

Using the Radio to Teach Speaking

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PAC3
at
JALT
2001

**Conference
Proceedings**



**International
Conference
Centre**

**Kitakyushu
JAPAN**

**November
22-25, 2001**

The purpose of this paper is to illustrate how the radio can be used to teach speaking. First, some of the benefits of using the radio in the classroom will be examined. Then, a brief theoretical overview will be presented. This will focus on genre theory from the Systemic Functional Linguistics model of language. In addition, theories of learning based on the concepts of modeling and scaffolding will be examined. Third, a workshop will be presented. A variety of genre-based teaching materials will be analyzed that have been designed from the radio. Finally, a general discussion will be conducted, examining issues such as genre-based approaches to language teaching and the use of appropriate models in the classroom. Drawing on practical examples and the concept of genre, the paper will provide participants with new ideas for using the radio in the classroom, as well as new ideas for the teaching of speaking in general.

この論文の目的は、スピーキングを教えるのにラジオをどのように用いることができるか例証することにある。

まず第一に、授業でラジオを使用する利点について検証する。第二に、簡単に理論の大意が提示される。これはシステミック ファンクショナル言語学のジョンラ理論に焦点がおかれる。それに加え、学習理論は、モデリングやスキャフォールディングの構想をベースにしたものが検証される。第三に、ワークショップが提示される。さまざまなジョンラ ベースにした教材、ラジオからデザインされたものが分析される。

最後に、一般的な論議が行われる。言語教授であるジョンラベースの学習法や授業で適切なモデルを使用すると書いたような検証点である。実践的な例やジョンラベースの構成を描く。その用紙は、参加者に授業でラジオを使用した新しいアイデア都合わせて用意される。一般的なスピーキングの新しいアイデアによる教授も同様である。

Benefits of using the radio

In recent years, using the radio has been a popular way of practicing and developing listening skills in language classrooms. In addition, it appears that not only is it popular with teachers, but also students enjoy learning from the radio. In a study conducted at two universities in Japan with approximately one thousand five hundred students, the radio was nominated as the third most popular from a list of fifteen possible topics of study in a general English course (Lucantonio, 2000). Reasons for this include the use of somewhat authentic language, the variety of music and topics, and up-to-date news and current affairs. However, another benefit of using the radio is the variety of genres (Martin, 1989) that can be found. These can be used as valuable language models for the teaching of speaking. These include opinions, discussions, explanations, reports, recounts, and procedures, as well as storytelling genres such as narratives and anecdotes (Egins & Slade, 1997).

Theoretical Overview

Theory of Language

The theory of language that underpins this approach to using the radio is genre theory (Martin, 1989) from Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1994). It describes how language is used for different purposes and how language varies from context to context. SFL operates beyond the level of the sentence and focuses on making meanings by producing whole texts. It describes the nature of both spoken and written language and highlights how the two are not the same. In terms of the radio, the most commonly occurring spoken genres can then be described and analyzed (Egins & Slade, 1997).

Theory of Learning

The theory of learning that underpins this approach to using the radio involves the use of modeling (DSP Literacy Project, 1989) and the use of scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1978; Applebee, 1999).

The issue of modeling supports the view that learners need to be exposed to appropriate language models (or genres). These models need to be made explicit to learners. Therefore, analyzing texts for generic structure as well as language items is considered to be essential to this approach to learning. The curriculum cycle of modeling, joint negotiation, and independent construction (DSP Literacy Project, 1989), which has been derived from a modeling approach to language

teaching, is followed in the design of classroom materials.

The issue of scaffolding supports the view that learners need to work with texts with a view to finally producing their own. Gradually the support of the text is removed as the learners move through high scaffolding classroom activities to low scaffolding ones. Eventually, learners produce their own text (that is, a text of the same genre but on a topic of their choice). In this paper, examples of low scaffolding materials from both the joint negotiation phase and the independent construction phase of the curriculum cycle will be presented.

Workshop: Analyzing Teaching Materials from the Radio

A Storytelling Genre: Anecdote: “KC’s Trip to Sydney”

According to Eggins & Slade (1997), storytelling genres are important in casual conversation. One such genre, an anecdote (Eggins & Slade, 1997), is identified from Inter FM radio. It is the story of the DJ’s recent trip to Sydney, Australia. This was taped, transcribed and analyzed, so that it could be used as a model for speaking. A series of teaching materials for low level EFL students are then created following the curriculum cycle of modeling, joint construction, and independent construction.

The text opens with a typical abstract, with the DJ stating that he wanted to tell his story. He then provides listeners with an orientation by explaining where he stayed and for how long. Typically, he then moves into the sequence of events that happened to him; that is, the main points of the story. As is typical of an anecdote, he proceeds to build the story up to the climax of a surprising event that occurred (that is, being stung by jellyfish and nearly drowning), with the climax being accompanied by a reaction to the surprising event (in this case, a statement by the DJ about respecting the sea), and finally ending the story with a somewhat open-ended conclusion that leaves the listeners wondering whether or not he was OK (that is, his friend’s brother had to swim out and rescue him).

In the modeling phase of the curriculum cycle, learners complete a vocabulary activity to pre-teach the main words. They then proceed to identify the social purpose of the text; that is, to tell a story. This they do by a multiple-choice exercise. The learners then move to the joint negotiation phase. Listening once more to the radio text, the learners work from the dialog and fill in the missing, key vocabulary. Then they complete a sequencing activity, listening to the text again and placing the main points of the story into the correct order. In the next step of the joint negotiation phase, the learners work from the text again. They listen to the text again and complete a generic structure activity

(see Appendix 1, Question 1). Using this activity as a guide, the learners then work in pairs to produce a guided role-play of the DJ's story. Following this, the learners are ready for the final phase of the curriculum cycle, the independent construction phase. First, the learners produce an independent role-play of the DJ's story. Then, they produce an independent role-play of a surprising story that happened to them while they were at the beach (see Appendix 1, Question 2). To achieve the last part of the cycle, that is their own story, lower level learners may need to go back into the joint negotiation phase once again before they are ready to do this independently.

A Discussion Genre: "Michael Jordan's Comeback"

According to Eggins & Slade (1997), opinion genres are also important to general conversation. One such genre has been identified from InterFM radio. It is a discussion between the DJ and the newsreader about the merits of Michael Jordan's comeback game in the American NBA basketball. The same procedure of taping, transcribing and analyzing the text was followed, as with the anecdote text, as well as the same curriculum cycle.

The text starts with a question by the newsreader inquiring about the merit of Michael Jordan's comeback performance. The DJ then opens with his opinion, stating that some people were a little disappointed.

He then proceeds to give two reasons for this. First, he argues that he lost. Second, he argues that he looked a little rusty. Then, as is often typical in a two-sided discussion, he proceeds to give a contrasting reason. He argues that Jordan's not superman. He then provides some supporting evidence for this reason by saying it is understandable because he has been out of the game for a long time. Then, typical of a discussion, he draws a logical conclusion by saying Jordan will be OK with a bit more time and a few more games.

The learners follow the same curriculum cycle and complete the same activity-types as they did in the anecdote text. This includes a generic structure activity in the joint negotiation phase (see Appendix 2, Question 1). This is followed by the independent construction phase. Firstly, the learners produce an independent role-play of the DJ's discussion text, and then finally they produce an independent discussion text of a topic of their own choice (see Appendix 2, Question 2).

Discussion

The construction of genres is essential for effective speaking (Eggins & Slade, 1997). The different ways that genres are constructed tend to reflect the different social purposes for which we speak. Thus, if our learners are capable of producing these various "chunks" of language, it would appear to be of great benefit to the development of their speaking skills.

The radio appears to be a rich source of every day, real-life genres. Through taping and transcribing, these genres can be used as models for speaking. By utilizing research from genre theory, the structure of these genres can be made explicit to learners. By adapting theories of

learning such as modeling and scaffolding, these genres can be learned by students of all levels. Finally, by using a genre-based approach to the radio, a useful way to explore the uses of authentic spoken language in the classroom is provided, even for low level learners.

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Appendix 1

KC's Trip to Sydney: Anecdote

Joint Negotiation Phase of Curriculum Cycle: Generic Structure Activity

1. Listen to KC's story about his trip to Sydney. Put the letter (A,B,C, ...) into the correct box. One is done for you.

ABSTRACT (Main Point)

OK, Let me tell you about

ORIENTATION (Background information: who, what, where, when, why)

EVENTS

First,

Then,**B**

The next thing,

And then, to top things off, (*SURPRISING EVENT*)

CONCLUSION (Open-ended)

Finally,

CODA (Final Comment)

Wow!

- A. one of his brothers had to swim out and rescue me.
- B. one brother told me to take his board out.
- C. I stayed at my friend's house in Coogee Beach in Sydney for about a week.
- D. I got stung by jellyfish bluebottles.
- E. I learned you really got to respect the ocean.
- F. I was getting sucked out to sea in a rip.
- G. My trip to Sydney.
- H. We went to the beach. All his brothers are surfers.

Independent Construction Phase of the Curriculum Cycle

- Now using the above as a guide, tell your own story about something surprising that happened to you at the beach or when you were on holidays.

(Inter FM Radio, February 22, 2000. Reprinted with permission)

Appendix 2**Michael Jordan's Comeback Game: Discussion***Joint Negotiation Phase of the Curriculum Cycle: Generic Structure Activity*

- Listen to Vance K's discussion about Michael Jordan's comeback game. Put the letters (A,B,C, ...) into the correct box. One is done for you.

OPINION

Mm, I think

REASON 1 (FOR) REASON 2 (FOR) REASON 3 (AGAINST)

You know ... And ...

But, hey ...**E**

EVIDENCE

I mean ...

CONCLUSION

So, ...

- at times, he looked a little rusty.
- He's been out of the game a long time.
- Give him a bit of time.

- D. Some people were a little disappointed.
- E. The guy's not superman.
- F. Going down by two.

Independent Construction Phase of the Curriculum Cycle

- 2. Now using the above as a guide, present your own discussion of:
 - A. Michael Jordan's comeback game.

OR

- B. Do you think Michael Jordan will be as good as he was?

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