004) explains that people remember things not in the way we see things, but in the way we interpret them (p. 143). Accordingly, video-based

instruction has the potential to facilitate development of critical and creative thinking skills, as well as student understanding of the issues being taught.

Content issue – tourism

The global education content that we chose for our lesson was *Tourism*. In the context of Global Education, *tourism* issues are generally used to inspire learners' respect for cultural and social diversity as well as environmental ethics, and to enhance their sense of responsibility as global citizens (O'Grady, 1982). In many cases, *tourism* deals with the maintenance of local culture, the struggles of local people, and their adaptation to the forces of globalization in a Third World context.

Tourism is an accessible introduction to global issues for young students. It can start with familiar topics for them such as overseas travel, geography, history and cultures of the world, which offer the students opportunities to learn about the positive side of tourism, such as gaining new knowledge about unfamiliar cultures and deepening cross-cultural understanding. The focus then shifts to core issues that point out the negative effects of tourism, including the erosion of local culture and abuse of human rights. In dealing with tourism issues, students are required to think critically and creatively to solve problems and find possible solutions through negotiation and compromise, with the goal of realizing ethical tourism. Ethical tourism is tourism that embraces and respects local cultures and environment.

Media – “Batak: ancient spirits, modern world”

In this study, we designed a sequence of classroom activities around the video clip from the documentary “Batak: Ancient Spirits, Modern World” by cultural anthropologist James Eder. This features the Batak tribe on Palawan Island in the Philippines, and shows their struggles to maintain their cultural and spiritual identity under the pressures of globalization. The use of this video clip aims at promoting the learners' cultural respect, environmental ethics, and an understanding of ethnic identity in the context of globalization.

Lesson design

In accordance with the four respective stages of ELT and GE explained earlier in this paper, we implemented four steps. The activities in each step were designed to combine the aims from ELT and GE (see Appendix 2).

We intentionally placed the *drama* stage before the *video-viewing* stage in order to use drama-based activities as an introduction to facilitate comprehension of the video clip. This is because we designed our drama practice as a controlled activity, in contrast to the more authentic video watching which we anticipated students would have difficulty understanding. Using drama-based scripts to input linguistic and conceptual information from the video into the drama lesson seemed reasonable, especially when students' difficulty with comprehension of the video clip was anticipated.

In addition, we included elements of critical and creative thinking in composing our drama scripts. We made each role in the drama distinctive borrowing ideas from the book *Six Thinking Hats* by De Bono (1999). In this book, De Bono

offered an innovative way in which deliberate role playing can create a climate of critical and creative thinking; he chose six colors and gave each color a distinctive character (Figure 2); he suggested that in decision making situations, the participants looked at the issues from the standpoint of each role (color) to save time, remove ego, and avoid confusion (p.9-12). We modified this approach and created five roles (white, red, black, yellow, and green) in each scene of the scripts; speeches of each role contained the characteristics adopted from De Bono's classification. We hoped that through reading the scripts and practicing the roles, students would become aware of different perspectives on each issue and develop their problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, as well as empathetic attitudes toward the Batak.

colors (hats)	characteristics of the roles
white	neutral and objective, concerned with facts and figures
red	emotional
black	careful and cautious
yellow	positive
green	creative
blue	organized

Figure 2. Modified from Six Thinking Hats by De Bono (1999)

Phase 1: Introduction of the topic

This was the Input stage of ELT and the Knowledge stage of GE. In this stage, teacher-written scripts for three different scenes - the Batak, the government and education (see Appendix 3) - were the primary input. This input included basic knowledge about the Batak people and the issues concerning globalization that they face.

To stimulate students' thinking, we incorporated several viewpoints in creating our scripts. Each of the three drama scenes was constructed with lines that contain different viewpoints. In reading their drama scripts, students were expected to recognize different perspectives and opinions on the topic as well as the integrated relationships between the three parties; the Batak people, the government, and school educators.

Phase 2: Drama

Play-acting of the drama scenes was implemented as the Intake stage of ELT and the Attitude stage of GE. The task of performing the drama scenes in front of the class was intended to motivate students to engage in intensive practice. The teacher encouraged students to act lively using stress and intonation as well as gestures and facial expressions. This led them to identify with their roles. As a result, students were able to focus more on the content of the subject matter than on language features (Heldenbrand, 2003).

Phase 3: Video

Video viewing was intended to expose students to real-life English aimed at enhancing their cognitive learning; this was the development stage of ELT and the skill-building stage of GE.

While watching the video clip, students tried to schematize the content and issues being shown in English using their background knowledge to understand the video. Thus, for the students, this process aimed at facilitating the development of their English abilities and promoting their global awareness. Moreover, video viewing enabled students to determine whether

what they learned and practiced in the previous stage was correct or not, and to recognize how verbal and non-verbal actions occur in real-life situations. This stage enhanced their cognitive learning of English language skills and of the subject matter.

Phase 4: Discussion

At this stage, students were expected to show their readiness for output (ELT) and action (GE). In each discussion, students were expected first to give their opinions from the viewpoint of their respective roles, and later their own opinions free from their roles. This was to confirm improvement of students' English language skills as well as to stimulate them to clarify their attitudes toward global issues.

Experimental lessons

To examine the efficacy of this design, we conducted two experimental classes: one with post-adolescent students (Group 1) at a vocational school and the other with junior high school students (Group 2). As some aspects of these two classes were different, such as class size, student numbers and student ages, each teacher inevitably employed a slightly different approach.

Notes:

- In introducing the script, the teacher elicited the different attitudes and perspectives of the people in each scene from the students of each group.
- Worksheet 1 (see Appendix 4) was designed to make students realize that there are three basic viewpoints – those of the Batak, the local government and local school educators. The questions aimed at having students recognize each group's perspective and realize the necessity of critically looking at issues from various angles. Students completed the worksheet while watching performances by the students in other groups.
- Three kinds of props were prepared according to the drama scenes: feather headdresses for the Batak, scarves for the government people and hats for the school educators.
- Worksheet 2 (see Appendix 5) was designed to make students aware of the issues and think about possible solutions while watching the video clip.
- As time was running short towards the end, only the class discussion was conducted. Students were encouraged to express their opinions about the issues in English, and required to think about future solutions.

Table 1. Group 1

<p>Time: 120 minutes</p> <p>Class: a special class between semesters (outside the regular curriculum)</p> <p>Participants: 1st graders of a vocational school taking English as a compulsory language course.</p> <p>Number: 40</p> <p>Course objectives: To introduce foreign cultures to promote students' understanding of the world and to prepare them for the global business world.</p> <p>Instructors: 1 Japanese teacher</p>	
<p>Phase 1: Input/Knowledge</p> <p>→ Pre-teaching & scripts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced the students to the topic through pictures of the Batak people and of Palawan Island to inspire their curiosity about the topic. • Then, asked several leading questions to induce students to become aware of the issues: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) What kind of life do the Batak live? (2) What do they eat / wear / learn? • Formed 8 groups of five students, and had them read the script to understand the situation of their assigned scene.
<p>Phase 2: Intake/Attitude (Awareness)</p> <p>→ Drama</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After practicing for 20 minutes, each group performed in front of the class, using props. • Students completed Worksheet 1 (see Appendix 4) while watching the video clip.
<p>Phase 3: Development/Skills</p> <p>→ Video</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gave the students Worksheet 2 (see Appendix 5). • Students completed it while watching the video clip. • After the video, the teacher went over the answers with the whole class.
<p>Phase 4: Output/Action</p> <p>→ Class discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted a class discussion about the issues. Encouraged students to think about solutions concerning the Batak's future.

Table 2. Group 2

<p>Time: 60 minutes</p> <p>Class: elective class</p> <p>Participants: 3rd graders of a Junior High School</p> <p>Number : 15</p> <p>Course objectives: Speaking and Writing using content-based teaching</p> <p>Instructors: Team-teaching by 1 Japanese teacher + 1 Assistant Language Teacher (ALT)</p>	
<p>Phase I: Input/Knowledge</p> <p>→ Introduction to the Batak and Critical Thinking skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ALT showed a map of Asia and talked about five Asian cities where he had lived. Students were then given maps of Asia and highlighted these places on their maps. • The ALT showed pictures of Palawan Island and the Batak people to introduce the topic. • Then, the ALT asked the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: Where is this beach? • <A: In the Philippines> • Q: Who are they? • <A: Filipinos> • Q: What kind of life do they have? • e.g.) food, clothing, life style etc. • Then, the teacher showed one-minute video clip of the Batak to increase students' curiosity toward the topic. • The teacher presented the scenario of Scene 1 and explained about the attitudes of the people in the scene and the characteristics of the five colors: White, Red, Black, Green and Yellow. • Students checked the meaning of the script
<p>Phase 2: Intake/Attitude (Awareness)</p> <p>→ Drama</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher divided the class into three groups of 5. • Each student chose which character to role-play. • The teacher instructed the students to act according to their roles and then practiced their roles. • Finally, students performed using props.
<p>Phase 3: Development/Skills</p> <p>→ Video</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher gave Worksheet 1 to check their comprehension by filling it out.
<p>Phase 4: Output/Action</p> <p>→ Reaction paper</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finally, students wrote a reaction paper to show what they learned from the lesson.

Notes:

- Only Scene 1 was used in class because of the 60-minute class time. Accordingly, Phase 1, 2 and 3 were conducted, but not Phase 4. Instead, students wrote brief comments, reactions and thoughts about the issues at the end of the class.
- In the role-play, the teacher introduced the concept of De Bono's *Six Thinking Hats* and assigned a different color hat to each student. The teacher then emphasized that each student should act according to the role. For example, if the student is Red, he/she should act like an emotional person; if Black, like a cautious person; if White, like a neutral person; if Yellow, like a positive-thinking person; if Green, like a creative-thinking person.
- Only the feather headdresses were used.

Findings

The results of these two experimental classes demonstrated that the three components of our class design – content based teaching, drama acting and video viewing – seemed to be effectively combined.

The students showed positive reactions with only a little confusion about the video. This indicates that the video we used as authentic material succeeded in increasing the students' curiosity about the issues in the subject matter, *tourism*, and promoting global awareness. In both groups, we also found, as Allan (cited in Quock, 1997) has pointed out, that video contributes to providing entertainment in the ELT classroom, which can improve the class atmosphere (p. 46).

The effectiveness of the use of drama preceding the video viewing stage was observable in the students' comments. Some students noted that reading the script helped them grasp words and expressions while watching the video clip. The opinions given in the discussion indicated that drama served to enhance students' comprehension of the content of the video. Some of the feedback from students in Group 1 was that they "could see connections between the drama and the video" and that they were "happy because they could understand the video."

Our approach to critical thinking also seemed to have a great impact on the students. In their reaction papers, many reported that it was the first time for them to think about things this way. Also, students in Group 2 were apparently very excited about play-acting using colored props. The use of props also helped students enjoy play-acting, naturally eliciting their emotions to their assigned roles. As a result, students looked more confident when play-acting in English and tried to act out their roles with appropriate gestures. This confirms the notion that young students can easily take on roles without hesitation and enthusiastically participate in drama activities (Heldenbrand, 2003).

There was some noteworthy behavior among students in Group 2. In choosing which role to play, some students started guessing their own color when applying the concept of the *Six Thinking Hats*. For example, they started saying "You are Red!" or "I am Yellow!" Some announced that they chose characters similar to their own personalities and others said that they chose the opposite. This demonstrates that the activity using the concept of *Six Thinking Hats* showed the students the way to critical and creative thinking.

Teacher-student ratio could be another factor. In Group 1, with one teacher trying to monitor eight groups, some students seemed to be less attentive to the play-acting task and therefore showed little sense of responsibility for that activity. These students felt less incentive to play their roles in English than they might have in a smaller class or with a second teacher monitoring them – e.g., an ALT who could create a more authentic English language environment.

Implications

First, in content-based teaching, it is important to include pre-teaching of the topic and background knowledge of the situation related to the subject matter. This prepares students for understanding the issues. Also, a pragmatic presentation of the topic is a requirement. In the lesson for Group 2, the ALT played an important role in drawing the students' full attention to the topic by telling about his own experience living in Asian cities (See Table 2).

Second, an extension of the class through follow-up activities by the teacher can determine the success of the drama method. Although drama activities are potentially enjoyable for students (Sano, 1990), there is a possibility that the class will result in lots of fun but no academic progress. Positive reactions from the students, such as lively laughter and great excitement during the class, may be misleading. An exciting class is favorable for every teacher, but it cannot be the goal; the teacher must continue to conduct tactful instruction to develop students' language proficiency and critical-thinking skills. In this regard, follow-up activities that require students' further engagement are essential.

Third, there were some differences between Group 1 and Group 2 in terms of response. This relates to a difference in student participation in the drama activities. Class atmosphere could be a key factor in this phenomenon. Group 1 was a mixture of different classes with forty post-adolescent students who are active in class tasks only when working with their friends. Many of these students showed great hesitation and even rejection in working with students they were not familiar with. On the other hand, Group 2 was a smaller class with 15 junior high school students who had already established intimate friendship as a class. It can be assumed that the intimate class atmosphere decreased, if not eliminated, the students' anxieties about engaging in the tasks in English.

Lastly, even though it was found that some students were immature and less motivated to accept their share of the group task, this can be overcome with more reasonable teacher-student ratio.

Conclusion

In principle, the challenge in working effectively with materials such as audio-visual media and drama is how to use them (Quock, 1997). In this study, we attempted to present an effective way of using media and drama to promote learners' language skills and global awareness, regardless of their age or English proficiency level.

The combination of drama activities and audio-visual material in the ELT classroom seemed to promote students' effective learning of English language skills and awareness of global issues. The results of the two experimental classes

demonstrated that using scripted drama at the pre-viewing stage assisted student comprehension of the video clip by introducing words, expressions and concepts related to the subject matter. To support this, feedback from students indicated that this approach helped them to gain a better understanding of the relevant language and issues when watching the video. Moreover, this class design led students to think critically about the issues in a fun and entertaining way.

On the other hand, some fundamental factors which influenced the success of this class design also became evident. First, the results of the experimental classes suggest that further instruction by the teacher is necessary to develop effective critical-thinking skills on the part of the students. Second, the importance of pre-teaching was emphasized. In Group 2, for example, a clear presentation and adequate input of background information proved crucial for student comprehension of the subject matter. Finally, a comfortable class atmosphere was an important factor in the successful marriage of drama activities and media.

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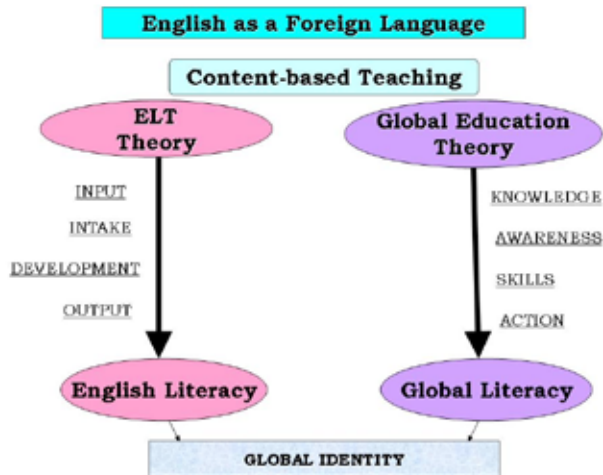
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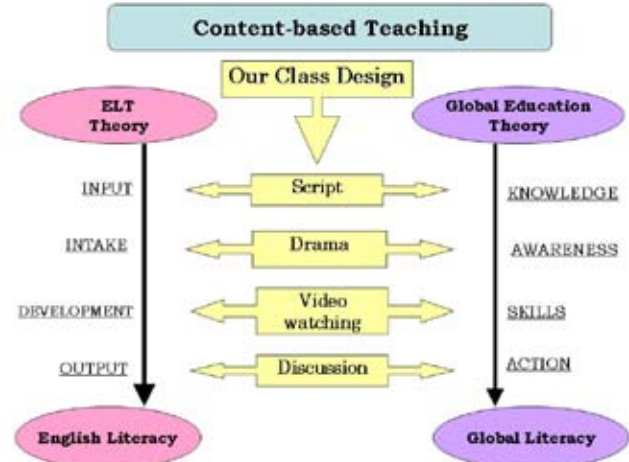
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Appendix 1



Appendix 2



Appendix 3

Scene 1: The Batak

- Traditional Way of Life (Eco-Balance) -

- R: We Batak are eco-friendly people.
- W: We know that we're a part of the eco-system of the forest, and we take only what we need. But there's not enough honey for us this year.
- B: Yes, the forest spirits must be very angry. They're punishing us for something.

- R: Aha! The immigrants have been taking too much honey. It's their fault!
- G: Well, let's just pray to forest spirits some more to appease them.
- Y: Maybe they forgive us and we can find more honey then... The normal balance between nature and humans will be resolved then.
- All: Yes. Let's pray!!!

Scene 2: The Government (City)

- Cash Economy -

- R: The Batak have been stealing honey. It's public property, not their private property!!
- W: And it is the government that controls public property. They need the government's permission to collect honey.
- B: But the Batak just don't understand. They always follow their old traditions, and never change!
- R: Yes! They're so stupid! They don't know how to count. They don't even know how to read and write.
- G: Well, anyway, it's time for them to start going to school and learning those things.
- Y: Certainly! It will be good for the Batak. And it will be good for everybody.

(All agree.)

Scene 3: School

- Education -

- W: Today, our day care school had its graduation ceremony. These Batak boys and girls are the first ones to graduate from this school.
(Introduce them → high praise)
- R: I'm so glad to see these Batak children who now know a lot about Western culture and modern society. I believe that these children will change the old Batak traditions.
- B: Well... Unfortunately, I don't think it will be easy for the Batak to change their ways of thinking so soon. It will take time.
- G: Anyway, I hope the Batak children will continue to receive education. And then in the future they will get off this small island and see the outside world.
- Y: It would be nice if they could study abroad – for example, at *your school's name* in Japan!

Appendix 4

Worksheet 1

The Batak – Ancient spirits, modern world

Scenes / Topics, Issues	Scene 1 the Batak	Scene 2 the government (city)	Scene 3 school educators
Policies / Life style			
Religion / Beliefs			
Issue(s) <Video>			
Future <Discussion>			

Appendix 5

Worksheet 2

The Batak – Ancient spirits, modern world

Part I

1. What do the Batak think will happen if the resources are wasted or abused by humans?
2. What kind of relationship do the Batak have with the forest?
3. Why is honey highly prized?
4. What are the new and different dangers to the Batak today? Why?
5. What do the Batak think the reason is for why honey collection has not gone well this season?
6. What are the Batak doing to solve the situation?

Part II

7. What kind of city is the capital of Palawan today?
8. Why do the Batak participate in the parade in the city?
9. What does the city think is the foundation for success?
10. What is the new and promising source of income for the government today?
11. What will the conservationists' new plan do? (key words: conservation / human rights)
12. Why did the Batak leaders create the foundation?

Part III

13. Were the Batak children happy about dressing up in caps and gowns at the graduation?
14. What are the Batak today?
15. How does the Batak's future look? Why?
16. What do you think the Batak should do?

Appendix 6

Experimental lesson 2

Phase 4 – Output / Action

<Reflections from the G2 students>

1. It was very difficult for me to understand the Batak, but I understood it a little.
2. I did not know the meaning of what we were doing in the lesson.
3. I was able to learn that the Batak prayed to gods when they could not get enough honey. For me, it was like a festival.
4. I was very sad because my role was Black, but it made me happy that I became able to read English.
5. I did not understand the Batak well.
6. I love honey.
7. I was very surprised to know that there were people who support their lives by selling honey.

8. It was very fun to put flowers on top of our heads. The Batak's way of living was very interesting to me.
9. I was very embarrassed to perform in front of the others, but it was very fun. I learned that the Batak cannot live without honey.
10. I was able to realize that each country has its own way of thinking.
11. I enjoyed the performance. I was very surprised to know that the Batak are very different from Japanese people.
12. I became very nervous when I was performing, but I realized that there are various ways of thinking and expressing emotion. I realized that there are many ways of living around the world.
13. I thought that it was very important to create a balance between nature and human being's lives like the Batak did.
14. It was difficult to understand the Batak, but it was very fun. I was surprised to see that the Batak squeezed honey out of the honeycombs.
15. I started to be interested in the idea that there are still many different tribes like the Batak in the world and each has its own customs and lifestyle.