

Teaching-learning dialogue: Sharing ideas and resources

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For the third consecutive year, the Global Issues and Language Education Special Interest Group (GILE SIG) has sponsored a Forum where mini-presentations on a variety of current global topics were held. The presentations included utilizing global issues for student growth, materials development, and exploring pedagogical approaches promoting international understanding. In addition to advocating professionalism in the classroom through well researched and tested classroom activities, GILE opens doors to individuals and organizations sharing their knowledge and experience on important issues that contribute to the wellbeing of all members of our global society. As educators, we can provide guidance to our students, leading them to think about the vital issues that influence and govern their lives, and then initiate a collaborative path for a better future fully cognizant of the role we must play as global citizens.



今年で3回目を迎えたグローバル問題研究部会(GILE SIG)が主催するフォーラムでは、地球規模で捉えなくてはならない現代の様々なトピックをテーマとする小発表が行われた。その発表を大別すると、学習者の学びを深めるためのグローバル問題の活用方法、より良い教材の開発、そして国際理解を促進するための教授法についての探求が挙げられる。GILEでは、研究を重ね、教室で実際に用いた学習活動を通して、教員が本当の意味でのプロの教師になっていくことを提唱しているが、それに加えて、国際社会全体の幸福に貢献するような重要問題についての知識と経験を、個人、もしくは組織と共有していくことに努めている。教育者としての私達は学習者の生活に大きな影響を与える問題について彼らがじっくり考えるように導くことが可能である。これは、世界の一員として共に果たすべき役割を十分に理解し、より良い未来に向けて共に道を切り開いていく第一歩でもある。

FOR THE third consecutive year, the Global Issues and Language Education Special Interest Group (GILE SIG), coordinated by Tim Grose, sponsored a Forum at the JALT2009 Conference, where mini-presentations on a variety of current global topics were held. These presentations allowed for the close interaction of all participants to share not only ideas, lesson plans, and resources, but also, a deep sense of our commitment to the EFL profession and particularly the educational needs of our students. Furthermore, the GILE SIG Forum provided the opportunity for experienced and novice educators to collaborate on projects that enhance classroom practices centered on international issues.

Consistent with the theme of the conference, and most appropriate for EFL learners worldwide, is the notion that English has become one of the effective means to facilitate new cultural norms throughout the world. Through English, a window to this knowledge is possible for people from most communities in the world, where they can share their vast experiences through personal contact utilizing various forms of multimedia and communication technologies.

Since many EFL students have very limited contact with people outside their own society, they rely on sources of information they trust to truthfully inform them about the world. This responsibility that educators assume and wholeheartedly pursue is mirrored

in the actions of our students. Thus, our presence in the classroom can help facilitate students' appreciation of other cultures, languages, and thoughts on global and local events. With this in mind, the presentations in the GILE SIG Forum included utilizing global issues for student development, using readily available multimedia to create materials for the teaching of environmental issues throughout the world, and exploring pedagogical approaches promoting international understanding.

Mirroring street children's dreams and yours highlights the use of *If I Had the Chance* as classroom material in a secondary school EFL classroom. Here, drawings and interviews of children are utilized to show how they view their world. In addition, *Freedom toast: Promoting learner development* outlines the use of monthly meetings to provide opportunities for discussions and presentations in English. This program facilitates autonomy, motivates learning, and encourages an interest in social and international issues.

Hands On multimedia for the classroom illustrates the use of readily available multimedia and online resource materials covering a wide variety of global issues for intermediate level EFL students. These materials stimulate students' interest in societies, cultures, and current global issues through the use of multimedia and guided Internet research. Also, *Using picture books for global education in English classes* introduces how to incorporate global education into English classes from elementary to university level students in Japan. The use of these visual aids in the classroom are extremely useful for introducing global issues and eliciting the already acquired knowledge of the learners that would stimulate their further learning.

Pedagogy is addressed in *Introducing a critical questioning framework*, which argues that language is rarely if ever completely neutral, and examines the relationships between language, power, and ideology through critical discourse analysis. A critical questioning framework was thus developed to inform materials design

and pedagogy, helping to raise both learners' and teachers' critical awareness of discourse and promote critical thinking skills in the language classroom. *Activism from the classroom: Effectively scaffolded task-based activities for the language learning classroom* focuses on students' understanding of global or local issues to improve their current conditions. These language learning tasks motivated friends and family members to become more active in the community. In addition, *The blurring of binary oppositions in Princess Mononoke* introduces students to the concept of binary oppositions and explores how binaries are distorted in film. Through character analysis and an examination of the plot, students unravel the complicated message the main character sends his viewers through his blurred portrayal of men and women.

This year's GILE SIG Forum helped facilitate a treasure of new ideas to share with the larger teaching community. The following presentation summaries reflect a vast wealth of classroom experience and professional commitment to furthering our students potential as well-rounded speakers of English.

Mirroring street children's dreams and yours

Naoko Harada

Children often observe their world differently from adults and are skillful in sketching what they see. An art competition for street children from seven Asian countries was sponsored by the Asian Development Bank in 2002. Drawings and interviews of the nearly two hundred winners of this competition were compiled in a book entitled *If I Had the Chance...* This paper highlights the use of this book as teaching material in a secondary school EFL classroom. Students were stimulated by reading interviews of the lives of artists who drew the pictures. By looking at those pictures, they could imagine the unique experiences these street children had.

The ability to see the world through someone else's eyes, known as *perspective taking*, may happen in a situation when someone has already experienced or imagined such experiences (Casanave, 2009, p. 3). In the case of imagining the unexplored world, perspective taking could go as far as being "associated with a particular social role" (VandesBos, 2007, p. 629). Using *If I Had the Chance...* created such an opportunity for the students to take the perspective of children whose lives are uniquely different from their own.

Cortazzi and Jin (1999) mention developing cultural awareness as being aware of members of another cultural group. By looking at the colorful drawings, my class contrasted their own lives to those of the children artists scattered in Asia by reading the interview articles at the end of the book. Reading four articles and then filling in the worksheet (shown in Table 1), enabled them to experience perspective taking. My students realized the difference in mirroring the difficult reality of the children facing danger, poverty, and hunger to their own safe lives. They tried to learn from the episodes of these diversified social backgrounds and cultures.

In the last unit, the high school third-year students were asked to write an essay on their future plans or dreams they cherished. This writing activity would facilitate them to consider their real plans for higher education and beyond. In doing so, the students had chances to connect their social responsibilities and the lives of the street children with fresh eyes.

Messages from children living in diversified societies are priceless for practicing global education in class. This activity framed by perspective taking gave each individual a chance to reflect on the street children's lives and their own through reading texts and looking at vivid images of pictures.

Table I. Interview information from the artists of the drawing contest

	Name: Raymond in Interview No. 1	Name: in Interview No. ()
Age	N. A.	
City Country	Manila The Philippines	
Dream or future profession	He wants to see nations united and to have peace also within the Philippines. He wants to reunite with his family.	
Message to the readers or a certain group	Peaceful change is possible.	

Bio data

Naoko Harada teaches at the Senior High School Affiliated with Japan Women's University. Her research interests include ESL materials development and learner autonomy.

Freedom toast: Promoting learner development Jim Ronald

Language teachers have responsibilities relating to various types of learner development: helping learners become more autonomous and responsible for their own language learning; fostering motivation to learn and use the target language; and encouraging interest and knowledge of social and international issues. Two qualities found in Rubin and Thompson's list of good language learners are "finding their own way" and "finding strategies for getting practice in using the language [...] outside the classroom" (1983, p. 117). Yet few Japanese students do find ways to use English outside the classroom productively, despite activities and environments where they could do this. One duty of language teachers, then, may be to introduce or provide accessible opportunities for language learners to step out of the classroom and beyond the campus.

Freedom Toast is a monthly meeting, held off-campus in Hiroshima city, which was started to provide opportunities for discussions and presentations in English. Anyone may join these meetings, but they are *sheltered* or *scaffolded* environments in that language support is provided; presenters are given assistance or guidance as needed, and the audience is provided with bilingual word lists for the presenters' topics. However, the purpose of *Freedom Toast* is not only language use, but also to learn about various issues beyond our local world. Presentation topics are about social or international issues and over the two years of its existence have included Australian Aborigines, Crime in Japan, Global Warming, History Teaching in Asia, Mauritius, Nelson Mandela, and Peace Camp in China.

A further reason for starting and continuing *Freedom Toast* was as a response to the small, and shrinking, local Amnesty International group. The coordinator of the group and I felt that an activity for language learners interested in learning or presenting about social issues might well be interested in the Amnesty

International meetings following immediately after. In addition, it would provide a service for Amnesty members: opportunities to use English for Japanese members, and an opportunity to learn about Japanese and international social issues for non-Japanese members.

Over the two years of its existence, the main challenge of *Freedom Toast* has been its effective promotion. It has been introduced with fliers in English and Japanese distributed to students and at Amnesty events, via local community Internet sites and Facebook, and in a student-produced colour booklet introducing places to get out and use English. Numbers of students joining *Freedom Toast* are still small and effective publicity remains a challenge, but it is a worthwhile, rewarding activity for promoting language learner development. It has also served to attract new, younger people to join the Hiroshima group of Amnesty International.

Bio data

Jim Ronald teaches at Hiroshima Shudo University. His professional interests include vocabulary acquisition, learner development (including critical thinking), and pragmatics.

Hands On multimedia for the classroom

Robert H. Taferner

The objective of this article is to illustrate the use of readily available multimedia and online resources materials covering a wide variety of global issues for intermediate level EFL students. Numerous researchers (e.g. Sampson, 2009) have claimed that the use of video in the classroom provides a stimulating environment for second language (L2) learners. Not only do many students want to watch films for educational purposes to learn, but they also would like to be entertained at the same time.

When we decide on the materials to use and determine how to incorporate them into a coherent set of lessons, a number of theoretical concepts and practical concerns need to be addressed. Foremost, when utilizing authentic materials there is a need to scaffold tasks to make them accessible to the EFL learner without overwhelming them with too many tasks that may increase their cognitive load. Under these conditions, students may have difficulty in learning the target language or content. Often the main concern with audiovisual materials is to teach content, listening skills, and vocabulary. Nation provides a useful framework, the 4 Strands (2001, p. 390; 2007; 2009), which was consulted to ensure pedagogical requirements and language skills be incorporated into the materials. Another concern with the use of videos in the classroom is for students to maintain their motivation, and focus of the content or language learning task without being distracted. This can be accomplished by viewing short segments of a video, ideally less than four minutes in length, while engaging in multi-layered exercises that challenge and require effort from the learner (Canning-Wilson, 2000).

The incorporation of these aforementioned factors lead to the development of *Earth Report: Hands On for the Classroom*, an intermediate to upper-intermediate level textbook intended to stimulate students' interest in societies, cultures, and current global issues. In this text, students are required to express their opinions about the various topics, complete guided Internet research tasks, and utilize online audio and video materials hosted on the BBC Earth Report: Hands On website <<http://www.tve.org/ho/index.html>>. Survey results (see Table 2) indicate that the majority of students were challenged by the materials, and expanded their views about many international issues throughout the world. Overall students enjoyed the numerous opportunities to learn English, both in the classroom and at home through Internet research and would like to continue learning English through texts like *Earth Report: Hands On for the Classroom*.

Table 2. Earth Report: Hands On for the Classroom survey results

Part I—Materials				Mean
The content was				3.9
The audiovisual materials were				4.0
The students' handouts were				3.9
5	4	3	2	1
Very interesting	Interesting	Okay	Boring	Very boring
Part II—Skills & Activities				Mean
The listening exercises were				4.2
The speaking exercises were				3.6
The reading exercises were				3.6
The writing exercises were				3.5
The vocabulary was				3.3
The discussions were				3.5
The Internet research was				3.5
5	4	3	2	1
Very difficult	Difficult	Okay	Easy	Very easy
Do you want to continue learning from the <i>Earth Report: Hands On in the Classroom</i> ?				Yes: 89.0%

N=49

Bio data

Robert Taerner has been teaching English in Japan since 1993. He holds a MAT-TESOL from the School for International Training and is a Ph.D. candidate in Applied Linguistics at Lancaster University, U.K. His research interests include materials development and student motivation. <robert_taerner@yahoo.ca>

Using picture books for global education in English classes**Hitomi Sakamoto**

This presentation introduced how to incorporate global education into English classes from elementary school to university in Japan using picture books. It has been officially decided by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) that there should be one English class a week for fifth graders and sixth graders at Japanese elementary schools from the spring of 2011. Yoshimura (2000) contends that English

classes should be fun but should have deeper content which could inspire them intellectually as well. I think it is particularly true for fifth graders and sixth graders. Now most elementary schools are using the textbooks entitled *Eigo Note 1* and *Eigo Note 2* published by MEXT in April 2009, and many teachers feel it necessary to enrich the content. One solution is the usage of picture books for global education. They can be extremely useful tools for introducing and brainstorming global issues and eliciting what knowledge the learners already have. Beautiful pictures can have a strong impact on young learners, remain in their minds and can consequently stimulate further learning. For example, there is a lesson to introduce time differences around the world in *Eigo Note 2*. I suggest using a picture book entitled *All in a Day* illustrated by eight artists from eight countries for this lesson (Anno et al., 1986). It shows how the eight children in different countries spend the New Year's Day at different times throughout the day in a very vivid fashion.

For students from junior high school to university I suggest that teachers have their students make picture books in English on global issues. One example comes from a course on how to teach English to children at my university. One student made a picture book based on the true story of the elephants killed at the Ueno Zoo during World War II. Another student made a paper theater out of this book and used it successfully during her teaching practicum with sixth grade elementary school students.

The students in elementary school responded very positively to my lessons about the poor elephants' story for two main reasons. The first reason is that most of the students had learned the story or had read the book in Japanese prior to listening to the story in English. Therefore, they were more interested in this story and it was easier for them to understand. The second reason was that the pre-reading and post-reading activities were well planned. A number of picture cards were prepared in ad-

vance to introduce the vocabulary and to review the story. The goal of this class was to have students think of war and peace. From the survey it was clear that the sad story of the elephants contributed to this aim. The students felt very sorry for the elephants and thought that there should be no more wars.

Bio data

Hitomi Sakamoto teaches at Toyo Gakuen University. Her research interests include global education in EFL classes and how to teach English to children.

Introducing a critical questioning framework

Philip Shigeo Brown

Based on the assumption that language is rarely if ever completely neutral, critical discourse analysis (CDA) examines the relationships between language, power, and ideology (Fairclough, 1989). More often used as a linguistic tool, CDA has been criticised for its complexity and lack of clear methodology suitable for classroom practice, especially in English language teaching.

Synthesising Fairclough (1989), Lankshear, Gee, Knobel, and Searle (1997), Ludwig (2003), and Stenglin and Iedema (2001), a Critical Questioning Framework for Text Analysis (Brown, in press) was thus developed to inform materials design and pedagogy, helping to raise both learners' and teachers' critical awareness of discourse and promote critical thinking skills (see Figure 1).

The framework outlines questions about the author's purpose, perspective, assumptions, biases as well as choices regarding lexis, grammar, text structure, visuals, and so forth that are used to construct its reality. It further encourages the listener or speaker to consider what has not been represented and alternative viewpoints.

Critical Questions

- What is the writer/speaker's purpose?
- How might the text influence the reader/listener's ideas?

- What opinions does the writer/speaker express?
- What is the writer/speaker's perspective?
- What biases does the writer/speaker have?
- What are the dominant readings in the text?
- What gaps or silences are there in the text?
- What assumptions are made about the reader/viewer/listener?
- What beliefs, assumptions, expectations (ideological baggage) do readers/viewers/listeners have to entertain in order to make meaning from the text?

- How do the writer/speaker's values, views, and interests influence the text?

- What choices (lexical, grammatical, textual, visual etc) are made to construct (its) reality?
- How are information and ideas expressed and represented to influence and position readers/viewers/listeners?

- What alternative positions might be taken?
- What possible views are excluded?

Figure 1. A critical questioning framework for text analysis (Reproduced from Brown, in press)

The Critical Questioning Framework was used to develop two lessons and teaching materials used in different contexts (see Brown, in press, for details). The first focused on using CDA

with music through a closer examination of John Lennon's *Imagine*. After class, two intermediate students commented:

"It's hard for me to understand song lyrics when I listen to a music. The lesson satisfied me because I could understand *Imagine*."

"I could recognize that not only the sound but the words of the songs of Beatles are very interesting."

The second, based on Jamall (2006), investigated stereotypes portrayed in advertising and other media images, and was used with upper intermediate and advanced learners. Their feedback indicated greater critical awareness:

"I want to reduce the number of prejudices I have."

"I think these are important, when you want to understand what people says."

"These affect me fundamentally in thinking way."

"To think about the connotation behind what is said is important. But it's hard to do it in English."

"Those are very important to think about something when watching TV, reading books, etc. We should avoid to get biased information to discard stereotypical images."

In summary, the Critical Questioning Framework was shown to inform learning and teaching materials creation and classroom pedagogy. The framework specifically identifies the types of questions that teachers and learners can ask in order to further develop both creative and critical thinking skills.

Bio data

Philip Shigeo Brown (MA TEFL/SL, RSA Cambridge CELTA) has been teaching in Japan for over eight years. His interests include global issues, learner and teacher development, autonomy, and vocabulary acquisition. <philza2003@yahoo.com>

Activism from the classroom: Effectively scaffolded task-based activities for the language learning classroom

Craig Manning

This section will briefly introduce a series of nine tasks (see Table 3) that have been successfully used within a university language learning context to guide low-level to intermediate students from understanding an issue to making effective change beyond the classroom. The tasks can be used to structure an entire semester-long course or as a weekly twenty-minute activity.

Students do most of the preparation, making these tasks teacher friendly. Students use English to select content, prepare materials, and give presentations about the sources of the selected problems and steps towards possible solutions in preparation for some kind of activism. With multiple groups and different topics, natural information gaps are created. Presentations or interviews may be done in between any of the tasks. Presentations and portfolios are recommended for evaluation purposes.

Summary of student responses

Given a choice between trying these activities and participating in a more traditionally structured class, the vast majority of students have voted to try them every time the offer has been made.

Table 3. Tasks

1. **Caring enough to be noticed:** Students list five problems/ issues that make them angry.
-Collect and keep their papers. Create groups of 3~4 like-minded students.
2. **Determining common values (information gap):** Group members figure out what they have in common and choose one issue to address during the remainder of the course.
3. **Becoming a team:** Students choose team names and take a group photo. (Each team member keeps a copy (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003).
4. **Aligning Values and Vision:** Each team writes a vision statement. (All members keep a copy.) (At this point, students may need to do research to better understand the sources of the problem.)
5. **Many hands make light work:** Each team writes a SMART goal to raise awareness.
6. **Beyond understanding:** Each team writes a SMART goal to create change.
7. **Act:** Each team uses their SMART goals to create and carry out a plan.
8. **Reflect and learn:** Each team evaluates their actions and suggests possible improvements.
9. **Momentum of success:** Teams repeat tasks 5, 6, 7, and 8 as time allows.

*A SMART goal is a goal that is:

Specific Measurable Attainable Realist / Relevant Time oriented

Adapted from Amnesty International (2006)

Students have taken action to raise awareness. A sample of topics may be found in Table 4. Students have hung posters, made blogs, taught at elementary schools, and given speeches at community events. Students were also required to do something that would generate measurable change. Some groups combined raising awareness with creating change, using petitions or walk-to-school campaigns. A group committed to reducing consumer waste engaged in a successful *pay it forward* eco-bag campaign. They gave reusable shopping bags, containing laminated cards explaining the project, to friends and asked that they use them instead of plastic bags. The card inside the eco-bag asked recipients to buy another eco-bag, put the laminated card in it, and give it to one of their own friends. The movement spread from friends to family members, extending the circle of influence beyond campus.

This structure can provide ample opportunities for learners to develop their language abilities. Following the task cycle for task-based language instruction, suggested by Willis and Willis (2007), students practice informal and fluent language as they prepare to report to other groups using formal and accurate language. Additionally, most students reported that these nine tasks provided motivation and feelings of empowerment. They seemed to value learning, firsthand, how to apply their understanding of global or local issues to improve conditions. Several students also reported transferring their knowledge of organizational strategies to other groups they belonged to. It is hoped that these skills, in addition to the language learned, will become lifelong assets for participating students.

Table 4. Examples of topics chosen

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- preventing deforestation
 - reducing consumer waste
 - reducing CO₂ emissions
 - encouraging healthier diets among students
 - stopping domestic violence
 - adapting economic policy to adjust for the declining birthrate
 - adapting economic policy to adjust for an aging population
 - eating locally grown organic food
 - preventing the erosion of traditional Japanese culture
 - eliminating nuclear weapons
 - improving waste management
 - reducing the consumption of meat
-

Bio data

Craig Manning works as a lecturer at the University of Shikane. His research interests include cooperative learning, community development, and their uses for language learning.

The blurring of binary oppositions in Princess Mononoke

Jennifer Yphantides

This synopsis outlines a lesson plan created for advanced students of English taking a content based Global Issues course. Part of the course is grounded in Critical Theory and students are gradually introduced to selected theories. The lesson aims at

familiarizing students with structural theory through the concept of binary oppositions. This concept is important because it forms the backbone of modern structural linguistics and structural theorists posit that language is organized and classified in the mind through binary oppositions (Saussure, 1966). It is also important since this binary classification is not neutral. Rather, it reveals an unequal balance of power. Derrida shows how one of the oppositional terms is always privileged, controlling and dominating the other (Derrida, 1979). During the class, students are introduced to the concept of binary oppositions, explore how binaries are blurred in the film, and have the opportunity of reacting to and reflecting upon this blurring. Through character analysis and examination of the plot, students unravel the complicated message (Miyazaki, 1997) the main character sends his viewers through his blurred portrayal of men and women.

Procedure

1. Explain to students that binaries are pairs of complete opposites and have students make lists of binary oppositions common in the study of Global Issues. Some examples may be rich/poor, black/white, man/woman. Then, have students brainstorm a list of binary adjectives traditionally used to characterize men and women. Possible answers may be strong/weak, brave/fearful, rational/emotional.
2. Show students key scenes featuring the two main female characters of the film, Lady Eboshi and San. Have students consider the portrayal of the characters through an examination of the plot. Have students brainstorm ideas about these women (see Table 5) and compare these characteristics with the binary adjectives from their man/woman list.

Table 5. Portrayal of female characters

Lady Eboshi	San
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong • owns iron factory • sympathetic to lepers • saves prostitutes • warrior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fighter • lover • wild • gentle • takes care of others

3. Have students discuss their ideas about the mixing of the binaries. Possible questions are:
 - a. What is your response to this blurring of traditionally masculine and feminine characterizations?
 - b. Do you think this blurring represents a more accurate picture of women than the binary list? Why or why not?
 - c. What other films or texts do you know of which support traditional binary oppositions? Which blur them and to what extent?
 - d. Cross-dressers are a clear physical example of binary blurring. How are they treated in Japanese society and why?

This lesson was taught to advanced students enrolled in a study abroad program at a private high school in Tokyo. Although the students had never heard the term “binary opposition” before, they quickly caught on to the concept and were able to provide examples. They enjoyed watching clips from the film and the post-viewing discussion was quite lively. Students reported that they thought it was important to have the opportunity to discuss these topics in the Global Issues class as they would not likely be raised in other classes.

Bio data

Jennifer Yphantides is a Lecturer at Kanda University. Her interests include peace education, content based learning and extensive reading.

Conclusion

The GILE SIG Forum allowed participants to communicate their beliefs about current global issues and prepare for future challenges in the language classroom. Three common themes arose during the conference: student development, materials development, and pedagogical approaches in teaching international content to Japanese EFL students. In addition to advocating professionalism in the classroom through well researched and tested classroom activities like those presented above, GILE opens doors to individuals and organizations sharing their knowledge and experience on important issues that contribute to the wellbeing of all members of our global society. While many people may be celebrating their first few years of global governance, others are unaware of the changes that lie ahead. As educators, we can provide guidance to our students, leading them to think about the vital issues that influence and govern their lives, and then initiate a collaborative path for a better future fully cognizant of the role we all must play as global citizens.

Bio data

Tim Grose teaches at Sapporo Gakuin University in Hokkaido. His research interests include content-based learning methodologies, in particular the provision of pedagogically appropriate material for low level learners of English.

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