

Building students' confidence through simple, step-by-step activities

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学習者の自信を高めるためのシンプルで段階的なアクティビティ

In this day and age of frequent travel, an increasing number of people find it necessary to be able to communicate at least on a basic survival level in English. Japanese students are no exception, but they can often be reticent when it comes to speaking out in class. Together with the participants and through her own experiences of teaching beginner and false beginner level students, Angela Buckingham will examine why this might be so. Then, under the conference theme of *The Teaching-Learning Dialogue: An Active Mirror*, she and the participants will explore ways in which proven classroom activities and techniques provide students with the tools they need in order to participate in everyday situations using English—be it at home, with a foreign home-stay student, or overseas on a business trip or holiday.

国際化が進み海外との交流が活発な昨今、最低限必要とされる基本的な英語によるコミュニケーション力が重要視されている。日本人学習者もその例外ではないにもかかわらず、会話中心のレッスンとなると無口になってしまう人々が多いのも現状である。この問題について、入門レベルや初級レベルの学習者を教えた豊富な経験をもとに、講演者が参加者と共に考察する。さらに「The Teaching-Learning Dialogue: An Active Mirror」という本大会のテーマに基づき、外国人留学生との交流や海外旅行および出張などの実生活において、学習者が必要とする英語力を指導するための効果的なクラスルーム・アクティビティと指導方法を参加者と一緒に検討する。

Keywords: false beginner, classroom activities, confidence, step-by-step, survival English 初級学習者, クラス・アクティビティ, 自信, 段階的学習, サバイバル英語

In this day and age of frequent travel, an increasing number of people find it necessary to be able to communicate at least on a basic, survival level in English. Many of the students we teach are often called false beginner level learners, a term which can cover a wide range of competencies. Under the conference theme of *The Teaching-Learning Dialogue: An Active Mirror*, I will invite participants to investigate how many different types of beginner we can identify and have taught in our classrooms. From there we'll begin to explore some of

the problems these learners can have in the English Language classroom, as well as opening up to some of the problems that we may have teaching them. How can we develop our learners' confidence, and enable them to enjoy not only the process of learning a language in class, but also actually using the language in the real world? As a practicing classroom teacher and materials writer, I'm interested in what goes on in the space between what I write for teachers and students and what actually happens in our classrooms—as well as what occurs when our learners get out there and try to use the language for real.

Building our students' confidence and getting them to speak is a problem that teachers around the world face on a day-to-day basis. It is not a new phenomenon and it may not necessarily require new solutions—but there are things which we can do to overcome the difficulties students face and transform our classrooms into lively, dynamic places where our students are motivated and enjoy communicating in English. Speaking in class should be purposeful as well as enjoyable, with the aim of equipping the learner with the confidence he or she needs to get out and “have a go.” It should be that safe place where students are given the time and place to get their mouths around new language, the freedom to make mistakes without fear, and the motivation to keep trying until they are confident enough to manage their own learning. In particular, we need to be able to help learners overcome feelings of self-consciousness, which can hinder their progress.



As an adult false-beginner level student in a foreign language classroom, I can sympathize with my students when they feel embarrassed, confused, or are reluctant to speak out—we've all been there. I don't want to be thrown in at the deep end, and I don't want to look foolish in front of my classmates. I want to learn the language, but I don't want to be talked down to, and I want to have a go at using the language with activities that are meaningful and relevant. It's tiring being a beginner, and in class it requires a lot of concentration. I need time to be able to develop my confidence. In other words, I want to practice things step-by-step, in small chunks at first, until I feel ready to try it out for myself.

So, how to motivate our students and help them develop the survival skills that they need to make their first telephone call in English, or that first nerve-wracking time going through Customs, or that first encounter with a waiter in a restaurant overseas? If we as teachers are to provide our students with the tools they need to survive in a foreign language overseas, then to start with we need to look into our classrooms, to identify which tools we can use to best effect in teaching the language and to develop our students' confidence.

If every learner is different, and each learner has their own individual path to success (Rubin, 1987), then this is necessarily rather different from the commercial publisher's point of view, which needs to view a group of learners (e.g., false beginners) as a homogenous group, with similarities that bind them together, in order for their books to reach the widest market. Where does the classroom teacher stand in this, and how to reconcile these two views, where we as teachers can identify with our students as individuals with individual learning needs, and yet at the same time recognize that there are certain traits that seem to be present in many of our learners—such as this lack of confidence in speaking out? As we begin to examine some of the difficulties our learners can have with speaking English, we will likewise begin to identify and analyze some of those practical techniques and activities that for some reason always seem to work well in class.

In order to involve as many people as possible, participants are invited to bring along ideas and examples of classroom tasks for their false beginner level learners that somehow always just seem to work. Using small group discussion in the workshop, we'll deconstruct some of these activities to see if there are any shared principles which underlie these successes, asking questions such as: What is the task? How did I set it up effectively? Can we break it down into steps? What were the stages?

What did I need to pre-teach? How did I set a context? What equipment did I need? What was my role during the activity? Why do my students like this task? Why do I? What makes it *effective*?

We know through our own experiences of learning as well as through our teaching that beginners require a careful, staged approach in the classroom, with plenty of task support, repetition and practice to help give them the confidence they need to start speaking out. Together, then, we will look at a number of classroom practices that can help towards this end, such as setting up activities effectively, giving clear instructions, and managing our classrooms well in order to increase student interaction. Taking things slowly, taking things step-by-step; we don't need to rush our students into speaking straight away, and yet we do need to provide the tools for the beginner to feel comfortable and motivated to do so. Clearly we learn to speak by speaking (Swain, 1985) and at some point, we do want our students to have a go at using the language for themselves.

In our investigation then, we'll need to look at the routines we use or can introduce, in order to make our classroom more familiar and less terrifying, and remind ourselves of techniques that enable us to maximize practice time. We'll share our experiences of teaching process language and explore why it is needed to promote learner confidence during classroom activities. Taking things step-by-step, we'll see how vital it is to have a task (Willis, 1996) and to find ways of pre-teaching task language in order to promote success.

Thus the aim of the workshop overall is to explore what we as language teachers need to do in order for our false beginner level learners to feel empowered to begin using basic "survival" English overseas. As their language teachers, we must work to identify what our students' learning needs are as a starting point, and from there we can gear our teaching and classroom practices around meeting those needs; step-by-step, slowly, and effectively, building our students' confidence as well as skills in speaking out in English.

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Angela Buckingham is a very experienced teacher, teacher trainer and materials developer in the field of EFL. Her areas of expertise particularly lie in English for Specific Purposes. Based largely on her experience as a teacher in Japan at a travel *senmon gakko*, Buckingham co-wrote *At Your Service* (Oxford University Press) for students of travel and tourism, followed by the Japan-specific *Passport* series. She also co-wrote *Get Real* (Macmillan

Language House). More recently, in 2009, she has just published the new second edition of *Passport* and the new third edition of *Business Venture* with Oxford University Press.

Angela Buckinghamは経験豊富な教師ならびに教師トレーナーであると同時にEFL教材の開発にも携わっている。特にESP(特定目的の英語)の分野に造詣が深く、日本の旅行専門学校にて教鞭を振るった経験を持ち、旅行・観光を学ぶ学習者向けAt Your Serviceや日本人学習者向けPassportシリーズ(オックスフォード大学出版局刊)の共著者としても知られている。また、Get Real(マクミラン・ランゲージハウス刊)の共著者でもあり、2009年にはオックスフォード大学出版局よりPassport第2版とBusiness Venture第3版の出版を手がけている。

Extensive reading or intensive reading: Two sides of the same coin?

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多読か精読技能練習か—同じコインの両面?

This workshop will serve as a forum to compare and contrast the merits of extensive reading and intensive reading as a basis on which to help our students develop their reading competence. Participants will work together to examine the two approaches and review their respective merits. Participants will then focus not on the tensions between extensive and intensive reading, but on their mutual strengths, and explore ways in which each approach can act as a complementary mirror to the other. There will be plenty of time to share common experiences and swap ideas on how to overcome the challenges that teaching reading presents. Finally, participants will draw up a list of key principles which can act as guidelines for teachers of reading classes.

本ワークショップは、多読と精読それぞれの利点を比較対照し、それに基づいて生徒の読解力の伸長を助ける場となるものである。参加者はまず両方のアプローチを共同で検討し、それぞれの利点を確認する。次に、多読と精読の対立関係ではなく、両者の極めて現実的な相互補完性に焦点を当て、それぞれのアプローチが互いに相補的な鏡として働くことのできる方策を探る。参加者が共通の経験を共有したり、「読解の教授」の際に生じる諸問題をどう克服するかアイデアを交換したりする時間も十分に設ける。最後に、読解のクラスの教師のための指針となるような基本原理の一覧を作成する。

Keywords: extensive, intensive, reading, approach, principles 多読 精読 読解 アプローチ 原理

The debate

Intensive reading is generally acknowledged to involve the detailed study of short texts, focusing mainly on extracting specific information. This approach maintains that when we read we employ a variety of skills, and when reading in L2 the path to comprehension lies in practising a range of text-attack and word-attack skills, explicitly as well as implicitly. The assumption in teaching intensive reading is that equipping students with the syntactic, semantic, and lexical analysis reading skills they need is the most effective way to help them progress to reading fluency. Supporters of intensive reading say that simply reading for its own sake does not necessarily make a better reader. They argue that students need to be trained in ways to



approach texts in order to be able to read them effectively. In other words, we need to equip students with the ability to apply to L2 texts all the skills and strategies they use in L1 instinctively (Koda, 2005).

Extensive reading is generally understood to mean reading longer texts, more for pleasure than tuition, from a wide range of genres and encompassing many styles. The emphasis here is upon reading fluency from the very start. The assumption is that through breadth and depth of reading input learners develop fluency (Day & Bamford, 1998). To some advocates of extensive reading, intensive reading is not really reading at all. They argue that analysing texts in this unnatural way is simply a language exercise, and nothing more, i.e., that focusing on comprehension, grammar, and cohesive devices, or practising certain skills and strategies, is not reading. What's more, some say that the reading skills and strategies so clearly identified in the intensive approach don't in fact exist; these so-called skills, which involve inferring, identifying text organization, and decoding meaning, among others, are simply elements of the natural process of comprehension. What's worse, they claim that separating these skills out artificially can impede students' progress.

Key issues

So, where does this leave us? Which approach is best? Which one should we employ to give our students maximum benefit? Well, let's start by establishing a few basic foundations.

Reading is a complex skill, and especially so when applied to second language acquisition. Reading in L1 or L2 requires both linguistic knowledge and mental information processing skills. Reading is also an active skill. It involves predicting, guessing, inferring, checking, and reflecting. So let's view our students as proactive participants in the reading process. That means we have to give them the opportunity to react and interact with the text and each other on a meaningful level. It also means we have to allow them the freedom and opportunity to develop their reading in the ways they choose.

Reading cannot be separated from other skills. In the real world, we rarely read in a vacuum. We tend to talk or write about what we read, or we might read something in response to what we have heard (Grellet, 1981). This is why the texts we choose should be informative and rewarding, but above all enjoyable. It is this enjoyment that provides the stimulus for learners to really engage with a text. We must remember that language is simply a vehicle that conveys the message of a text. However, all too often, reading texts for learners of English

are nothing more than vehicles for the language. We need to accept that content is key, perhaps more so for reading than any other skill. Ask students to spend an entire class in close scrutiny of a text they can't relate to, and the result will be a tiresome exercise in futility for all involved.

There is one thing we need to state clearly at this point: Students in our classes are there to learn. They are giving their time, effort, and possibly their money, to be there. Understandably, they need to feel that their reading ability is improving as a result. It may seem obvious, but time spent in a reading class needs to be distinct from time spent reading out of class. Learners need to see clear learning outcomes from their experiences in class. This is a vital factor, and one that educators responsible for reading programmes overlook at their peril. Like it or not, students come to us with certain expectations and demands, and we need to accommodate them as best we can without sacrificing our principles!

A unified approach

For all the above reasons, we need to encourage ourselves to look to both the intensive and extensive reading approaches for help here. I believe that students really benefit from quality class time spent focusing on key skills and strategies that can help them read effectively in their L2. We can't deny that for many students there is something very satisfying about practicing a skill while at the same time completing an exercise accurately. It fulfills a basic need for affirmation that they are 'learning' something useful and that they are succeeding. It also helps them feel confident that they can cope when they approach more extensive texts, either in or out of the classroom. They feel better prepared, knowing they can employ the skills and strategies they have covered to help them overcome the challenge of a longer unseen text (i.e., one they haven't been prepared for with discussion, predicting, or vocabulary preparation exercises).

However, students also need to stretch their wings and so we have to offer plenty of room for extensive reading, to develop a more genuine fluency. Offering extensive reading opportunities necessarily involves out-of-class time. Some programmes refer students to collections of graded readers, which help them systematically progress from level to level along clearly defined language tramlines. Sometimes, it might also be possible to run a Book Club (Newman & Green, 2004), or offer a recommended list of short stories, novels, poems, newspapers, magazines, and other unabridged texts that match topics or language level. We can

certainly help our students to broaden their reading horizons by encouraging them to explore diverse genres. We can't ignore the huge volume of reading material available online in the form of e-zines, bulletin boards, and blogs, among others. In the case of online material, it is perhaps best to evaluate sites and web pages first (e.g., for level, content and appropriacy), before giving students a recommended shortlist to start off with. These can act as a springboard for further online browsing, and help to make sure they aren't put off at the first attempt!

As long as we set clear goals, provide stimulating texts (both simplified and unabridged) of varying length, and cover a wide variety of real-life genres, we should be able to engage our students' interest. Students often find it difficult to assess their progress during a reading course; if we can also try to develop ways to measure achievement regularly, then so much the better. It is of course important to continually monitor progress and assess fluency in any reading programme, but how we do this is more problematic. If we give tests, what are we testing for? Fluency, accuracy, speed, vocabulary range, use of skills? The balance between intensive and extensive reading becomes more of an issue here, but need not be insurmountable, provided the tests reflect that balance in proportion and involve both assessment and testing (Aebersold & Field, 1997) together with a degree of self-monitoring.

Conclusion

You might be asking yourself, so where does the balance lie between intensive and extensive reading? Should we be aiming more towards an extensive reading programme, or should we be thinking primarily about a skills-based intensive programme? Drawing from what I have said above, I'd like to suggest that time spent in class needs primarily to involve the study of skills and strategies, while time spent out of class should include wide-ranging extensive reading opportunities. But let's not get distracted by labels. It may not be new to say this, but it is worth emphasizing: both approaches are means to the same ends (Nuttall, 1982). As such, they each represent two sides of the same coin.

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Miles Craven, sponsored by MacMillan Language House, has over twenty years experience in English language teaching and is author or co-author of many ELT publications, especially for Asian learners. Courses include *Get Real!*, *Reading Keys*, *English Grammar in Use* CDROM, *Cambridge English Skills*, and *Breakthrough*. He has written many articles and online materials, and regularly presents at conferences and workshops. Miles also helps coordinate the Business English Programme at the Møller Centre, Churchill College, University of Cambridge. His recent research has focused on developing skills and strategies to help learners improve their reading ability, for Macmillan's new edition of *Reading Keys*.

Miles Cravenは、MacMillan Language House社の後援を受けて20年以上の英語教授の経験があり、数多くのELTに関する出版物、特にアジアの英語学習者向けの出版物の著者・共著者である。コースとしては、Get Real!、Reading Keys、English Grammar in Use CD-ROM、Cambridge English Skills、Breakthroughなどがある。多くの論文やオンライン資料を執筆しており、定期的に会議やワークショップで発表を行っている。また、Møller Centre、Churchill College、University of Cambridgeでビジネス英語プログラムのコーディネーターに参与している。最近の研究の中心は、MacMillan社のReading Keysの新版に向けた、学習者が読解力を向上させる助けとなる技能および戦略の開発である。

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Introducing corpora into the language classroom

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語学クラスへのコーパスの導入

Although electronic text corpora and the new discipline of corpus linguistics have had a profound impact on the design and content of second language dictionaries, grammars, and course books, very few teachers or learners are directly accessing corpora for themselves, either within or beyond the confines of the language classroom. This workshop begins by briefly considering why this is so, and why it matters, before tackling the central question of what can be done about it. Participants will try out a range of classroom activities whose aim is to convince learners of the value and viability of studying corpus data inductively and of the value and viability of learning how to use corpus software in order to access and manipulate such data. The aim of the workshop is thus to provide participants with both the inspiration and the practical means to introduce corpora successfully into their language classrooms.

電子テキストコーパスおよびコーパス言語学という新たな学問分野は、第2言語の辞書や文法書、教科書などの構成や内容に多大な影響を及ぼしてきたが、教師や学習者の中で、語学クラスの枠内または枠外で自らコーパスに直接アクセスしている人は極めて少ない。本ワークショップはまず、この現状の原因とその重要性について簡単に考察した後、その対策を探るという中心課題に取り組む。参加者は多種多様な教室用のアクティビティを体験する。これらのアクティビティのねらいは、帰納的にコーパスデータを学習する価値および実現性、さらにコーパスソフトウェアを用いてそのようなデータにアクセスしこれを操作する方法を学習する価値および実現性を、学習者に納得させることである。したがって、本ワークショップの目的は、参加者に自分自身の語学クラスにコーパスをうまく導入するためのヒントと具体的な方法とを提供することである。

Keywords: corpus, concordance, data-driven learning コーパス コンコーダンス データを活用した学習

It is now widely recognised that electronic text corpora and corpus linguistics have had a profound impact on the language classroom, perhaps most obviously visible in the field of lexicography. When the first edition of the Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary appeared in 1987, it was greeted in many quarters with bemusement or even derision. Two decades later, attitudes and practices have changed so much that it is now difficult to imagine anyone taking seriously a monolingual learner's dictionary that was not informed by a

large electronic corpus of authentic language data (Hunston, 2002).

Corpora have also had a revolutionary impact on the production of grammar reference books. Where grammarians once aimed to provide general accounts of the grammar of a language, advances in corpus analysis have now made it possible (and increasingly necessary) for descriptive and pedagogic grammars to distinguish between spoken and written modes, and to compare the behaviour and distribution of particular grammatical features across different genres or registers. And where grammarians once took pains to exclude vocabulary from their analyses wherever possible, the insights gained from corpus linguistics allow modern grammars to relate structural patterns to the words with which they are typically associated. The *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999), for example, features a lexical index alongside its traditional grammatical index, while the entire first section of the *Cambridge Grammar of English* (Carter and McCarthy, 2006) is devoted to a detailed account of the grammatical properties of 77 high frequency words and phrases.

Developments such as these clearly reflect profound shifts in thinking about the nature of language and how best to describe it, shifts that have been spurred on by recent findings of corpus research. Indeed, some new thinking has even begun to filter through into the traditionally more conservative world of language course book publishing. Books produced for language classroom use are now beginning to devote more time and care to the integration of lexis into their overall design, and there is now a greater general awareness of the value of providing students with a repertoire



of multi-word units and formulaic expressions to balance the traditional roster of verb tenses and other grammatical structures that still form the backbone of most course book syllabi. It is also becoming more common for published materials to indicate when and whether a particular language feature is more or less likely to occur in speech or in writing, and more course books are now beginning to appear that explicitly target a particular mode or variety. A good example of this is the *Innovations* series (Dellar, Walkley, & Hocking, 2004-2007), which focuses very strongly and deliberately on informal spoken English, and on developing conversation skills in ESL.

However, there is one glaringly obvious area in which corpora have yet to make any significant impact. Despite the advocacy of applied linguists and educationalists, very few teachers (and still fewer students) are accessing corpora for themselves, either inside or outside the language classroom. Given the massive impact of corpora in other areas of language learning and teaching, it is worth asking why hands-on, classroom-based corpus analysis, or data-driven learning (DDL) as it is usually termed (Johns, 1991), has thus far received such a lukewarm reception among practising teachers.

In some places, of course, this lack of take-up may reflect the fact that the requisite technical resources are not available to teachers and learners (although see Cornu, 2005, for a more positive perspective). But this is clearly not a plausible explanation for DDL's apparent lack of penetration in affluent countries such as Japan, where many if not most teachers have direct access to the Internet, and where computers, interactive whiteboards, and other forms of educational technology are becoming commonplace. Here, a more likely explanation is that many teachers may be reluctant to introduce DDL into their classrooms because it seems to require learners to take on too many new ideas on too many fronts simultaneously. As Boulton (2008) puts it, "[i]t is unsurprising that learners find it difficult to get to grips with new material (the corpora), new technology (the software) and a new approach (DDL) all at once—especially at lower levels of language ability" (p. 39).

If we do want to introduce corpora successfully into our classes (and, as I shall argue in my Featured Speaker presentation, there are some very good reasons why we should), we need to prepare the ground carefully. First, we must ensure that students understand the fundamental learning approach that underpins the whole DDL enterprise. Essentially, DDL is a form of inductive learning, requiring students to study some examples of

authentic language data (typically in the form of a set of concordance lines) and to infer some kind of linguistic rule or generalisation out of them. Of course, there is nothing new in this approach in general terms; students may well have had plenty of exposure to inductive activities of various kinds. However, familiarity does not necessarily entail comprehension. Many students do not see inductive learning tasks as real learning tasks at all, but as tiresome and time-wasting activities to be endured until the teacher finally weighs in with the correct answer. In such a milieu, it is unlikely that DDL activities will meet with success unless and until such misapprehensions are addressed as a crucial first step.

Even when our students have been persuaded of the value of inductive learning, we still need to convince them of the value and viability of studying corpus data. The first is not particularly difficult to achieve; indeed, any corpus-savvy teacher has at least one striking example of the power of concordance analysis up her or his sleeve for precisely this purpose. (My own favourite involves asking people to explain the difference between the plural nouns 'factors' and 'aspects' using their intuition only, and then showing them concordance samples for each of these words.) Achieving the second can be more difficult. It is all too easy for an initial wave of enthusiasm for corpus-based language study to be extinguished by the barrage of unfamiliar language and content that typically occurs within even a small set of concordance lines.

Finally, we cannot take it for granted that students will automatically see the point of learning how to use corpus analysis software for, or by, themselves. As a student once said to me, "What is the point of spending lots of time learning how to use this complicated software when I can answer the same questions for myself just by typing a few words into Google?" It is not enough to *tell* such students that learning to use corpus software will enable them to answer their own questions about the language they are learning—we need to *show* them if we are to convince them to invest their time and energy in this way.

In summary, my argument is that the successful introduction of corpora into the language classroom depends on our ability to demonstrate three things to our students: the value of inductive learning in general, the value and viability of studying corpus data inductively, and the value of learning how to use corpus software in order to access and manipulate such data. The question that remains concerns how we are to do this in practice. The aim of my workshop at JALT2009 is to answer this question. I

will provide hands-on demonstrations of a range of practical classroom activities that focus on each of the three learner training objectives stated above. I will also review the research literature on learner training and inductive learning in general, and on DDL in particular, in order to make a theoretical case for introducing corpora into the language classroom as a strategy for enhancing student learning. If you are at all interested in bringing corpora into your own classroom, I look forward to seeing you there.

Dedication

This article is dedicated to the memory of Tim Johns, inventor of DDL, who passed away in March 2009.

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2009

A global view from your classroom window

Kristin L. Johannsen
Textbook author

教室の窓からのグローバルな視野

Within the language classroom, cross-cultural communication is too often framed in terms of differences, a catalog of troublesome national quirks. Instead, true culture teaching explores both differences and similarities—the fascinating diversity of cultures, and the common humanity that unites us. Such a perspective gives learners a window to understand the world, and a mirror to perceive themselves. This practical, hands-on workshop will present ways that teachers can bring cross-cultural learning and communication into their own classrooms. Participants will look at different views on cross-cultural communication and build their own definitions. Then they will take part in a number of classroom activities using language to investigate different cultures and build understanding. Such activities give students a sense that culture is a fascinating field to explore, and build students' confidence in their own ability to have successful and enjoyable cross-cultural encounters.

語学クラスの中では、異文化コミュニケーションは往々にして相違点、すなわち問題を引き起こしがちな、国民の奇妙な特性をリストするという枠組みで語られがちである。しかしながら、正しい文化の教え方は、相違点および共通点—文化の魅力的な多様性および我々を結びつける共通の人間性—の両方を探るものである。このような視点に立つことで学習者に世界を理解するための窓と、自分自身を認識する鏡を与えることができる。今回の実践的なワークショップでは、教師が異文化学習および異文化コミュニケーションを自分のクラスに導入する方法が呈示される。参加者は、異文化コミュニケーションに関する様々な意見に接し、自分自身の定義を構築する。その後、言語を使って、異なる文化を調べ、その理解を深めることのできる教室用のアクティビティのいくつかを体験する。これらのアクティビティにより、学習者は文化が探求すべき魅力的な分野であるという感覚を持ち、また、異文化との出会いを見事にやり遂げ、楽しむことのできる自らの能力に自信をもつようになる。

Keywords: crosscultural, culture, communication, diversity 異文化 文化 コミュニケーション 多様性

WHY do we teach culture in our foreign language classroom? A hundred teachers will give a hundred different answers, but often it comes down to the idea of tolerance: “I want my students to learn respect for other cultures, and especially tolerance for other people who are different from them.”

A seemingly noble goal, but when we unpack it, it begins to look much less appealing. To tolerate is to

put up gamely with an unfortunate fact. One current learner dictionary defines *tolerate* as “to allow people to do, say, or believe something without criticizing or punishing them” (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 2003). Another says that “If you tolerate a situation or person, you accept them although you do not particularly like them” (*Collins COBUILD Advanced Dictionary of American English*, 2007). An older dictionary contains an even balder definition: “to allow, put up with” (*Newbury House Dictionary of American English*, 2000). In other words, tolerance says “You’re wrong, but because I’m a decent person, I’ll do my best to overlook that.”

Until now, a lot of culture teaching has been unconsciously based on this sort of idea—that cultural differences are mainly a cause of friction and misunderstanding. We warn our students, just as we may have been warned by our own language teachers, “Europeans like to shake hands a lot. Always shake hands with them.” “Don’t talk too loudly to a Japanese.” In doing this, we’re really teaching our students to be afraid of differences, to regard them as a source of problems. I believe a broader view is possible, and crucially needed—one that sees difference as something to explore, enjoy, and even celebrate.

My own experience as a language learner seems to parallel the development of culture teaching in language classrooms. I began studying French, my first foreign language, in high school in 1972. We had a particularly enlightened teacher who went far beyond substitution drills to share with us her love for all things French. Sister Irene taught us about the chateaux and the 365 cheeses. (She also advised



us that in France, one needs to greet everyone when entering a small shop, or the French will find you desperately rude.) Culture, I understood, was something developed through a thousand years of high civilization, which definitively ruled out my native place: An industrial city best known for brewing beer and building motorcycles (Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA, home of Harley-Davidson and—at that time—three of North America's largest breweries). And in such a rarefied atmosphere, people would naturally view a foreigner as odd, and wrong.

A bit later, I joined a pen-pal club and began exchanging letters with several people in Europe, including a girl who lived on a fjord in western Norway. After graduating from college, I went off to spend five months in Europe, and successfully visited a number of French chateaux and greeted people in French cheese shops. But my real awakening came when I went to visit my Norwegian pen-pal. She was about to leave her remote village of 150 people to attend university and get an elementary-school teaching certificate. Her goal was to teach Norwegian language and history.

My youthful self was amazed. A country half the size of Texas, its language spoken only by four million people, and she was getting a degree in it! The more she told me, the more astonished I became. Her obscure mother tongue had numerous distinct dialects, and two very different written languages (her room was stuffed with books in both versions), and its very own poets and writers of detective novels. And quite apart from Vikings and ski champions, the country had its own rich, intricate past, which she loved to talk about. Many modern Norwegians are still named after ancient Norse gods, she told me. Every town in Norway had its own traditional jewelry, clothing, and way of knitting.

It wasn't just my beloved France that had a culture, I saw—even that handful of remote Norwegians at the end of their fjord had one. Not only that, but they were deeply proud, and gruffly sentimental, about it. The corollary was even more electrifying: that most mean that I, too, had a culture. (I felt as foolishly amazed as the character in the Moliere play we studied in French class who realizes that for forty years, unbeknown to him, he's actually been speaking in "prose".) I had gained a new pair of eyes. Everywhere I looked, I could see *cultures*—including my own.

Over the last decades, there have been major shifts in the ways culture has been treated in the language classroom. Traditionally, if it was considered at all, it was high culture (sometimes called "Culture with a capital C"). The English cognates for Sister Irene's chateaux and Flaubert are English

manor houses and Shakespeare. Later, with the move towards communicative language teaching, teachers began to consider the role of culture in learners' potential interactions with native speakers—the "small-c culture" of customs and everyday life in the target language. Much as Sister Irene taught proper French greetings, we told our students that English speakers don't like spitting, long silences, or loud slurping of food—whatever sins their culture might lead them to commit. It was a contrastive approach to culture, built upon the assumption that learners would be interacting with native English speakers.

However, that assumption is woefully outdated. More and more, English has become a language of international communication, of conversations between two nonnative speakers, and we need to question this way of teaching culture as a catalog of differences.

For one thing, there can never be such a thing as a single, monolithic culture, certainly not one based on language. English speakers include Australian Aborigines and London investment bankers. Housewives in the Caribbean and Swiss physicists share French as their mother tongue. Even teachers of Japanese need to consider the differences in ways of living (and speaking) between, say, a teenage girl in Osaka and an elderly Okinawan farmer.

Furthermore, this catalog approach is singularly unhelpful for students. No one can ever hope to memorize and master all the differences between cultures, certainly not within the walls of a language classroom. Even people who marry into another culture and live immersed in it for decades can still, on occasion, find themselves taken aback, or even infuriated, at some quirk of their adopted culture. Add in the fact that users of English as an international language are likely to interact with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, and the futility is even more obvious.

Finally, the contrastive approach actually undermines any effort to help make our students truly global citizens. By emphasizing differences, rather than considering both differences and things we all have in common, it builds a sense of separateness. Students learn only to "do as the Romans do"—not to consider the ways that "the Romans" (and the Danes, Thais, and Ethiopians) raise their children, enjoy their friends, go about their daily work, and do all the things that every human around the world does.

To truly teach culture, we need to teach *many* cultures, using the language to access the wider world. We need to show students that English is the language of a tremendous variety of people—not

just “the Americans” or “the British.” We need to include minority cultures within the English-speaking world, such as African-Americans and Maoris in New Zealand. Students need exposure to the expanding circles of English, in countries like India, the Philippines, and Singapore, where local varieties of English have taken on a life of their own.

Above all, students need to gain a sense that English is a means they can use themselves to connect directly with people in other countries who are like them in some ways—and intriguingly different in others. The practical tools for this kind of cross-cultural interaction are evolving too quickly to discuss here in detail. With each passing month, the possibilities opened up by new online applications grow more varied and exciting. Through use of tools such as email, chat, VOIP, and blogging, students can interact not only with native speakers, but with learners and others from a spectrum of places and cultures.

Our real task as teachers of culture is to give learners a sense that differences are fascinating areas to explore—not stumbling blocks to overcome. Through learning about a variety of cultures, students begin to grasp the range of cultural possibilities, as well as gaining a sense that culture is an intriguing realm worth delving into. They gain confidence in their ability to deal with and enjoy whatever new, surprising cross-cultural situation they might find themselves in.

Culture teaching needs to examine the big issues in life and how they are answered in different places: What do people value most? What’s the best way to raise children? What do people celebrate, and how? What do people hope for our collective future? We need to present cultural content that gives students a sense of our shared humanity, and the diversity within it. If teachers can do that, we will truly play a part in making our students citizens of the world.

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Kristin Johannsen is a language teacher, materials writer, and lifelong cross-cultural traveler. She has taught English at universities in the United States, France, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, and Japan. She has served as author, coauthor, and contributing writer for a number of EFL textbook series, most recently *World English* (Heinle). Her travels have taken her to more than 70 countries, and her travel writing has appeared in newspapers and magazines from Tokyo to Bahrain to Trinidad. Her presentation is sponsored by Cengage Learning.

Kristin Johannsenは、語学教師、資料執筆者、また生涯をかけての異文化間の旅人である。これまで米国、フランス、韓国、アラブ首長国連邦、そして日本の大学で英語を教えている。また、数多くのEFL教本シリーズ、最近のものとしてはWorld English (Heinle社)の著者、共著者また寄稿者となっている。旅行で70カ国以上を訪れており、東京やバーレーン、トリニダードなどの新聞や雑誌で旅行記事が掲載されている。本ワークシヨップはCengage Learning社から後援を受けている。

– JALT2009: TIP #17 –

"Give the speaker a break—wait, and pounce later!"

While you're at a presentation, you may well have a lot of questions for the presenter. However, during the presentation may not be the best time to ask. The presenter is nervous or busy, and probably has their own timeframe already mapped out, so Q&A time will be limited. Instead, wait till they leave and approach them. You'll find them relaxed, relieved, and more than willing to share their thoughts further!



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Functional literacy and contextual learning theories applied to English language learning

April Alcazar
Balsamo Asian Scholar
Asian Institute of Management

英語学習に応用された場合の機能的識字理論及び文脈学習理論

The paper explores the application of two learning theories, functional literacy theory and contextual learning theory, as applied to English language learning. The author hypothesizes that using these two approaches can increase the English language proficiency of students in Japan. The author cites her own case in comparing the learning of English with Japanese and the techniques with which greater proficiency can be achieved. She will discuss more methods and techniques using these two methodologies during the conference as she presents her paper and asks the participants about how their own teaching methods are related to these theories. She cites empirical research that has been conducted and how it will assist in professional teacher development using these two theories. She concludes that these theories can help English language teachers achieve their objectives in teaching English courses that are relevant, current, and interesting to students.

本講演は、機能的識字理論および文脈学習理論という2つの学習理論の英語学習への応用を探るものである。講演者はこの2つのアプローチを用いることで日本の生徒の英語熟達度を向上させることができると仮定する。自らの事例を引用して日本語と英語の学習を比較し、熟達度を向上させる諸手法について論じる。また、自らの論文を提示し、参加者自身の教授方法がこれらの理論にどのように関係しているかを問いかけながら、さらにこの2つの方法論を用いたメソッドや手法を論じる。また、これまで行われてきた経験的な研究を引用し、それがこの2つの理論を用いてどのように専門性の高い教師の育成に寄与するかを論じる。結論としてこれらの理論は、生徒にとって意味があり、最新かつ興味深い英語の授業を教師が行う上での諸目標を達成する助けとなると論じる。

Keywords: functional literacy, contextual learning, learning theories, proficiency, practical application 機能的識字 文脈学習 学習理論 熟達度 実践的応用

COME from the Philippines. My country has a rich foreign cultural heritage: 350 years of Spanish rule and 50 years under American occupation. The pseudo-nationalists in my country derisively call the colonized periods as “350 years in the convent and 50 years in Hollywood.” One of the prevailing myths among educators in my country is that English language proficiency is high enough to enable Filipinos to land jobs abroad.

Eight million Filipinos comprising the diaspora would seem to validate that claim.

But I hypothesize that English language proficiency in my country has only achieved a comparatively high level (at least in South-east Asia) because of the application of two theories of learning: *functional literacy theory and contextual learning theory*.

According to contextual learning theory, “learning occurs only when students process new information or knowledge in such a way that it makes sense to them in their frame of reference (their own inner world of memory, experience, and response). This approach to learning and teaching assumes that the mind naturally seeks meaning in context—that is, in the environment where the person is located—and that it does so through searching for relationships that make sense and appear useful” (Hull & Sonders, 1996, p. 41). On the other hand, the functional literacy approach is a method to teach people how to read well enough to function in a complex society (Mancebo, 2005, p. 6).

Let me explain by telling you about my own experiences in learning Japanese and relating it to the study of the English language.

I lived and studied in Japan for six years. During my first year in the university where I studied, I studied Japanese in an intensive course for 6 months and then studied another 6 months for the entrance examinations. Although I had studied Japanese before I came to Japan to an intermediate level, the demands of academic life in Japanese became the focus of my studies during that first year. My reading and writing skills were all that I emphasized. I did not really speak or listen much to



“ordinary” Japanese, because I focused on the technical language I needed to know in order to pass the entrance examinations.

In my second year, I began taking master’s level classes conducted in Japanese. That was when I started really using Japanese in an everyday context inside the classroom and with my classmates. However, I still would not characterize my Japanese as being proficient; also, it was obviously tilted to the needs of academic life. I literally spoke like a book at that time.

Before the end of my third year, I got married and my husband came to Japan and became a JET (Japan Exchange Teacher) teacher for one year. He studied some Japanese before coming to Japan and continued to study Japanese while teaching, but was very much dependent on me for translation. In addition, there was paperwork that had to be done with government agencies written in Japanese, so I started acquiring spoken vocabulary (and reading kanji) to deal with those matters, as well as increasing my contact with people outside the university.

By the fourth year, we had our first baby and there was lots of paperwork, preparation before, during, and after the hospital stay, applications for day care, immigration, insurance, and a whole host of completely new things that we had to deal with. Before the year was out, my husband went to graduate school in a city different from where the baby and I were staying, was a victim in a major earthquake, had a major surgical operation in two hospitals, and went through evacuation plans. But by that time, my Japanese became better in that I could initiate conversations with complete strangers, speak on the telephone with confidence, and generally find information useful for our daily lives.

The fifth year, I could argue on the telephone in Japanese—whether it was a mistake on the credit card billing, having a wrong amount transferred to my bank account, mishaps at my daughter’s day care center, notices from different government agencies on insurance, health matters, etc.

My point is not to really tell you my life story, but to point out that my need for functional literacy in Japanese increased as the demands of my life in Japan became more integrated and assimilated to Japanese society. Without those demands on me, I would probably not have acquired the level of Japanese I have if my life had been confined to life in the university and if someone else always acted as a buffer between me and Japanese society. I acquired spoken vocabulary and written kanji in the context of the situations I found myself in.

But the key to being able to deal with Japanese society was to learn Japanese to a proficient work-

ing level, so that I did not feel illiterate or helpless in Japan. I still have a handicap as a foreigner due to my lack of understanding cultural nuances, but my disadvantages have decreased as the level of my Japanese increases.

By using functional literacy and contextual learning theory, it is possible for Japanese students to acquire English language proficiency. If students cannot find it within themselves to find the motivation to learn English, maybe the English teacher can be instrumental in finding the *raison d’être* for learning English for them. For instance, I taught English to three law students one summer. I did not teach them the basics, but we studied New York state law which I had studied and which was going to be of use to them in a course on international law.

Later, I encouraged three Japanese students to come to the Philippines to study in the Philippines, not so much for the contents of graduate studies, but to take the opportunity to study English at more economical rates, rather than going to a native English language speaking country. I convinced them that by acquiring English language proficiency, they could have future jobs that were better than their current prospects. In the end, it worked out for them. One now works with a religious organization that gives disaster aid to calamity stricken areas. She has worked during the post-tsunami period in Thailand, has distributed blankets in Somalia, and has traveled extensively to different countries. One graduate changed her job from being an assistant to a professor in the university to now being the international marketing representative to the Asia-Pacific region for an international cosmetics company. She conducts technical training in English for their representatives in Southeast Asia, China, and Korea. The third one worked for an international computer company where she acquired technical skills and now has moved to an NGO developing bilingual websites.

I had a different system of studying foreign languages probably because I do not have a background in language teaching or linguistics. What I did have were clear and specific objectives in studying English. Firstly, I wanted to do something in the international field. When I was in university, I started getting involved in activities that were international in nature. I joined an international university congress held in Rome, Italy, writing a paper representing the Philippines. After the conference, I had the opportunity to also travel to France, Spain, and England for the rest of the summer. Then I joined the International Association of Students in Business and Economics, an international student organization that had at that time 70 member countries based in 300 universities around the world. From my involve-

ment in the group, I had the chance to organize a Philippines Study Tour for our Japanese counterparts and to participate in a Japan Study Tour that they organized in return. From that time on, there was no looking back as to what were the necessary tools and skills that I needed in order to get into the international field—excellent communication skills in English, both written and oral—as well as working knowledge in several of the languages I had studied—Japanese, Spanish, German, and French. In between my graduation from my undergraduate course in business and my entering law school, I went on an international business traineeship in Germany. In Europe I was fascinated by the fact that most university graduates were trilingual and English was not necessarily one of the languages they considered their second language. But English was definitely the international language, especially for those who came from outside the European countries.

By applying these two theories, it may be possible to encourage your Japanese students to study English more. It would certainly make your teaching more interesting, vibrant and relevant to your students.

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Design, Zen, & the art of presenting naked

Garr Reynolds

Designer, author, and blogger

デザイン、禅と裸でのプレゼンテーション美学

Over the years, presentation software programs such as PowerPoint and Keynote have gotten better, but presentations have not. Why? Part of the problem has been a focus only on the tools themselves, not on how to clarify our ideas and messages through fundamental design and storytelling principles. In this workshop, Garr explores techniques from some of the world's top business leaders. His Presentation Zen approach

challenges the conventional wisdom of making "slide presentations" and encourages thinking differently and creatively about the preparation, design, and delivery of presentations. Incorporating cognitive science, principles of graphic design, visual communications, and Zen aesthetics, Garr dispels popular myths about presenting, and offers alternatives for designing and delivering better presentations. The



lessons are not about dressing up the presentation or decorating slides; they are about understanding and embracing concrete design and delivery principles to make presentations clear, powerful, and memorable.

長年にわたり、パワーポイントやキーノートなどのプレゼンテーションソフトは向上しているが、プレゼンテーション自体は良くなっていない。なぜか？問題の一部はツール自体にのみ重点が置かれ、基本的なデザインと話術の法則を通じてどのように我々のアイデアやメッセージを明確にさせるかに重点が置かれていない点である。本ワークショップではReynolds氏が数人の世界のトップビジネスリーダーの技術を研究します。Reynolds氏のPresentation Zenアプローチは、広く受け入れられている「スライド式プレゼンテーション」に疑問を投げかけ、プレゼンテーションにおける違った、また独創的な考え方や、デザインとプレゼンテーション方法を奨励します。認知科学、グラフィックデザインの原理、視覚的情報伝達、禪の美学など、Reynolds氏がプレゼンテーションについての一般的な通説を払拭し、違ったプレゼンテーションのデザインと、より良いプレゼンテーション方法を提案します。このレッスンはプレゼンテーションをどのように飾り立てるか又はスライドをどのようにきれいに見せるかについてはなく、プレゼンテーションを明確で迫力があり、印象的なものにする為に、具体的なデザインと話術を理解し受け入れるものです。

Keywords: presentations, presentation software, simplicity, zen プレゼンテーション、プレゼンテーションソフト、簡潔さ、禪

O NSENS (hot springs) are ubiquitous in Japan and an important part of the culture. The act of getting naked and soaking in the bath with others is a means of communication. In Japanese it's called *hadaka-no tsukiai* (communication in the nude). With *hadaka-no tsukiai*, to soak with others in your in-group is to freely expose everything and communicate the naked truth. Naked, we are all the same, regardless of rank or position. In theory at least, this kind of exposure leads to better, more honest communication.

What if we thought of designing and delivering business or conference presentations in a way that was more naked as well? A way that was simpler, fresher—perhaps even a bit cheeky—and far more satisfying to both presenter and audience? That is, in a way that was freer. Free from worry. Free from anxiety over what other people will think. Free from self-doubt. Free from tricks and gimmicks and the pressure to pull those off. Free from hiding behind anything (including slides) and the fear of possible exposure that accompanies such hiding. Remove all encumbrances, be in the moment, naked...and connect.

Being naked

Being naked involves stripping away all that is unnecessary to get at the essence of your message. The naked presenter approaches the presentation task embracing the ideas of simplicity, clarity, honesty, integrity, and passion. She presents with a certain freshness. The ideas may or may not be radical, earth-shattering, or new. But there is a newness

and freshness to her approach and to her content. And if she uses slideware, her slides fit well with her talk and are harmonious with her message. The slides are in synch, and are simple and beautifully designed, yet never steal the show or rise above serving a strong but simple supportive role.

Why are we afraid to be naked?

Presenting naked is hard to do. But it wasn't always this way. When we were younger and we performed show and tell at the front of the class in elementary school, we were honest and engaged—sometimes our candor even made the children laugh and the teacher blush. But it was real. We told great stories...and we were only six. Now we are experienced and mature, we have advanced degrees and deep knowledge in important fields...and we are boring.

One reason we are so dull as adult presenters is because we are overly cautious. We are afraid. We want it all to be so safe and perfect, so we overthink it and put up a great many barriers. Or we retreat, however unconsciously, and play it safe by hiding behind a stack of bulleted lists in a darkened room in a style void of emotion. After all, no one ever got fired for just stating the facts, right?

Next time, to be different—to separate yourself from the crowd—try presenting naked.

How to present naked

This is not an exhaustive list, but here are a few things to keep in mind when trying to present naked.

- Be present in the moment. Right here right now. Do not be occupied with thoughts of the future, of thoughts concerning what the results of your presentation might lead to. Do not ask about origins and ends leaving the moment forgotten. When you are with your audience, all that matters is that moment.
- Do not try to impress. Instead try to share, help, inspire, teach, inform, guide, persuade, motivate, or make the world a little better.
- Keep the lights on. Find a compromise between a bright screen and enough room light for you to be seen. Do not hide in the dark—the audience came to see you as well as hear you.
- Forget the podium. Move away from obstacles that are between you and the audience.
- Use a small remote allowing you to have the freedom to move around the room or stage as you like.

- Do not attempt to hide. What's the point? Do not be evasive intellectually or physically.
- Do not become attached to your software—if your computer crashes, screw it ... the show must go on immediately, not after you have rebooted. Stuff happens, move on. Your message is far more important than the technology helping you.
- Keep it simple. All of it. Simple goals, clear messages, and moderation in length.
- Are you just a bit cheeky? Then that should show in your presentations too. Let your personality shine through. Why hide one of your biggest differentiators?
- Be credible, respectful, and never go over your allotted time (ever).
- Do not use corporate-speak—speak like a human being. You cannot be naked if you say something like best practices or empowering a new paradigm.
- Think of your audience as being active participants not passive listeners (passive listener=oxymoron?).
- Be comfortable with yourself being naked. It takes practice and it takes confidence. The confidence comes with practice. Audiences hate arrogance and cockiness, but they love confidence if it is genuine.
- Never decorate your messages or your supporting visuals. Decoration is veneer. Think design, but never decoration. Design is soul deep, decoration is “Happy Birthday” placed atop a sponge cake.
- Make it visual, make it large, make it high-rez.
- Make it vocal. Your voice is a powerful tool. Your presentation is not a slideshow with narration. It is you telling your story with compelling visual support.
- Think in terms of what makes a good meal and good design. Think balance, harmony, variety, and content that leaves them satisfied and delighted, yet wanting more.

Presenting naked may not be appropriate for every case, but stripping down as much as we can often will make a huge, refreshing difference. The result will be a presentation that is different and somehow more real, like a frank conversation among friends. In my experience, the higher up the management chain you go, the less real the talk. People at the highest level of management do not often present naked, but I wish they would.

A writer, designer, musician, and life-long student of the Zen arts, **Garr Reynolds** is author of the internationally best-selling *Presentation Zen* (3rd out of Amazon's top 10 business titles for 2008). Honored for outstanding book design at the 38th Annual Bookbuilders West Book Show and Awards Ceremony in 2009, Garr is the Director of Design Matters Japan. His popular website presentationzen.com features regular insights on presentations, communication, and creativity. Currently Associate Professor of Management at Kansai Gaidai University, Garr is frequently invited to speak internationally (recently to Microsoft, Google, Hewlett Packard, P&G, and Ritz-Carlton). Garr lives in Osaka, Japan.

著者、デザイナー、音楽家、また生涯、禅を学び続ける学生でもあるGarr Reynoldsは国際的なベストセラー本:*Presentation Zen* (2008年のAmazonトップ10ビジネスタイトルで3位)の著者でもある。2009年、第38回 Annual Bookbuilders West Book Show and Awards Ceremonyにおいて「きわめて優れた本のデザイン賞」を受賞。またDesign Matters Japanのディレクターでもある。Garr Reynoldsの有名なウェブサイトであるpresentationzen.comでは、プレゼンテーション、コミュニケーション、創造性に関して、様々な洞察力溢れる話題を取り上げている。現在、関西外大経営学部准教授を職務とし、国際的な会議で講演者として招かれている(最近ではMicrosoft, Google, Hewlett Packard, P&G, Ritz-Carlton)。大阪に在住。

– JALT2009: TIP #91 –

"Plenaries—more than just, well, plenaries!"

Plenaries can be a mixed bag. Some, like Paul Nation's last year, are mind blowing. Others can be yawners. However, they provide a wonderful opportunity for a number of things—a relaxing sit down in comfortable seating, a chance to read the handbook and plan ahead, an opportunity for people watching and catching up with friends, and if worst comes to worst, a moment to snooze. Just don't snore too loudly!



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Business English and TOEIC®: Similar goals, similar methodologies

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ビジネス英語とTOEIC®: 共通の目的と指導法について

Developing practical English skills of use in the workplace is more important than ever. In response to this need, Japanese companies are increasingly relying on the TOEIC® test to evaluate their workers' English ability. Traditionally these two areas have generally been seen as requiring significantly different skills and have been approached with often dramatically different teaching methodologies. In this workshop, I will show how goals of practical business English and effective TOEIC® preparation classes are largely similar and will demonstrate that the same interactive and communication-focused techniques can and should be applied in both types of classes. Finally I will look at ways that TOEIC® and Business English study can be integrated and made more mutually supportive.

仕事上での実践的な英語力向上が重視されている昨今、このニーズに対応するため、社員の英語力の評価にTOEIC®スコアを活用する日本企業が増えている。ビジネス英語とTOEIC®テストは、大きく異なるスキルを必要とし異なる方法で指導されるべきものと考えられてきた。しかし本ワークショップでは、実践的なビジネス英語の指導と効果的なTOEIC®対策クラスの大きな共通点に着目し、インタラクティブでコミュニケーション重視の指導方法がどちらのクラスにも有効であることを解説する。TOEIC®とビジネス英語学習の間の垣根を取り払うことで、より効果的な学習が進められることを証明する。

Keywords: TOEIC®, Business English, functional language, testing, goals, methodology TOEIC®, ビジネス英語、機能言語、テスト、目標、方法論

FOR countries like Japan, with a high dependence on overseas exports, the need for practical business English skills has become more important than ever. In addition, companies also need to be able to assess the English ability of their workers. To this end, the Test Of English for International Communication (TOEIC®) has become the standard for Japanese companies. This multiple-choice listening and reading test is taken by over 4.5 million people each year, with over one third of these in Japan (TOEIC® Data & Analysis, 2008).

TOEIC® scores are often required for new recruits seeking employment, for promotion to senior

management positions, and for transfers to international departments. This leads to the very real pressure for Japanese workers to not only develop practical English ability, but also to get decent TOEIC® scores.

Traditionally however, business English and TOEIC® preparation have been seen as requiring different skills and are generally taught in completely different courses using different methodologies. Unlike business English courses, which generally use an interactive or communicative approach, TOEIC® preparation has consisted largely of extensive practice doing test questions supplemented with additional lessons on grammar, vocabulary, or both, often with some focus on test taking strategies.

Not only is this type of instruction generally seen as a poor complement for developing practical English skills, many educators actually see it as counterproductive. Nall (2003) notes this sort of teaching:

...may include narrowing or distortion of the curriculum, loss of instructional time, reduced emphasis on skills that require complex thinking or problem-solving and test score "pollution," meaning gains in test scores without a parallel improvement in actual ability in the construct under examination. (Evaluating the TOEIC test section, para. 3)

In any case, the desire for both high test scores and practical communication ability leaves Japanese learners (and teachers and administrators) with the unhappy need to study two separate, and seemingly only indirectly related, courses of study.

But are these two curriculum choices actually as different and incompatible as they seem?



After nearly 15 years of teaching, administering, and writing materials for large-scale TOEIC® and business English courses, I've come to the conclusion that they aren't as different as they may appear at first glance.

In order to clarify why I believe this, I'll first take a closer look at what exactly is involved in business English.

What characterizes business English?

Ellis and Johnson (1994) note three main characteristics of Business English:

1. Sense of purpose—Broadly speaking this means that in business English language is used to achieve a practical end.
2. Social aspects—A big part of business interaction involves building a good relationship. Much of the language used for things like greetings and introductions is typically polite and largely formulaic.
3. Clear communication—Exchanging information with the minimum risk of misunderstanding is a high priority

In terms of the objectives of business English, the main focus is on performance. Typically this would include features such as:

- confidence and fluency in speaking
- sufficient language accuracy (to be able to communicate ideas without ambiguity or stress for the listener or reader)
- strategies following the main points of fast, complex, and imperfect speech
- strategies for clarifying and checking unclear information
- clear pronunciation and delivery
- an awareness of appropriate language
- skills for organizing and structuring information
- practical reading and writing skills
(adapted from Ellis and Johnson, 1994, p. 35)

Now let's take a closer look at the TOEIC®. The TOEIC® Examinee Handbook (2008), says that the test, "...measures the everyday English skills of people working in an international environment." (p. 2), but to get a clearer understanding of exactly what skills and knowledge students need, let's take a look at some examples of actual TOEIC questions.

Listening Part 2: Question-Response

In this part of the test students hear a question or statement followed by three responses. Students

must select the best response to the question or statement. Question content includes a range of typical business or social interactions.

Why don't we go to the beach this weekend?

- (A) Sorry, I don't know.
- (B) That's a great idea.
- (C) Because I was there.

In order to choose the correct response, you need to be able to recognize that this is actually not a question. The first speaker is in fact making a suggestion, and answer (B) is a very common and appropriate way of responding to such suggestions.

Common everyday functions such as suggestions, requests, offers, complaints, and invitations make up a high percentage of the type of things tested on the TOEIC®. In order to do well in these sorts of questions, students must be familiar with common language functions, and the natural phrases used to perform them. Here we can see a direct relationship to business English, as being aware of the appropriate ways proficient speakers handle such common functions is crucial to social interaction and avoiding misunderstanding.

Let's look at another example.

Listening Part 3: Conversations

In this part of the test, students hear conversations between two people, then answer three questions. Situations in Part 3 closely mirror those found in typical business English textbooks, and include such things as asking for information about delivery schedules, making appointments, asking for directions, and arranging meetings by telephone. Students hear:

- W:** Would it be okay if I took a few hours off next Friday? My parents are coming to visit and I need to pick them up at the airport.
- M:** Yes, that would be fine. We do need to form a construction committee and start planning the company picnic next week but there should be plenty of time for that.
- W:** Thanks. I'll be happy to work late on Thursday if necessary.
1. What are the speakers discussing?
 2. What will happen next week?
 3. What does the woman offer to do on Thursday?

In this case we have a situation where an employee is making a request to her boss for some time off work. Understanding that the stock phrase *Would it be okay if...* is a common way of making polite re-

quests, and that such requests are often followed up with a future offer or promise, is of great assistance in understanding the situation, and by extension, answering the questions correctly.

Looking closely at the test, we find that the types of situations closely mirror those found in the average business English course. A more important, and often overlooked similarity is that an understanding of natural English usage, especially common everyday functions and their associated vocabulary and stock phrases, is a key factor in doing well in the TOEIC®.

Teaching Methodology

Traditional TOEIC® study methods do very little to address this key need of understanding natural English usage. Thus the implications for teaching such clearly communication-focused content are fairly obvious—if you want students to gain a clear understanding of how language is used in the real world, the best way to give them that understanding is to give them opportunities to actually use it.

In practice what this means is that rather than having students spend most of their class time doing practice questions, teachers should:

- Draw attention to key functions common in everyday communication
- Outline the high-frequency language associated with those key functions
- Give students opportunities to practice actively using the language in activities such as role-plays, focusing on the type of functions and situations found in the TOEIC® (and in business English courses)

After several years of using this approach with my TOEIC® classes, I noticed significant improvements in overall test scores. Even more encouraging has been the development of the types of practical language skills normally covered in business English courses.

Implications for TOEIC® and business English classes

The similarities between TOEIC® and business English, in terms of content, key language, and effective methodology present a number of positive implications for our classes, specifically:

- Study of key functional language found in the TOEIC® can directly support the development of skills relevant to business English study (and vice versa)

- Use of interactive and productive activities of the type found in typical business English courses can help students better understand and answer questions on the TOEIC®
- Students or institutions with limited study time can find it easy to integrate practical business skills and TOEIC® preparation into a single course of study

In my workshop I will present further examples of the similarities between TOEIC® and business English and will provide some practical examples of ways the two types of courses can be integrated and made more mutually supportive.

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Grant Trew has 20 years EFL experience in the UK, Asia, and the Middle East. He has particular interest in language assessment and has designed oral and written test instruments for a number of institutions. He has designed training courses and written preparation materials for the TOEIC® test, TOEFL® test and EIKEN tests and has been an oral examiner for the Cambridge exams. He is the author of the *Tactics for TOEIC® Speaking and Writing Tests* and *Tactics for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Tests* for Oxford University Press. Grant is the series advisor for the forthcoming *Business Venture* 3rd edition.

英国、アジア、中東諸国にて20年以上の英語教育経験を持つGrant Trewは、特に語学力評価の分野に力を注いでおり、多くの機関にスピーキングおよび筆記試験教材を提供している。TOEIC®テスト、TOEFL®テストおよび英検対策のコースや教材作成にも携わるとともに、ケンブリッジ英検のスピーキング試験官も務めている。オックスフォード大学出版局刊のTactics for TOEIC® Speaking and Writing TestsとTactics for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Testsの著者でもあり、間もなく出版されるBusiness Venture第3版のシリーズ総監修者としても知られている。