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Learning to Teach
Teaching to Learn

In this month's issue . . .

Greetings, everyone. Welcome to the September/October issue of *The Language Teacher*. I hope you are managing to keep cool through the seasonal heat.

As usual, this issue of *TLT* contains one Feature Article and one Readers' Forum piece. The former, from **Luke Winn**, examines the effects of authentic storybook use on the L2 English vocabulary acquisition of Japanese kindergartners. The latter, from **Tim Murphey**, proposes an alternate approach to secondary and tertiary classroom-based English language pedagogy involving student creation and selection of course materials.

In addition to these two articles, this issue also includes an interview with JALT2020 conference plenary speaker Kay Irie by Rob Kerrigan and Eric Shepherd Martin. Don't forget to check out our many regular JALT Praxis columns, such as My Share, *TLT* Wired, Book Reviews, Teaching Assistance, Writers' Workshop, SIG Focus, and Old Grammarians as well.

In closing, as always, I would like to thank the many *TLT* contributors at every stage of our production, without whose tireless efforts this publication would not be possible. Finally, to all our readers, I hope you enjoy the issue and find it useful.

— *Paul Lyddon,* TLT *Co-editor*

皆 様、こんにちは。*The Language Teacher* 9/10月号にようこそ。この時期の暑さにも負けず、なんとか涼しくお過ごしされていれば幸いです。

本号はいつものようにFeature ArticleとReaders'Forumが一編ずつ掲載されています。Feature ArticleではLuke Winnが、日本の幼稚園でのL2としての英語の語彙獲得において、「本物の」童話を使用する効果を検証しています。Readers'ForumではTim Murpheyが、高校や大学における教室中心の英語指導法について、学生自身が教材を作ったり選んだりする新たなアプローチを提案しています。

この２つの記事に加えて、Rob KerriganとEric Shepherd Martinによる、JALT2020の特別講演者Kay Irieへのインタビューもあります。

また、My Share、*TLT* Wired、Book Reviews、Teaching Assistance、Writers'Workshop、SIG Focus、Old Grammariansなど、JALT Praxis恒例のコラムのチェックもどうぞお忘れなく。

TLT Editors: Nicole Gallagher, Paul Lyddon
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　最後になりましたが、いつものように*TLT*製作のさまざまな段階で貢献してくださった多くの人々に感謝申し上げます。本号の出版が実現したのは、皆様の絶え間ない尽力のお陰です。

　そして読者の皆様には、どうぞ本号をお楽しみいただき、お役に立てていただけますように。

— Paul Lyddon, TLT *Co-editor*

Co-Editor Position Open at *The Language Teacher*

The Language Teacher is now accepting applications for a new Co-Editor to work as part of a three-person editorial team. This team manages production of our peer-reviewed Feature Article and Readers' Forum sections, handling manuscripts through review, copy editing, and proofreading. Other responsibilities include medium- and long-term strategic publication planning as well as attendance at an annual JALT Publications Board meeting along with a small number of meetings, presentations, and workshops at the annual JALT International Conference, for which fee waivers are available. The average time commitment for fulfilling these responsibilities is approximately two to four hours per week.

TLT editorial team membership offers numerous opportunities for both personal and professional development. Working with authors, reviewers, and the *TLT* production team can help to further develop academic writing and editing skills. Coordinating the efforts of our all-volunteer staff is an excellent opportunity to develop team management skills. Finally, serving on the *TLT* editorial team brings you into closer contact with the entire JALT membership and its leadership, providing a prime opportunity for networking.

This position entails a three-year commitment: two years as Co-Editor and then an additional year as Senior Editor. Interested applicants should submit a full CV and letter of application to the JALT Publications Board Chair, Caroline Handley, who can be contacted through our website's contact form at https://jalt-publications.org/contact or by email: jaltpubs.pubchair@jalt.org.

Application review will be ongoing until a suitable candidate has been selected. Priority will be given to applications received before October 1, 2021.

Please see https://jalt-publications.org/recruiting for other position openings in JALT Publications.

JALT Research Grant Proposal Deadline: September 30th

Each year, JALT awards up to three grants for a maximum of 100,000 yen each for research on language teaching in Japan. Only JALT members who have no outside funding sources to conduct research are eligible to apply. The goal of the grants is to support language teachers in their professional development and to encourage teachers to engage in classroom-based research. Grant applications are collected each summer and vetted by the JALT Research Grants Committee. Winners of the grants receive funding before the start of the following school year, during which they conduct their studies, provide quarterly reports, and receive guidance from the committee. Following the completion of the research, winners are invited to give presentations on their projects at the JALT national conference and to publish a paper in the Language Teacher. The deadline for proposals for projects starting in the 2022 school year is September 30, 2021.

Details and application can be found on the JALT Research Grants website.

http://jalt.org/researchgrants

Submitting material to *The Language Teacher*

The editors welcome submissions of materials concerned with all aspects of language education, particularly with relevance to Japan. For specific guidelines, and access to our online submission system, please visit our website:

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Questioning the Efficacy of Reading Storybooks to Very Young Japanese EFL Learners: A Vocabulary Study

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https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTTLT45.5-1

This study is concerned with vocabulary acquisition from reading authentic English storybooks to very young Japanese children in an immersion EFL setting. Twenty six children took part in a quasi-experimental study which examined two reading techniques. A multiple readings condition offered three verbatim readings of three different storybooks (nine readings in total), whereas the second condition added brief L2 explanations of target words within a single reading of each book (three readings in total). Prior vocabulary in L2 (English) was also measured to evaluate its effect on word learning. A post-treatment target word vocabulary test was conducted to assess for acquisition. The results of the study show that neither reading condition resulted in significant effects with regard to word learning. The effect of prior vocabulary (both L1 and L2), however, was significant, and implications for educators working with children in this age group are discussed.

本研究は、イマージョン型のEFL環境における、「本物の」英語の童話を使った読み聞かせによる日本人児童の語彙習得に関するものである。26人の児童が実験に参加し、2つの異なるリーディング手法について調査した。一つのグループには、3つの異なる童話を3回ずつ逐語的に繰り返し読み聞かせ（合計9回）、もう一つのグループには、各童話の対象となる単語の簡潔な説明をL2　（英語）で行った上で一回ずつ読み聞かせた（合計3回）。さらに、L2（英語）の事前語彙知識を測定し、単語学習効果を検証した。どれくらい習得したか評価するために対象となる単語の事後テストを行った。本研究の結果は、どちらのリーディング手法も単語学習には有意な効果をもたらさなかったことを示している。しかしながら、事前語彙知識（L1とL2の両方）の効果は有意であり、この年齢層の児童と関わる教育者のための示唆を述べる。

Reading authentic storybooks to very young (3- to 6-year-olds) English language learners is a commonplace activity in early-learning classrooms throughout the world, and Japan's growing market of English medium preschools is no exception. Educators recognise their value as they offer richer and more diverse language learning opportunities to otherwise limited syllabuses (Ellis & Brewster, 2014; Ghosn, 2002; Linse, 2007). Their use with very young learners of English is seen as constituting part of an acquisition-based methodology, where receptive language acquisition is facilitated through a comprehension support structure including textual cues (narrative), visual cues (illustrations), and child/reader interactions (Ellis & Brewster, 2014; Wright, 2008).

Definitions

First, in the context of this article, the term 'authentic storybook' refers to an illustrated text that has been written and published primarily for the enjoyment of children with English as their first language. Their distinguishing characteristics are not always immediately apparent to end-users, such as parents or kindergarten teachers. However, such books typically incorporate a rich vocabulary and prioritize an intriguing narrative over learnable linguistic form and content. In contrast, storybooks which are published specifically for EFL learners (children learning English as a foreign language) tend to prioritize comprehensible linguistic form and typically include vocabulary content which is controlled and incrementally introduced over a system of grades. In addition, this paper makes a distinction between three different types of young learners: L1 English learners, who speak English as their first language; L2 English learners, who typically speak English in addition to their first language (e.g., at school); and EFL learners, who typically learn English as a curriculum component and have little further exposure.

Introduction

Rationale

Although English lexical knowledge among adult EFL learners has been shown to affect reading comprehension (Laufer, 1992; Nation, 1990), speaking proficiency (Hilton, 2008) and listening comprehension (Bonk, 2000), research on educational practices which support L2 lexical development in younger learners is scant. Therefore, the present study attempts to address this issue by investigating factors that affect pre-school EFL learners' receptive vocabulary acquisition from listening to English storybooks. A small number of publications are

available which offer practical guidance on the use of authentic storybooks with EFL learners (Ellis & Brewster, 2014; Wright, 2008). However, little of the guidance contained in these publications has been underpinned by empirical research and many questions concerning the efficacy of using this type of literature with pre-school EFL learners have yet to be adequately addressed. However, a large amount of research has been conducted on the vocabulary outcomes of reading storybooks to English L1 and L2 children, and it is this body of literature which provides a conceptual and methodological focus for the study reported here.

The Learner

A key question in this study relates to the individual learner. Specifically, the extent to which prior English vocabulary knowledge affects the ability of pre-school EFL learners to acquire new English words from listening to storybooks. Studies of English L1 children listening to storybooks have shown that prior vocabulary knowledge is indeed a key predictor for word learning (Ewers & Brownson, 1999; Reese & Cox, 1999; Robbins & Ehri, 1994; Senechal, Thomas & Monker, 1995). Similar results have also been found with a sample of young L2 English learners (Collins, 2010). Thus, it is expected that children with larger vocabularies in both of these groups will learn substantially more new words during a read-aloud session. In response to this discovery, researchers of both L1 and L2 English learners have investigated the effects of different supportive techniques during read aloud sessions, examining whether they can help children with less English word knowledge develop their receptive vocabularies prior to beginning the process of learning how to read independently.

Supportive Read-Aloud Techniques

In an attempt to help children with relatively smaller vocabularies overcome this hurdle to incidental word learning, researchers in L1 literacy studies have investigated the effects of supportive read-aloud techniques. Studies of interactive strategies whereby children are encouraged to engage in narrative negotiation throughout a storybook reading have reported impressive vocabulary gains (Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002; Whitehurst et al., 1988; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Wasik, Bond & Hindman, 2006; Dickinson & Smith, 1994; Price, Kleeck & Huberty, 2009). Other approaches have focused on providing children with rich explanations of target words throughout reading sessions (Elley, 1989; Brett, Rothlein & Hurley, 1996; Penno, Wilkinson & Moore, 2002;

Collins, 2010), as well as multiple readings (Senechal, 1997). All of these studies of instructive techniques report higher levels of receptive word-learning among participants in experimental groups. However, with the notable exception of Elley's study (1989), none of these instructive techniques have managed to negate the effect of individual prior vocabulary and help learners with smaller English vocabularies catch up with their higher vocabulary peers. Regardless of the support given during a read aloud session, those with lower levels of vocabulary knowledge consistently learn fewer new words.

Research Questions

At present, there are just two relevant EFL studies (Uchiyama, 2011; Tarakcioglu & Tuncarslan, 2014) which have investigated the language learning efficacy of using authentic storybooks with young learners. Uchiyama's study, with a sample of elementary school children, compared the technique of dramatic enactment with verbatim reading and found that the use of this technique resulted in small vocabulary gains. However, the 2014 study merely incorporated storybooks as part of a broader syllabus of learning for pre-schoolers, and little detail is specified regarding the input techniques that were used. Unfortunately, neither of these studies assessed the prior English vocabulary knowledge of the children involved, which seems to be a critical issue when considering the outcomes of the L1 English storybook studies mentioned above.

The main focus of the study reported here is on the question of whether prior English vocabulary knowledge affects very young EFL learners' acquisition of new English words when listening to readings of storybooks. Two experimental conditions were also assessed: one group was given immediate explanations of target words throughout one reading of each story, while the other group listened to three verbatim readings of the same book. These two conditions represent two common techniques which are often seen among kindergarten teachers during read-aloud sessions; i.e., rereading books which children enjoy, and explaining language aspects that are deemed beyond the comprehension of their learners. If the ability of both L1 and L2 English children to learn new words from storybooks is affected by their prior lexical knowledge, it is hypothesized that this effect would be consistent among EFL learners whose prior vocabularies are typically much smaller. The objectives of this research are stated in the following questions:

1. Can very young EFL learners learn new words from listening to authentic storybooks in English?

2. Does the use of either *target word explanations* or *multiple readings* of a storybook help close the word learning gap between those learners with bigger and smaller prior vocabularies?

3. Does prior English vocabulary knowledge affect the ability of preschool EFL learners to acquire new words from listening to English storybooks?

Method

Participants

The study sample comprised a total of 26 L1 Japanese children (12 male and 14 female) with typical developmental status. The participants had received a total of two years and seven months of daily exposure to English from a native speaking kindergarten teacher. The kindergarten setting provided the children with five hours of daily care, of which typically 90 minutes would be spent on structured foundation learning activities (e.g., crafts, music, dance, etc.) that involved interaction in English. The mean age of the children at the start of the reading procedure was 6.0 years, with a range from 5.5 to 6.5 years of age. All participating children were familiar with English storybooks as a quick survey of teaching routines at the kindergarten found that, on average, they experienced storybook read-aloud sessions in English at least once daily.

Materials and Measures

Three commercially available picture storybooks were selected for this study according to two criteria: (1) a meaningful narrative targeted primarily at L1 English speaking preschool children (i.e., not phonics readers or word builders that tend to neglect storyline), and (2) a plentiful vocabulary likely to be unfamiliar to the participants. The following publications were used:

- Book 1 – *Sheep in a Jeep* (Nancy E. Shaw, 1986)
- Book 2 – *Rosie's Walk* (Pat Hutchins, 1968)
- Book 3 – *Tough Boris* (Mem Fox, 1994)

Possible target words, which were considered by the teacher/researcher to be unfamiliar to the participants, were identified from within the original texts and their unfamiliarity was verified by conducting a post-treatment Target Vocabulary Test (TVT, see description below) with a comparable group of children from another class (same length of time on the programme; same average age). Any words which were found to be familiar to this peer group, i.e., where children scored significantly above the level of chance, were dropped from the post-test analysis.

The potential learnability of the chosen target words was also taken into consideration. Research

with elementary school EFL learners in Japan (Rausch, 2011) alludes to the ambiguity between illustrations used in storybooks and the language of the story itself. Illustrations in storybooks do not always provide a reliable context for word learning; in fact, they can often obscure children's understanding of storybook narrative (Beck & McKeown, 2001). Therefore, prior work (Elley, 1989) on correlations between text/illustration-based variables and word learnability provide a solid research basis from which to evaluate target words. Fourteen words across the three storybooks were selected for post-treatment analysis; however, after piloting the TVT with a comparable group of children, one word was dropped from the set due to it being correctly identified above the level of chance.

Two measures were used to assess initial lexical knowledge in both L1 and L2, as well as target vocabulary acquisition:

- *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – Revised* (PPVT-R) (Dunn & Dunn, 2007)
- Post-treatment target vocabulary test (TVT).

The PPVT-R (Dunn & Dunn, 2007) is a norm-referenced, multiple-choice instrument for measuring English receptive vocabulary, and has been used in similar previous studies (Collins, 2010; Ewers & Brownson, 1999; Robbins & Ehri, 1994; Senechal et al., 1995; Senechal, 1997; Silverman & Crandell, 2010). Using PPVT-R data ensured that English lexical knowledge between groups was balanced, and allowed for correlational analysis after the post-treatment test was administered. The TVT was a purpose-designed, hand-made testing instrument, which followed very closely the format of the PPVT-R test and the descriptions of instruments used in previous studies to measure target vocabulary acquisition through storybook reading (Collins, 2010; Senechal & Cornell, 1993). On each page children were presented with four pictures; one of which corresponded to the target word, along with three distractors. The target word was uttered verbally and the child was asked to point to the correct illustration.

Procedure

First, participants underwent PPVT-R testing to establish baseline vocabulary scores, then they were matched in pairs before being assigned to either group A (multiple readings; i.e., three verbatim readings at an average reading speed) or group B (explanations; i.e., a single reading at an average reading speed with verbalized target word explanations). This arrangement ensured that baseline English vocabulary means were balanced between conditions

(A = *m* = 47.3; condition B = *m* = 47.3), thus allowing for a balanced post-treatment analysis of TVT scores between treatment conditions. Group A was read to three times within the space of one week, and brief explanations were given to the children in group B at the end of each sentence containing a target word. Overall exposure to each target word was balanced across groups as the target word explanations in group B also repeated each keyword two more times (see Appendix A for an example explanation). After administration of the TVT, which took place one week following the end of the reading sessions, participants were grouped into either high or low PPVT-R scores (above or below the median of 46) and their comparative TVT means were assessed.

Results and Discussion

A preliminary analysis of means found no gender effect on the dependent variable (TVT score). The means for both reading conditions on the TVT were compared against the mean level of chance. Therefore, the mean chance outcome for a multiple-choice test consisting of thirteen items with four illustrations on each page (one key and three distractors) would be 3.25 words answered correctly (25%). Looking at the *multiple readings* group in Table 1, we see an overall mean of 4.85 words correctly answered, which represents an outcome of 37.3%,

or 12.3% above the level of chance.

The *explanations* group, with an overall mean of 5.23 words, answered 40.3% correctly, which represents a gain of 15.3% compared to chance. These figures suggest that moderate vocabulary acquisition was taking place throughout the reading sessions.

Regarding the second research question, an independent t-test was conducted to compare the TVT means of both the multiple exposures group and the explanations group. On average, the group who received embedded explanations throughout the reading sessions scored only slightly higher (M = 5.23, SD = 2.17) than the group who received multiple exposures to the storybooks (M = 4.85, SD = 2.54). This difference, -.38, BCa 95% CI [-1.505, 2.109], was not significant, $t(24) = .415$, $p = .682$; from this a low effect size was calculated: Cohen's $d = 0.15$. Based on this analysis, there was no difference found in the effects of the two input techniques.

Finally, in order to explore question three, correlational analyses were conducted to examine the relationships between the PPVT-R and TVT scores. First, a significant correlation was found between the PPVT-R and the TVT; $r(24) = .504$ [.165, .759], which demonstrates that there is a positive relationship between prior English vocabulary knowledge and young EFL learners' ability to learn new English

Table 1

Correct Answers on the TVT for Both Conditions

Target Vocabulary	A (Multiple Readings) *n* = 13		B (Explanations) *n* = 13	
	Correct Answers	%	Correct Answers	%
greedy	7	53.8	4	30.8
massive	8	61.5	4	30.8
fearless	6	46.2	9	69.2
scruffy	6	46.2	1	7.7
mill	4	30.8	6	46.2
hive	7	53.8	9	69.2
haystack	4	30.8	4	30.8
cheer	3	23.1	6	46.2
yelp	6	46.2	11	84.6
weep	2	15.4	3	23.1
tug	4	30.8	5	38.5
shove	3	23.1	4	30.8
leap	2	15.4	2	15.4
Means	4.85	37.3	5.23	40.3

Note. Maximum score on the TVT was 13.

words from listening to storybooks. Looking at Table 2, we can also see that when the participants are grouped into either a high or low PPVT-R score (above or below the median of 46), their comparative TVT means are substantially different.

Table 2

Showing TVT Means for Both High and Low PPVT-R Groups

High or low vocab based on $m = 47.4$	n	Mean on TVT	SD
Low	15	4.00	1.506
High	11	6.08	2.724
Total / avg.	26	5.04	2.323

These results seem to indicate that L2 vocabulary acquisition from listening to storybooks was taking place at a modest rate, as expected. However, the results in Table 2 also indicate that much of this modest gain was made by those children with a higher level of prior vocabulary knowledge. It was anticipated that participants with larger vocabularies would demonstrate more robust learning through the TVT, and as vocabulary levels measured by the PPVT-R (Dunn & Dunn, 2007) correlate with the results from the TVT, there is evidence here to support this. In the present study, children with larger vocabularies were more successful across both conditions. This result is consistent with similar L1 studies where supportive reading techniques were unable to narrow the learning gap between children with larger/smaller English vocabularies.

Limitations and Conclusion

This study comprised a small sample of children, divided into two treatment groups without a verbatim reading condition or any measure of long-term retention. Future investigations in this area of research would benefit from the inclusion of verbatim reading to more rigorously assess the impact of supportive reading techniques. Furthermore, a longitudinal research design would allow richer insight into the relationship between frequency of exposure, vocabulary acquisition, and retention.

Educators working with young EFL learners can draw implications from this study in relation to the value of learning activities which assume incidental vocabulary acquisition from rich input. It seems that, even when storybooks offer a low level of linguistic demand, their effect on the acquisition of new words is largely dependent upon the size of learners' L2 vocabularies. Learners with smaller L2 English vo-

cabularies may struggle to isolate words and ascribe meanings in the midst of rich input; therefore, such learners may benefit more from input techniques which present unfamiliar words more explicitly.

This is not to say that real storybooks don't have educational value in the EFL classroom. Any educator of pre-school learners will attest that storybooks possess a magical ability to keep children's attention, as young children are naturally drawn to narrative in their quest to understand the world around them. The use of real storybooks in the EFL classroom may incur some educational value. However, for the development of L2 English vocabulary among very young learners with little prior vocabulary, explicit instructional techniques may be more effective.

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Appendix

- *Text: "Sheep shove. Sheep grunt. Sheep don't think to look up front."*
- *Definition*: Point to the picture of shoving action; *"Shoving is the same as pushing. The sheep are shoving the car."*

Ask Your Students for a Change: Using Student Produced and Selected Materials (SPSMs) in Dialogic Pedagogy

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https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTTLT45.5-2

While I have found several good textbooks to use in my university classes over the years, the defining quality of my classes always seems to have been the creation and use of texts that students themselves have produced from their own experiences. In this piece, I will describe seven types of activity structure teachers can use to stimulate the production of student texts and then loop them back into the classroom for further student use. I will also describe four principal results of adopting such materials through this methodology—student-centered teaching, level and content sensitive materials, socialization, and emic pedagogy—and explain their impact on students in terms of SLA, identity construction, and community formation.

　私が大学で教鞭をとってきた中で、良い教科書はいくつかあったが、授業の質に決定的な影響を与えたのは、学生自身が文章を書き、それを教材として使用することである。本論では、学生が自らの経験を綴ることを手助けし、それをさらなる学びの教材として授業で循環させる七つの手法を紹介する。それらは、学習者中心の教授法、学習者に適したレベルと内容の教材の使用、学生同士の交流、（学習者の周辺環境や文化を包括した）イーミックな教授法（emic pedagogy）の活用であり、その手法による、主な四つの効果と第二言語学習、アイデンティティ構築、そしてコミュニティの育成構築に与えるインパクトについても言及する。

Background

As a Master's student supporting my thesis entitled "Situationally Motivated Teacher Produced Texts," I wrote "a teacher . . . can better produce [their own materials] for a particular class and make [them] relevant to any specific group than can a whole group of specialists [from afar]" (Murphey, 1978, p. v). A few years later, I clarified that "Situationally Motivated Teacher Produced Texts (SMTPTs) are of course not new; many teachers have been producing them for years. Most textbooks are, in fact, adaptations of SMTPTs originally designed to meet the needs of a particular teacher's (the author's) class and then transformed in an attempt to reach a larger audience" (Murphey, 1985, p. 6). I also noted that in this transformation, the content usually becomes generalized, losing its flavor of particular details, and resulting in a loss of any sense of keen relevance for specific groups. While I still use some textbooks that I consider appropriate for my students, I think student/teacher-constructed collections of student-produced texts on topics of shared interest are more accessible to other students in the same class and more likely to fall within their particular language proficiency levels, that is, their zones of proximal development, or ZPDs (see Vygosky, 1962).

Later, in Switzerland, I gave a string of workshops on "Insearch," demonstrating how the most relevant material for language learning involves new language that is mapped onto the content that students bring out from within themselves (Murphey, 1991). In other words, appropriate material is found not so much through teacher research as through student insearch. Students' own information, opinions, and reactions are the most potent content material to map onto their own personal language learning (see Meddings & Thornbury, 2009). For, as Paley (1986) asserts,

> "The first order of reality in the classroom is the student's point of view" (p. 127). Students' own personal content gives them a compelling motive for studying English, namely to explore themselves through socialization and searching within. "Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-student and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with student-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself/herself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach" (Freire, 2000, p. 80).

More recently, in an attempt to be even more intensely relevant to our particular learners, I and my colleagues have begun to experiment with structures that stimulate students to produce situationally motivated, insearched material in student-produced texts (Murphey & Falout, 2010). We loop these texts back into the classroom for students to learn even more from them. By "texts"

we mean any written or orally produced sequences in the target language. Most of us work at universities; however, many of our student-produced texts (SPTs) would be suitable for high school students as well. I also think that high school students could participate in the activities described in this article if well-guided. These texts have been successfully used with first-year students in academic English preparation courses and with second-, third-, and fourth-year students in mixed content and language integrated learning (CLIL) classes, as well as in large (i.e., enrollments of 80 to 150) "lecture" classes.

Research shows that student-produced texts inspire greater degrees of student investment because they comprise high-interest, level-sensitive materials within their group's collaborative zones of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1962; Williams-Mlynarczyk, 1998). These texts are also relatively easy to obtain once certain classroom structures are in place. Hereafter, I will describe how teachers can stimulate the production of student texts and then loop them back for further student use. I will also describe four principal results of adopting such materials through this methodology (namely, student-centered teaching, level and content sensitive materials, socialization, and emic pedagogy) along with their impact on students in terms of second language acquisition (SLA), identity construction, and community formation.

Structures for Generating SPTs and Looping Them Back into Class

Below are seven examples of activity types teachers can use to obtain student-produced texts and ways that they can further use them with students for a variety of goals.

1. Action Logs and Newsletters

After each lesson, students in my classes write action logs (Hooper, 2020; Murphey, 1993; Murphey et al., 2014; Murphey & Woo, 1998a). In these logs, they comment on what we did and on what they liked and didn't like as well as provide various kinds of feedback. Teachers can learn a lot by reading these different perspectives, which can help them better plan their future classes because the timely feedback points teachers to "where to next" (Hattie & Clarke, 2019; Miyake-Warkentin et al., 2020). Students can also learn a lot when teachers select certain comments from the action logs and put them into newsletters that are distributed to the class. Comments may be about the usefulness of a new strategy, a change in attitude or belief, or requests to do things differently. In class, students

read their classmates' comments and identify more closely with them than with those of the teacher and often develop much faster as a result (Murphey, 1998a, 1998b, 1998f).

2. Vocabulary / "Strange Stories"

My students often have about 25 vocabulary quiz items each week to learn from other teachers. To help them remember these words more easily, I ask them to use the ones they are less familiar with to write stories about themselves and people they know. They send me the stories by email. I then correct them a bit and either print them out for everyone or send them back via the class mailing list. Students find it very enjoyable to read each other's "strange stories" each week. Not only is it a good strategy for remembering vocabulary, but it is also a type of personalized, student-selected, and controlled input and output flooding. As one example, one teacher once gave my students some positive psychology terms (e.g., persevere, mindset, grit, gratitude) while another gave them some kitchen words (e.g., oven, mix, dishes). Here is the resultant "strange story" one student wrote about her mother: "My mom perseveres like an oven always on. Her mindset never frozen. With grit she mixes different things, and with gratitude we eat new dishes."

3. Student-Made Tests

Inviting students to make up their own tests after receiving a certain amount of instruction allows them to decide what is relevant to their learning and what is not. The act of creating questions is a powerful act of learning in itself. The students usually produce many more and much more varied questions than teachers can. This activity is an opportunity for the teacher to evaluate which aspects of the course students see as most personally important and valuable. I usually print all their questions on a handout, along with a few of my own that I think are important, and give it to them to study (Murphey, 1995, 2019a, 2019b, 2020, 2021a).

4. Audio and Video Conversation Transcripts

Another useful activity is to have students record their conversations and transcribe them later to focus on what they need to improve or correct and compare their transcriptions with those of their classmates (Murphey & Kenny, 1998; Murphey & Woo, 1998b), as some communication strategies are easier for students to understand when they can actually hear themselves using them. Although audio-only activities help students practice the sounds

they need to acquire in a foreign language, seeing themselves actually talking in a foreign language can also shift their multilingual identities in their mind to help them learn even more (Kindt, 1998). It allows them to notice their non-verbal language communication as well.

5. Favorite Song Presentations / Contributions

For this type of activity, the teacher models a slide show for an eventual student-led class presentation on a favorite song, including information about the artist, the song, difficult vocabulary, reasons for liking the song, etc. (Murphey, 1992). This model presentation should also include a video of an artist singing the song with the lyrics or subtitles at the bottom of the screen. After the model presentation, the teacher can circulate a class name list and ask the students to write beside their name the titles of favorite songs to possibly present on in future classes. Everyone is asked to present a different song. Students should provide a copy of the lyrics and a video link a few days before their presentation in class to allow the teacher to prepare for possibly difficult language. They can then write short texts describing their songs and their presentations. The slide show is made outside of class and the student has the option of sharing it with the teacher before their in-class presentation for corrections and advice. Students watching and listening all take notes on the song and the presentation and can ask questions at the end.

6. Language Learning Histories / Class Publications

Asking students to write their own language learning history (LLH) prompts them to become more metacognitively aware and to think about learning developmentally. LLHs are also level-appropriate reading material for fellow students within the group ZPD and can greatly inspire readers as they come to recognize appropriate beliefs, strategies, and attitudes (Murphey, 1998d, 1998e, 1999).

7. Near-Peer Role Models and Diversity Models

For this type of activity, students are asked to present three of their near-peer role models (NPRMs) and three diversity role models (DRMs) (Ogawa & Murphey, 2012). As an illustration of this assignment, for my own students I presented first and explained that my father was a big role model for me and near to me for the first 20 years of life.

But the real near peers were my brothers and sisters, who also played sports and sang a lot with me. The third group was my black basketball teammates in high school, who taught me a lot about basketball. For the diversity role models, I chose Mulan (a Disney character), Charlie Chaplin in his dictator speech (which I showed in class), and the renowned anthropologist Margaret Mead. I explained why I liked them and wanted to be like them in different ways. The teacher should not only demonstrate what is expected in terms of slides, pictures, speaking, and presentation skills but also describe why they find these particular NPRMs and DRMs admirable. When I did this most recently in a Zoom class, I could feel so much positivity that it astounded me. The students were recognizing people that they seemingly had not fully appreciated before. So, my last suggestion to them was to tell their NPRMs and DRMs (if possible) that they were in fact part of our class and that they had talked about them.

All activity types above (except #5) ask students to create texts, written or recorded, which are then looped back to them for further learning. Number five gets students to select songs they already have some investment in and to contribute these for classroom use. Thus, technically, it involves not student-*produced* but student-*selected* texts. Its inclusion here is to show that students do not necessarily have to make the texts themselves but can choose what texts are chosen for study in a more partnership education style (Eisler, 2000). Number six, language learning histories, is a great way for first-year students to discover how they have developed over time and in what directions they wish to go in the future. Number seven, role models, is a great way for older students to acknowledge who they have modeled, are modeling, and wish to model more. Written versions of these could also be asked for afterward to create publications.

CLIL/CBI Classes Special Topics

The last format category for publications is CLIL courses, in which students choose topics to research and write about in detail. Since most of my students are English majors, and many plan to teach English later, it is useful for them to start learning about MEXT policies and the education systems that they will be working in. Thus, many of their chosen topics were about language learning in Japan.

Many of their finished texts have ended up in class publication booklets, enough print copies of which are made for the writers, the next cohort, and attendees at my presentations who may potentially wish to seed the idea that students can create their own English

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narratives. Twelve case study booklets about teaching songlets (Figure 1) and four others about various topics (Figure 2) are publicly available at https://sites.google.com/site/folkmusictherapy/home.

Figure 1

Twelve Case Study Publications, Each Approximately 40 Pages

Figure 2

A Justification for Musical Therapy, with 4 Diverse Booklets from Student Research
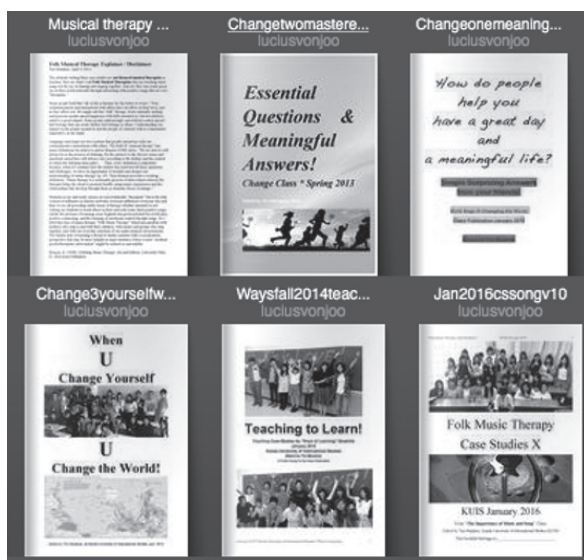
Advantages of Student Produced and Selected Materials (SPSMs)

SPSMs are intensely student centered since they are produced or selected by students dealing with their own perceptions and experiences. It is also easy to see that these materials are level sensitive in that they are produced by the same learners who will be consuming them, and *ipso facto* must be at their level or highly interesting to them for some reason. It also follows that the content will be mostly in line with that which is interesting to fellow students of the same approximate age. Additionally, when communication about themselves is the main content of the course, students socialize more profoundly, making friends and forming learning communities.

Finally, there are great advantages for teachers using SPSMs, most notably less of the strained tension that comes from trying to adapt alien texts to students or students to texts. As Underhill (1987) says, "One inherent problem is that the course book is written by someone else, somewhere else, who has never met my students or me, and does not know our backgrounds or our learning styles" (p. 12). Thus, while the idea of student-produced texts may seem like more work at first, it actually is less because the material is selected and created by the students.

Teachers also learn that good materials and methods can emerge dynamically from the group. However, a certain amount of flexibility and trust is required to invite students to collaborate in their own education. This "emic pedagogy" (Murphey & Woo, 1998a) creates intensive teacher-learning of students' perspectives and can greatly stimulate teacher development and promote partnerism with students rather than domineering over them (Eisler, 2000).

Impact on Students

There are three areas that impact students and warrant looking at more closely: SLA processes, identity construction, and community building. In SLA terms, when the texts are produced by the students (with editing corrections, when possible, by the teacher), they are level-appropriate materials which peers can learn from and feel stimulated by. SPTs are at once both input and output and can become meaningfully negotiated in classroom activities. Interest in reading what their peers have written means that students will probably be more aware and notice more (Schmidt, 1990; Schmidt & Frota, 1986), particularly the gap between their own productions and those of their peers (Ellis, 1997). Reading and viewing peers' works also sets up cognitive comparisons that

further allow students to "notice the gap." Moreover, certain types of SPT (e.g., LLHs, audio and video conversation transcripts) effectively constitute their own genre, characterized by frequent repetition of similar structures and expressions, and thus provide a flood of meaningful and relevant input (Murphey, 1998c). The fact that the genre repeats itself quite heavily means that the same types of structures and expressions are flooded in the learners' environments and more available to be noticed and absorbed. In particular, when they are dealing with their own texts, students seem to increase their metacognitive, metalinguistic, and metacommunicative awareness as they construct material within the group's zone of proximal development (Vygosky, 1962). As one student wrote:

> When I read the newsletters, I can learn a lot of things. I agree or disagree to classmates' opinions . . . In addition, I can also learn some useful expressions which I don't know or which I usually don't use. So I'm always looking forward to having newsletters. The newsletter is one my textbooks for learning English!

Peirce (1995) notes that learners' "investment . . . must be understood in relation to [their] multiple changing, and contradictory identities" (p. 26).

Norton (1997) similarly suggests that

> Every time language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with their interlocutors; they are also constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. They are in other words engaged in identity construction and negotiation. (p. 410)

I believe that constructing a supportive L2 identity component of one's self goes hand in hand with successful use. The students whose texts are used as classroom learning material feel a certain pride at seeing their work in print. The recording processes especially serve to construct a substantial personal sense of a second language voice that raises self-esteem and enhances further investment. As one student wrote in their student action log, "Today we did videotaping. I enjoyed talking about what I am going to do. I was very aggressive. … I think that this kind of lesson is very very good for us to improve my English ability."

Finally, SPTs can add greatly to the feeling of community when students read, view, and comment on one another's oral and written texts and create more texts in the process. They begin to model their peers and try new strategies and beliefs. SPTs allow students to more quickly access and cre-

ate a community of learners as they progress with their peers from legitimate peripheral participation to a more central role in the learning community (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Conclusion

I do not want to imply that conventional, traditional, and commercial textbooks are without use in our profession. They have their uses in appropriate times and places. However, to rely totally on texts coming from other places seems a terrible waste and a professional neglect of the rich resources sitting in our classes every day. I think we can greatly benefit by re-centering our students' stories and perspectives in our educational endeavors.

Well-meaning teachers work too hard at guessing what students will like and can learn from. Often this guesswork occurs among groups of government officials or university researchers, both of which are even further removed from the site of action. I suggest that what is most relevant to anyone is themselves, their experiences, and their opinions. *Ask your students for a change!* Then give whatever they give you back to them recursively (Murphey & Falout, 2010).

As teachers, we can create structures that will do this (like the ones described in this paper), but we cannot predict the full content of the course because the best plans emerge from our inspirations that come from tuning in to our students. The creation of periodic retrospective syllabi can help to show the organization of a course, like the maps that explorers make after having traveled through new territory. Obviously, they can't make such maps beforehand, but they can prepare some of the tools they predict they will need.

> "The substitution of socialization for acquisition places language learning within the more comprehensive domain of socialization, the lifelong process through which individuals are initiated into cultural meanings and learn to perform the skills, tasks, roles and identities expected by whatever society or societies they may live in" (Watson-Gegeo, 1988, p. 582).

We should be constantly constructing small societies in our classrooms. These can become small caring, sharing, and critically aware democracies, or they can move in degrees in the other direction, toward more totalitarian types of education. An easy way to go toward the more democratic end and to educate all involved, teachers and students alike, is by using what is already there—the students, their lives, their experiences, their opinions, thoughts, and dreams (see Medding & Thornbury, 2009, for

an eloquent argument in this direction). In the words of Freire (2000), "It is to the reality which meditates men [sic], and to the perception of the reality held by educators and people, that we must go to find the program content of education" (p. 96).

This content can be found highlighted through SPTs, which can provide successful language learning experiences while supporting identity and community construction through rich socialization. SPTs are the texts of our students' lives. What could be more relevant for students to deal with in the new language than their own well-becoming and socializing selves (Murphey, 2016, 2019a, 2019b, 2021b)? It is up to teachers to *dare to ask* for student help (Canfield & Hansen, 1995; Palmer, 2014) in creating texts that can display students' work to the world and to repeatedly disrupt and solidify groups through educational dialogue that allows them all to participate in improving our world.

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Acknowledgements

Tim Murphey (MA University of Florida, PhD Université de Neuchâtel, Switzerland), semi-retired professor in the Research Institute for Learner Autonomy Education (RILAE) at Kanda University of International Studies and part-time instructor in Wayo Women's University Graduate School of Human Ecology, juggles while skiing and makes lots of miss-steaks to increase his opera-tunes-it-teas for learning. He is currently researching-learning about connections between Eisler's partnership education, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Watson-Gegeo's language socialization paradigm, Mynard's learning advisor training, and Aaker and Bagdonas's serious humor. His books *Voicing Learning* (Candlin & Mynard, 2021) and *Group Dynamics in the Language Classroom* (with Z. Dörnyei, Cambridge, 2003) expound many of the main points in this article.

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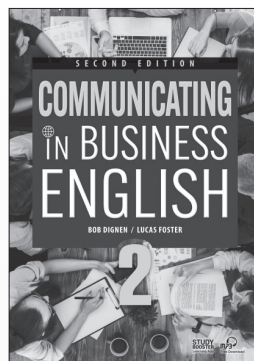
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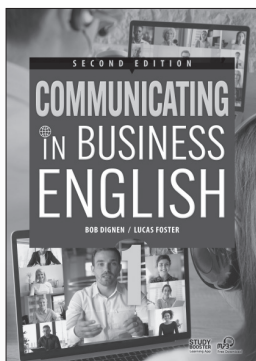
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Welcome to the September/October edition of TLT Interviews*! For this issue, we bring you an in-depth conversation with Kay Irie, a plenary speaker from the JALT2020 conference. Rob Kerrigan and Eric Shepherd Martin teamed up to conduct a fascinating interview after her plenary speech about positive communication and its applications in the language classroom. Kay Irie is a Professor at the Faculty of International Social Sciences at Gakushuin University. She has a Doctor of Education (EdD) from Temple University, Japan Campus, where she tracked the motivational orientations of junior high school students learning English over three years. She has published several articles and contributed chapters to a number of books on the L2 self-system. She is also a major proponent of Q methodology in second language acquisition (see Irie, 2014 for a review). Rob Kerrigan is a lecturer in the Department of Global Studies at Shitennoji University. He is also the Assistant Editor for* The Language Teacher. *Eric Martin is a lecturer in the Department of Education at Shitennoji University. They are both PhD candidates at Temple University, Japan Campus.*

An Interview with Kay Irie
Rob Kerrigan
Eric Shepherd Martin
Shitennoji University

Rob Kerrigan and Eric Shepherd Martin: *Thank you for taking the time for this interview. We know you must be very tired after your plenary, so we appreciate you for talking to us. Our first question is, what were your thoughts on the plenary? It was very unique this year, being online.*

Kay Irie: I don't know if somebody had told you, but this is my sabbatical year, so I'm not teaching. I haven't used Zoom for any teaching, so I didn't know what was where on the screen.

Well, your plenary was great and really informative. You presented ideas that we had never considered as English teachers here in Japan.

Thank you. I wanted to make it simple and practical, so I hope that worked.

We think so. We saw some of the comments during the presentation, and they were all positive. We think everyone took a lot from it.

Okay, well then, I'm very happy about it.

Let's begin. We'd like to ask you a little bit about yourself. How did you start your research career? What areas were you interested in?

I got into research as a doctoral student at Temple University in Tokyo, and at that point, I was teaching kids. Originally, I wanted to do research on early English education in elementary school. Since part of the research design that I had was to look at not just proficiency but also the differences in motivation, my research interests shifted from children's English education to motivation. My dissertation was a longitudinal study of a group of junior high students for three years exploring their changes from their entry point in the first year, the end of their first year, their second year, and their third year. I used the same survey four times, interviewed some of the students, and examined the results. Since then, I have always focused on the psychological side of language acquisition.

We've noticed a lot of your previous research focused on the L2 self-system (e.g., Irie & Brewster, 2013).

The L2 self-system came out just when I finished my EdD and started teaching full-time at a university, which kind of coincided with a big change in the landscape of L2 motivation studies. At that time, my dissertation was based on Robert Gardner's (2001) integrative and instrumental motivation framework which had been dominant in the field. Zoltán Dörnyei and other researchers like Emma Ushioda (see Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013) called for the need to change the types of research that we do. That's when I became interested in the L2 self-system. It resonated with me because I was born and raised in Japan, but my parents both spoke English and used it professionally and socially. My father was a university professor, and we always had guest researchers and professors from other countries

coming to our place. It was just kind of natural to me—people coming to our place, listening to English, and my parents interacting with these people in English. I've never doubted that I would be able to speak English. That's my ideal self in a way. I had this kind of experience and sensations, and I imagined that one day I would be like that. Of course, I like traveling and talking to local people, but, as for the L2 self-system, I didn't have to worry about the ideal self or the ought-to self. Back then, I identified strongly with that whole model. It explained some of my language learning journey. That's why I used that a lot for my research.

In one of your previous studies (Ryan & Irie, 2014), you mentioned imagined communities. Do you see any similarity between that and integrativeness?

Well, yes, of course some aspects of integrative orientation are that you want to get closer to the target speaking population, but in reality, it's not always easy to be part of that community. I think if you are in a foreign language learning context, then a lot of that is imagination. You imagine what it would be like to be part of that community. Maybe that can be partially replaced by the internet—there is like a niche or a small community from all over the world that is connected mostly not only through English but in other languages, too. Then, when you enter that community, you want to remain a part of it. I think the boundaries of these concepts have become quite blurred. With the development of technology along with the current situation and that people are not physically traveling, it will be interesting to see how that's going to affect the interest in other cultures, and what their motivation to learn not only English but also other languages would be.

For those students who don't study abroad and are not experiencing the outside world, how can we facilitate their imagined communities?

That's something I will probably need to deal with when I go back to work in April. The internet I think is a great tool and a great asset that we have. I'm relieved that this pandemic didn't happen pre-internet. I think students are becoming savvier with technology, and in some ways, they will be more focused on interacting online. They will be able to feel more natural doing it with others across all borders and around the world. I hope this won't turn students inward. I want them to see that things have actually become much easier for them to get to know other parts of the world. I think there is a lot of potential in tandem learning. Also, trying to set up a cooperative relationship with another university in another country, where students meet and

discuss issues or have a language exchange in some ways, would have a lot of potential. And, something I have personally become quite aware of and interested in is students processing all the different viewpoints represented in various media and on the internet—the importance of teaching students how to look for information, to evaluate that information, and to become aware of the viewpoints found in the media in other countries. It can be done by using the internet. That should also enhance students' awareness as being global citizens.

Let's move on to your plenary if that's all right with you. When JALT asked you to do the plenary, were you preparing to do it in person at the actual conference, or were you always preparing to do it online?

When I was asked, it was already decided that it was going to be online. My first reaction was, "Oh my god, I haven't been using Zoom!" But of course, I felt really honored. Like I said in the beginning of the plenary, I never imagined that I would be a plenary speaker for JALT because when I became a member, I was a graduate student, and I was part-time teacher, part-time wife, and soon after, I became part-time mother as well. Speaking at JALT as a plenary was something that I never thought I would do. When I was asked, I was already analyzing and writing about positive communication for language learning, so I thought it would be something people might be interested in, so I accepted the offer.

Let's go on to that. For those who missed the plenary and are not familiar with the idea of positive communication, would you be willing to explain it one more time?

In a nutshell, positive communication is a kind of communication that enhances peoples' well-being. Positive communication is a concept that was developed in the field of communication studies and not in SLA (second language acquisition) or applied linguistics. Up until like probably 2010 or so, the focus of communication studies was on fixing problems—fixing broken communication and broken human relationships using communication—so it was pretty much like positive psychology in a sense. Martin Seligman, who was the president of the American Psychological Association, told everybody at a conference to look at the positive side of psychology—not to fix problems to get people to the "normal" level but to take the normal level to a higher level and feel positive about life. I think positive communication was inspired by positive psychology. My point in the talk was that in SLA or language education, communication has been

perceived and positioned as means and ends to teach students—to be able to communicate in that second language or foreign language. How do we do it? We do it by letting them practice and communicate with each other in that language. As teachers, we forget that in our classroom because we're so focused on helping students speak, write, read, and listen. We forget what communication can actually do, so the point of my talk was to say, "Let's do that in the classroom. Let's not forget that we are communicating with students, and students communicate with each other." What we can do with that communication is to feel good about ourselves and for our well-being.

We're guilty of that as well. We sometimes focus more on the competencies of communication rather than on positive communication because we never think that it's our job as English language teachers to facilitate that. To us, we always envision that idea as belonging in a Japanese classroom. Do you know of any classes designed to facilitate positive communication in the Japanese education system at all?

I can't say I do because the concept of positive communication is something that I encountered recently when doing my research. I think a lot of teachers actually do it already intuitively and automatically but probably have not had a chance to really think it through. I introduced a model of positive communication and six actions that you can try, and I am pretty sure that you do some of those sometimes. I don't think we really need to make a whole class, a syllabus, or a curriculum, focusing on positive communication, but I think it's something that we teachers can be all aware of and encourage students to do in class.

When engaging in such (positive communication-focused) activities, should students be doing this in the L1 or the L2 in your opinion?

Ah, that's a good question. Yes of course, they can do it in their L1, too. Positive communication came out of communication studies, which were based on the assumption that people communicate in their L1. It is not just about the language classroom. It can be used with your partners at home or with your colleagues in your own language. It is just that when I encountered positive communication in the communication studies literature, I thought, "Wow! These are the things I can do in my language classroom."

What about for learners with low English proficiency? Is it doable?

I think so. They may want to write it instead, and then read it together or exchange pieces of paper. Also, if a controversial topic is chosen, then students can at least provide one-word adjective responses to that. I hope the classroom will be comfortable and close enough for students to share their different opinions. I think that's something we can aim for, and I think it would actually contribute to developing language proficiency in the end.

We were watching your plenary, and aspects of Bandura's (1977) idea of self-efficacy came to mind. For example, the influence of social persuasion. I think it all ties in to creating an environment where students feel comfortable expressing their opinions. Then they can maybe do so in their L2. It has this sort of cyclical function.

Also, we don't really teach our students to complement each other. I have, of course, been guilty of that, and I tend to concentrate on how to be critical and give constructive feedback in peer-review activities. In my mind, Japanese students are "nice" and not too good at giving constructive feedback. They seem to be afraid of being critical of others, and I think there's a stigma attached to the word "critical," as well. In the minds of some learners, being critical is negative.

In your talk, we got the sense that positive communication practices are necessary in the Japanese context.

I think so. It is important not just to talk about things on a surface level but to really engage in communication and to be supportive of each other so that you feel good about yourself by doing that. You also receive that positivity from others, and you feel good about them and the connection with them, as well.

In your plenary, you referred to a study of yours involving senior citizens (see Irie, 2021). Do you see any obstacles in implementing these kinds of communicative practices with younger learners?

I think for teenagers, it's difficult to communicate with each other. Especially in the formal education system in Japan, the homeroom system allows students to develop a closely-knit community that may be facilitative or inhibitive. They spend all day, every day, together. Outside of the English classroom, they already form a kind of dynamic relationship that is very difficult to undo. Maybe doing this (positive) communication in the L2 hopefully will let them feel differently about themselves. Some of the senior learner interviewees told me how it's actually easier to talk *honne*, an honest opinion, with limited proficiency because you cannot afford cognitively to be too worried about how it comes out.

We have some questions about Q methodology. Could you explain it for those who are unfamiliar with Q methodology?

Q methodology is a package of mixed-method research methods that aims to identify subjective views that exist within a group of people or a community. If there is a classroom of 30 students, there are 30 different views about language learning. They're all different individually, but there are some core views that exist within that classroom. Q methodology finds out and identifies those representative ideas that people have. For example, maybe five people are similar, and their view is like this. Then maybe other people share a similar view about language learning, and that's that view. I think that's what Q methodology helps reveal.

In your talk, you said that it's similar to factor analysis, correct?

It uses a type of factor analysis. It's called *by-person factor analysis*, and some people imagine it's like a flip of regular factor analysis. We are looking at the relationships of these individual views and not individual items, statements, or constructs. It's a process of reduction and boiling down to the main ideas. We want to find a pattern in the views in a particular group.

So, factor analysis focuses more on the items, whereas Q methodology seems to focus more on the participants, correct?

Yes, participants and their individual views. It's funny, (William) Stevenson, who developed this methodology, was a student of Charles Spearman, who was the developer of factor analysis.

What type of topics would be good for Q methodology?

Q methodology is used to find out the diverse thoughts and views that exist within a community. If everybody has the same view, then it's not that interesting. It should be used for something that people have different views about. A controversial topic is always good—a topic that people have divergent views on. Anything goes, really, but you need to narrow it down to one topic. That's the part that I want to emphasize with people who want to give Q methodology a try: to really think about the research question and what you really want to figure out.

Reading some of your studies, they take on a sort of a complex dynamic nuance (see Larsen-Freeman, 2015 for a review). Traits in people are fluid and change over time, and Q methodology seems to be a good way to capture that. Do you know of any studies that have used Q methodology repeatedly with the same subjects over a period of time?

The first study that I did was with Stephen Ryan on study abroad students (see Irie & Ryan, 2014). We did a Q study about how they perceived themselves in relation to their L2 by asking them to sort statements on cards about their L2 self before they left. Then, when most of them came back in half a year, we asked them to sort the same set of cards again. The finding was that the students' views were quite similar before the departure, but their views diverged after the study abroad experiences. What interests me at the moment are studies done with a single participant, looking at changes within the person's view about a matter over time or the views about a matter from different perspectives or in response to different instructions at one point. Visually you can compare how the participant rated the items and how they changed by comparing the raw data, something called Q sorts without statistical analyses. I'm sure there are people who would say that's not a proper Q methodological study, but I think it's interesting enough to look at Q sorts of one person, track their changes, and then interview the person right after sorting the cards and ask, "Why did you put this item here?" Then you can delve into the changes and dynamics of their language learning motivation, their L2 self, their mindset about their language ability, or any topic of your choice. I think there is so much potential for this methodology and its methods to be used in our field.

Well, Professor Irie, we'll let you go because we've taken up far too much of your time! Thank you so much for this informative session. It was a pleasure.

Thank you! I enjoyed talking to you!

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[JALT PRAXIS] MY SHARE

Steven Asquith & Lorraine Kipling

Hi everyone, and welcome to My Share, the bi-monthly column which aims to provide a little inspiration for your upcoming classes. Personally, the start of September is usually a period when I begin to pencil in new ideas for the autumn semester, and as such I find this edition to be especially timely. This month's offerings include a range of high-quality ideas which may be used either as standalone activities or adapted to enhance pre-existing materials. Given the variety of topics and skills addressed, I am sure that many of you will be able to find something to include in your planning.

First off, Richard Thomas Ingham introduces a fun, writing practice activity which stimulates students' creativity by asking them to write imaginary diary entries for famous people, teachers, or even animals, whose identities then need to be guessed by classmates. This activity requires students to use their writing skills effectively to communicate with a real audience. In the second article, Adelia Falk describes an ingenious way of developing students' skills in using keywords though reporting the contents of comic strips. As I am always looking for better ways to encourage my students not to use scripts when giving presentations or delivering information, this is one activity I will certainly try to adapt to my syllabus. Thirdly, Angus Painter introduces a method of teaching students to be more persuasive in their speaking and writing through learning about the Rhetorical Triangle. This activity actively encourages more confident and engaging writing as students must use their skills to write and deliver persuasive political manifestos. In the final article, Sam Keith explains a travel plan presentation project in which students research and describe a trip abroad. As this activity both utilizes and evaluates students' practical skills, I am sure that it will be popular with both teachers and learners alike.

—Steven Asquith

A Mystery Person's Diary

Richard Thomas Ingham

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Quick Guide

» **Keywords:** *Writing, past simple tense*
» **Learner English level:** *Pre-intermediate and above*
» **Preparation time:** *20 minutes*
» **Activity Time:** *30 minutes*
» **Materials:** *Printouts of diary example, paper, writing instruments*

Writing is seldom incorporated into lessons and is often relegated to homework, thereby reducing the opportunities to be communicative. In addition, the kinds of writing tasks that we set learners may not be motivating. This activity not only provides some great in-class writing practice of past simple form, but also offers a fun follow-up guessing activity that helps to develop a sense of audience for the writers. The activity can also easily be adapted for use in online classes

Preparation

Step 1: Write a short, imaginary diary entry for a person that the students know well. Examples of

people that have worked well in the past for me are famous actors, politicians, singers or even fellow teachers. The diary entry should describe a typical day in the person's life, and students should be able to determine the identity of the person fairly easily by reading it.

Step 2: Print enough copies of the diary entry for each student or copy onto a PPT presentation for display in online classes.

Procedure

Step 1: As a warm-up, ask students if they write a diary or journal or know anyone who does on a regular basis. Ask learners if they found someone else's diary, would they be tempted to read it?

Step 2: Either distribute the example diary entry that you have prepared or display it on a PPT slide. Students read the diary entry, then discuss with a partner who they think wrote it. If the class is online, they can type their guesses in the chatbox after a suitable time limit. After they have guessed, the teacher can reveal the identity of the writer.

Step 3: Ask students to imagine a day in the life of a person that they know well and write a short diary entry for that person using the past simple tense. They should give some clues as to the identity of the person without writing the person's name.

Step 4: Once finished, learners in the classroom can move around the class swapping their mystery person diaries and trying to guess the identity of the celebrities. Online learners can either share their screens in breakout rooms or read their diary entries aloud, thereby adding a listening element to the activity.

Variations

Option 1: This activity can be made more suitable for younger learners by changing the writing activity to an animal diary. Students write about a typical day in the life of an animal, then have to guess the animal their peers have described.

Option 2: A similar variation of this idea can be carried out in the form of a fan letter. Students write a fan letter to a celebrity, leaving the celebrity's name off the letter. Again, peers read the letter and try to guess the identity of the recipient of the letter.

Conclusion

A Mystery Person's Diary is an easy-to-prepare, fun activity that students find interesting and engaging. Since it serves a communicative purpose, it makes

writing more rewarding. A further added benefit is that it also integrates other skills—either reading or listening. It could potentially provide a springboard into further writing activities, such as blog writing or journaling. Finally, since learners are writing for their peers, it supports an emphasis on the importance of writing for a real audience, rather than solely for their teacher.

Reporting from Notes: Explaining Comics Using Keywords
Adelia Falk
adeliafalk@hotmail.com

Quick Guide

- » Keywords: *Speaking, keywords, presentation*
- » Learner English level: *Intermediate and above*
- » Learner maturity: *Junior high school and above*
- » Preparation time: *10–20 minutes*
- » Activity time: *10 minutes*
- » Materials: *At least two sets of the following: a multi-panel comic split into two parts with the final panel missing, an Answer Sheet for each group of students that contains the missing panel and two or more* distractors *from other comic strips, keyword Notecards, and two pieces of blank paper (see Preparation).*

Many students feel insecure about speaking in English and want to write out exactly what they will say before reading it aloud to the class. Teachers often struggle to impress upon their students the value of keywords in preparing for presentations and discussions. This adaptation of a *read and run* activity models useful keywords and allows students to experience how they can be helpful when speaking.

Preparation

Step 1: Prepare the comics. For each set, find or draw a 6–8-panel comic and two or three *distractor panels* from comics that do not match the story. Remove the final panel from the full comic and split the rest in half (Parts 1 and 2). Copy each part onto a separate sheet of paper (Appendix A). Cover the comics with a blank sheet of paper.

Step 2: Prepare the Notecards. For each part, write up to five useful keywords or phrases (Appendix B).

Make one copy for each group of 3–4 students.

Step 3: Prepare the Answer Sheets. For each set, copy the final panel of the comic and two distractor panels onto a sheet of paper. Make one copy for each group of 3–4 students or display it on a projector (Appendix C).

Procedure

Step 1: Divide the class into groups of three or four students. Tell each group to choose who will be "Listeners," "Reporter 1," and "Reporter 2."

Step 2: Place Part 1 and Part 2 of the first comic in different areas of the room. Place the Notecards next to the comics.

Step 3: Tell Reporter 1s to go to Part 1, and Reporter 2s to assemble around Part 2. Tell all Reporters to take one of the Notecards at their location.

Step 4: Tell the Reporters to lift the covers of their comics and think for 1–2 minutes about how they will describe them to their groups. They can work together or ask questions. Meanwhile, give Listeners the Answer Sheets and tell them to look at the panels.

Step 5: Tell Reporters to return to their groups and describe their parts to the Listeners. Encourage them to look at their Notecards to remember what they want to say.

Step 6: When the Reporters have finished, ask Listeners to select the correct final panel. Reporters may not help them.

Step 7: Show the students the whole comic and give feedback to the whole class.

Step 8: Change roles and repeat with the next set of comics.

Variations

- For small groups of two or three, you could use shorter comics with only one reporter in each round.
- For more advanced practice, students can write their own keywords.
- For additional conversation practice, students can discuss their opinion of the comics after the correct answers have been revealed.

Conclusion

This activity allows students to experience the use of keywords as memory aids. Careful selection of keywords and phrases allows students to remember what they want to say, and some of the words they

need to say it. This can help them speak more confidently, without reading pre-written texts.

Appendix

The full appendix is available from the online version of this article at https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare.
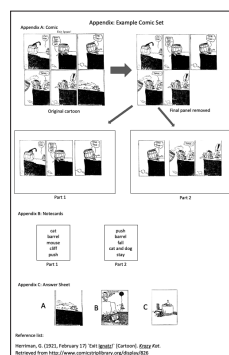
Encouraging Students to Use Persuasive Language in Speaking and Writing Classes

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Quick Guide

- » **Keywords:** *Speaking, writing, opinions, facts, persuasion*
- » **Learner level:** *Intermediate and above*
- » **Preparation time:** *20 minutes, depending on familiarity with topic*
- » **Activity time:** *50–90 minutes*
- » **Learner maturity level:** *Secondary to university*
- » **Materials:** *Writing materials and worksheets*

Using the Rhetorical Triangle, this activity aims to encourage students to use more persuasive language in their writing and speaking activities, therefore, making their comments or opinions stronger.

Preparation

The teacher should have a clear understanding of the Rhetorical Triangle: Ethos, Pathos and Logos (see Appendix for worksheet and resources). Also, prepare worksheets with various examples of each technique.

Procedure

Step 1: Explain rhetoric: The art of persuasion.

Step 2: Ask students to give examples of when rhetoric is used and which various professions may use it (politicians, lawyers, speeches in movies, advertisements, arguments, etc).

Step 3: Show students a picture of Aristotle and ask if they know who he was, or why he was famous.

Step 4: Give a short introduction about Aristotle and his book, *Rhetoric*. Emphasize, the book is still being used to teach students how to be persuasive.

Step 5: Tell the students that the Rhetoric Triangle includes three methods to persuade: Pathos, Logos and Ethos.

Step 6: Explain the first technique, Pathos: Uses emotions to persuade.

Step 7: Give an example, including who the speaker is, the audience, and the example of Pathos. Elicit further possible examples.

Step 8: Have a worksheet ready with three examples of Pathos and three examples of Logos. In pairs, students have to identify the Pathos examples.

Step 9: In pairs, students write another two examples of Pathos, including who the speaker is and the audience.

Step 10: Ask students to read out their examples.

Step 11: Explain the second technique, Logos: Uses logic like facts and statistics to persuade.

Step 12: Give an example including who the speaker is, the audience, and the example of Logos. Elicit further possible examples.

Step 13: Have a worksheet ready with three examples of Logos and three examples of Ethos. In pairs, students have to identify the Logos examples.

Step 14: In pairs, students write another two examples of Logos, including who the speaker is and the audience.

Step 15: Ask students to read out their examples.

Step 16: Explain the third technique, Ethos: Uses a person's credibility and trustworthiness to persuade.

Step 17: Give an example including who the speaker is, the audience, and the example of Ethos. Elicit further possible examples.

Step 18: Have a worksheet ready with three examples of Ethos and two examples of Pathos and two examples of Logos. In pairs, students have to identify the Ethos, Pathos and Logos examples.

Step 19: In pairs, students write another two examples of Ethos, who the speaker is and the audience.

Step 20: Ask students to read out their examples.

Step 21: Individually, students have to write a short political manifesto to be elected as Prime Minister.

Step 22: In small groups, students read out their manifestos. Then they decide the best in the group.

Step 23: The winner of each group, goes to the front of the class and reads out their manifesto.

Step 24: On a piece of paper, each student writes who they would vote for.

Step 25: Announce the winner.

Conclusion

This activity aims to get students using more persuasive language in writing and speaking activities, creating more confidence when speaking, and emphasizing the importance of giving support to comments or written sentences.

Appendix: Persuasive Language Worksheet

The full appendix is available from the online version of this article at https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare.

1. Below are three examples of Pathos and three examples of Logos. Circle the examples of **Pathos**.

   a. **Speaker:** *nation leader* / **Audience:** *the nation*
   "*It is better to fight and die for our nation than be ruled by the barbaric, authoritarian enemy trying to invade our country.*"

   b. **Speaker:** *parent* / **Audience:** *their child*
   "*During the 30 years that I have lived in this house, I have never seen a ghost in your room.*"

   c. **Speaker:** *trade union leader* / **Audience:** *work force*
   "*Your boss has continued to abuse his power; now it is time to stand up to him as a group.*"

   d. **Speaker:** *parent* / **Audience:** *their child*
   "*You will make the right decision, because I have seen you since you were a child making rational decisions.*"

   e. **Speaker:** *NASA* / **Audience:** *the public*
   "*After years of research, we can confirm that having a colony on the moon is possible.*"

   f. **Speaker:** *teacher* / **Audience:** *student*
   "*After all the teachers checking your homework five times, we still haven't found a correct answer.*"

2. In pairs, write two examples of **Pathos**.

3. Below are three examples of Logos and three examples of Ethos. Circle the examples of **Logos**.

   a. **Speaker:** *parent* / **Audience:** *their child*
   "*Smoking causes cancer. Therefore, you shouldn't smoke.*"

b. Speaker: *boss* / **Audience:** *employee*
"You know me—I have never missed a day of work in ten years, the other employees like me and my work is good."

c. Speaker: *doctor* / **Audience:** *patient*
"With my years of experience, I believe this is the medicine you should take."

d. Speaker: *teacher* / **Audience:** *university*
"The candidate's work ethic is exceptional; she is intelligent and very popular with other students. This should guarantee her a place at this university."

e. Speaker: *teacher* / **Audience:** *education board*
"With my 30 years of experience as a teacher at this school, the positive results I have achieved with my students and my popularity with the parents, I should be the next head teacher."

f. Speaker: *coach* / **Audience:** *athlete*
"You know taking performance enhancing drugs would destroy your career and reputation as a professional athlete."

4. In pairs, write two examples of **Logos**.

5. Below are three examples of Ethos, two examples of Pathos and two examples of Logos. Identify each persuasive technique.

a. Speaker: *parent* / **Audience:** *their child*
"I have been happily married to your mother for 25 years, and I can assure you that your girlfriend will only bring you unhappiness."
    Pathos   Logos   Ethos

b. Speaker: *sales staff* / **Audience:** *pet owner*
"Your dog gives you unconditional love, so you should only buy the best product for it. This is the best product on the market."
    Pathos   Logos   Ethos

c. Speaker: *mechanic* / **Audience:** *customer*
"I have been a car mechanic for 27 years, and this is one of the best cars I have ever worked on."
    Pathos   Logos   Ethos

d. Speaker: *teacher* / **Audience:** *a student*
"With all my experience as a teacher, I know that if you study, you will be able to enter the university of your choice."
    Pathos   Logos   Ethos
Speaker: *publisher* / **Audience:** *a teacher*
"90% of teachers who have used this textbook, have seen an improvement in their student's ability."
    Pathos   Logos   Ethos

e. Speaker: *charity worker* / **Audience:** *possible donor*

"With all your wealth and life comforts, I am sure you can donate a little money to people who are less fortunate."
    Pathos   Logos   Ethos

f. Speaker: *pharmacist* / **Audience:** *patient*
"This drug has been tested numerous times, and no patients have reported side effects. It is safe."
    Pathos   Logos   Ethos

6. In pairs, write two examples of **Ethos**.

Activity 1

Imagine you want to be elected as Prime Minister. Write a short political manifesto which includes examples of the various persuasive techniques. When you have all finished, read your manifesto to the other political candidates. Each candidate votes for the best manifesto to decide who will be Prime Minister.

Activity 2

Each person must choose a profession or celebrity (no superheroes). Imagine you are all in a hot-air balloon. The balloon is rapidly falling to the ground, so you must decide which person has to be thrown out. Each person gives one reason why they shouldn't be eliminated using a persuasive technique. When finished, everyone votes to see who should be eliminated. This continues until one person is left. Everyone continues to vote for who should be eliminated even if they have been removed from the hot-air balloon.

Activity 3

Each person in the group must choose a product of their choice (pen, watch, wheel, etc). Using the persuasive techniques, sell your product to the other group members. When finished, the group votes for the best product, or the product that they want/need the most.

Answers

1. a. Pathos b. Logos c. Pathos d. Pathos e. Logos f. Logos

3. a. Logos b. Ethos c. Ethos d. Logos e. Ethos f. Logos

5. a. Ethos b. Pathos c. Ethos d. Ethos e. Logos f. Pathos g. Logos

Resources

A video explaining the rhetoric triangle may be found at the following YouTube reference:

Ulmer, K. (2016). *The Three Persuasive Appeals: Logos, Ethos, and Pathos*. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-oUfOh_CgHQ

ARTICLES

JALT PRAXIS ● MY SHARE

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Travel Planning Presentation

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Quick Guide

- » Keywords: *Travel, trip planning, presentation skills*
- » Learner English Level: *All levels*
- » Learner Maturity: *University or adult*
- » Preparation time: *20 minutes*
- » Activity time: *90 minutes or more*
- » Materials: *Access to Internet for research, Presentation Information and Evaluation Sheet handouts (see Appendices), slides for model presentation (see Preparation)*

This is a project that allows students to learn about other cultures and explore important vocabulary that will help them plan trips to foreign destinations using English. It is especially useful when teachers need to create lessons about sightseeing or business travel. It will also provide students opportunities to practice giving instructions and using conditional tenses. This activity is likely to take up to three class periods, depending on how long students need to prepare a presentation.

Preparation

Step 1: Adapt the Presentation Information and Evaluation Sheet according to your class's needs and print enough copies for each student.

Step 2: Prepare a model presentation and slides about an example travel destination. This should cover all the key points outlined in the Presentation Information handout.

Step 3: Prepare some travel-planning resources, such as wikitravel.org or lonelyplanet.com for information about countries, or booking.com for hotel and flight information. Embassy websites often have information about visa applications or other essential paperwork.

Procedure

Step 1: Put the students into groups and have them brainstorm a list of their dream travel destinations.

Have a brief discussion about why they want to go to these places, and what they would do there.

Step 2: Tell them that they will choose one country, plan a trip there, and give a presentation about it. They must include as many details as possible to ensure that there are no issues during the trip.

Step 3: Have them brainstorm as many aspects of planning a trip as they can. For example, plane tickets, hotels, transportation, etc. Make a list of the students' ideas on the whiteboard and elicit or remind them of any missed points.

Step 4: Tell students you're going to give a model presentation, and they should pay attention to the information regarding your trip.

Step 5: After you've given your model presentation, ask the students what points they remember from your presentation and review the planning list on the whiteboard.

Step 6: Now tell groups to each choose a country and distribute the Presentation Information (Appendix A).

Step 7: Explain some of the resources listed on the handout and demonstrate how to use them to search for information.

Step 8: Tell the students to delegate the workload and help where necessary. For example, one group member researches transportation, one member researches hotels, and one member researches sightseeing destinations.

Step 9: After they've finished their research, tell students they now need to plan their presentations. This might be a good time to review relevant language they can use, such as, "Make sure to _____," "You can't forget to _____," or, "If you want to _____."

Step 10: Provide an appropriate amount of presentation practice time (this will depend on your class) and help the students with any questions they have.

Step 11: Hand out Evaluation Sheets (Appendix B) and explain that students will be giving feedback on other groups' presentations. Check understanding of the evaluation criteria and encourage the students to take notes as well. Give each group 10-15 minutes for their presentation.

Step 12: Once all the presentations are finished, mix the groups up and ask students to take turns to use their evaluation sheets to give feedback on each of the presentations.

Conclusion

This activity gives students an opportunity to study a wide array of English vocabulary and grammar

and allows them to actively engage in planning to travel abroad, which is something that many students aspire to do someday.

Appendices

The full appendices are available from the online version of this article at https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare.

Appendix A: Presentation Information Handout

Travel Planning Presentation Information

Task: Plan a trip to a foreign country and give a 10-15 minute presentation using PowerPoint or Google Slides. Imagine you are planning the trip for your audience and you want to give them as much information as possible on how to plan a trip to this country. Work as a group, and make sure all members of the group participate evenly.

Things to consider:

Content: Your presentation should include the following information:

- Flight and hotel information, including average prices
- Information on any visas or vaccination requirements before departure
- What type of transportation to use upon arriving
- Information on the top tourist destinations of your chosen country
- Information about weather and the best time of year to travel to this country
- Any safety concerns or sensitive cultural issues

Structure: Your presentation should be well-organized, and include:

- Introduction—introduce the country you're presenting about
- Key Points—make sure it's clear when each section begins and ends
- Conclusion—a brief review of your presentation and a friendly closing statement

Presentation Skills

- Eye Contact—make eye contact with every person in the room at some point
- Clarity—practice pronunciation to make sure your speaking is as clear as possible
- Body Language—use body language to show that you are relaxed and confident
- Breathing—make sure to pause occasionally and take a breath in order to stay calm and focused

- Facial Expressions—express emotion with your face and smile to help the audience relax
- Gestures—use gestures in addition to words to keep the attention of the audience
- Voice—speak in a clear voice that is not too quiet or too loud
- Visual Aids—effectively use your visual aid to supplement the presentation, but don't let it become the main focus

Preparation:

Step 1: Choose a country: _____

Step 2: Do thorough research to gather all necessary information on the checklist. Here are a few useful websites (you may use other sources as well):

- wikitravel.org
- lonelyplanet.com
- expedia.com
- booking.com
- The embassy website of your country

Step 3: Plan and prepare your presentation content. Make sure all group members participate equally.

Step 4: Practice giving your presentation, focusing on voice, gestures, and body language.

Appendix B: Sample Evaluation Sheet

Travel Presentation Rubric		
Presenting group:		
	No	**Yes**
In your opinion, did they gather enough information? (Check yes or no)	(✓)	(✓)
In your opinion, did they use good resources for their research?	(✓)	(✓)
In your opinion, was their presentation organized?	(✓)	(✓)
In your opinion, was their presentation clear and easy to understand?	(✓)	(✓)
Do you feel like you are prepared to travel to this country now?	(✓)	(✓)
	Total No: ___/5	Total Yes: ___/5
Additional comments:		

Paul Raine

In this column, we discuss the latest developments in ed-tech, as well as tried and tested apps and platforms, and the integration between teaching and technology. We invite readers to submit articles on their areas of interest. Please contact the editor before submitting.

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The Benefits of Using the British Council Interactive Phonemic Chart

Thomas Entwistle
British Council, Japan

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) was created in the late 1800s and is a standardized portrayal of the forty-three individual sounds that can be found in English. The British Council Interactive Phonemic Chart (IPC), like the IPA, groups the individual sounds into three categories: vowel sounds, diphthong sounds, and consonant sounds (see Figure 1). The IPC was developed to help students hear the various sounds in English in isolation and to provide example words for each sound.

Figure 1
International Phonetic Chart

Chart Layout

In the IPC, the pure vowel sounds (top left section) have been arranged in the same pattern as in the IPA chart: according to the shape of the mouth at the point of articulation. For example, from left (the lips are wide) to right (the lips are round), and from top (the jaw is more closed) to bottom (the jaw is more open). The diphthong sounds (top right section) have been grouped in rows according to their final sound. The middle and bottom rows of the consonant sounds (bottom section) are all voiced sounds (with the exception of the /h/ phoneme) and the top row of the consonant section is a mixture of voiced and unvoiced consonant sounds.

How it Works

The IPC is incredibly easy to use, and can be used in both live face-to-face lessons, and also used on remote online platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom and so on, provided that the computer audio has been shared with the students. The application can be downloaded from the Google Play store for Android devices and the App Store for Apple devices (see Figure 2). Search for the "*LearnEnglish Sounds Right*" app.

Figure 2
LearnEnglish Sounds Right App

You can also download and use a non-interactive image of the chart onto your laptop or computer from the British Council teaching English webpage: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/phonemic-chart

Once downloaded, the app can be basically used in two ways. To play a phoneme in isolation for stu-

dents by simply clicking on the phoneme you would like to be played. Or, by choosing the drop-down arrow in the top right corner of each phoneme for a selection of three example words containing the sound.

Resource Integration

The IPC also integrates well with other resources and materials. For example, there are many excellent Japanese to English, English to Japanese electronic dictionaries (Swan & Smith, 2001) in which the words the students look up are accompanied with the IPA script. This is also the case if students search the meaning of words on Google, or on most online dictionaries, Merriam-Webster for example. Lastly the IPA is used in many textbooks such as the Cambridge Unlock series, so the IPC can be integrated into classes that use these texts.

Practical Ways the App Can Be Used
Drilling

The sounds or example words on the IPC can be used for choral drilling.

As a Model

The teacher can use the IPC as a model for students, a model of the isolated sounds for some focussed pronunciation work, or as a model of the sounds within an example word.

Articulator Training

Students can find it difficult to pronounce certain vowel sounds due to the position of the articulators (i.e., the mouth and tongue). Therefore, it can be beneficial for students to repeat the vowel phonemes from left to right or from top to bottom, paying attention to the position of their mouth and tongue. This can help highlight that pronunciation is not just a speaking skill but also a physical action (Underhill, 2005).

Noticing

The teacher can use the chart as a way of guiding students to notice the difference between certain sounds. I have found this useful with problematic vowel sounds that Japanese students struggle with e.g., Cap /kæp/ and cup /kʌp/. Playing the vowel sound and having students match it to the phoneme can help students notice the different vowel sounds.

Self-study

As the IPC is a free resource for anyone to download and use, it can also be used by students as a way of self-studying pronunciation. Furthermore, students can use it as a reference when they come across unknown lexis when studying.

The more the IPC can be exploited, the more chances are created for the students to repeat, practice and train their ears to problematic phonemic sounds (British Council, 2001).

Possible Limitations

The IPC was developed by the British Council so therefore the individual phonemic sounds and example words are spoken in a British accent. This likely does not match much of the JALT readership, however, using the IPC could be a beneficial way of raising learners' awareness of other World Englishes.

Student Feedback

I surveyed my students at the start of semester one and at the end of the academic year after consistently using the IPC in class. Over the year I used the IPC to conduct feedback, as a model, and to drill students. It was never the aim of the lesson but was used when new emergent language came up or pronunciation problems occurred. At the start of the year not one of the sixteen students answered that they understood the phonemic chart. By the end of the year, thirteen of the sixteen stated they had *much greater*, or *greater* understanding of the IPC.

Conclusion

The British Council Interactive Phonemic Chart is an easy to use, simple, effective, and engaging application that can add a new way of dealing with pronunciation. Also, helping raise learners' awareness of the phonemic script through using the IPC, students can then use this knowledge when they work on their listening, speaking, pronunciation, and can help foster autonomous self-study. Also, exposure to different kinds of World Englishes could help reduce the shock learners feel when confronted with fluent speech in the future (Field, 1998).

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Mari Nakamura & Marian Hara

The Younger Learners column provides language teachers of children and teenagers with advice and guidance for making the most of their classes. Teachers with an interest in this field are also encouraged to submit articles and ideas to the editors at the address below. We also welcome questions about teaching, and will endeavour to answer them in this column.

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Storytelling Activities for English Language Development of Future Japanese Preschool Teachers

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There is no mystery about how infants and toddlers come to understand the language spoken around them and begin speaking it for themselves. Across the world, young children's language ability develops from joint interaction with other speakers of the language in the course of everyday activities. Initially, this ability arises from children attending to language spoken (or signed) by others, especially by skilled adults, in situations where it has meaning or causes a noticeable change in the immediate context (Luria, 1979/1982; Luria & Yudovich, 1957/1971). To do more than merely understand what is said around them, and to increase their fluency, children must also be encouraged to speak in increasingly complex ways (Black, 2010, 2015). This holds true for preschoolers when learning to use an additional language.

In both EFL and regular preschool classes, the trained early childhood educator (ECE), in particular, can model more intricate utterances and reinforce those of children to further develop their speech through targeted activities (see Black, in press; Bodrova & Leong, 2007). Thus, preschoolers' language development moves along a continuum that begins with verbalizations about their immediate situation and later develops to include what they are not experiencing at the moment, for instance when retelling or creating original stories. Therefore, storytelling activities, where either the adult or the children tell the story, can be found in preschool curriculums across the world (Atkinson,

2019; Bodrova & Leong, 2007; May, 2011; Tobin, Hsueh, & Karasawa, 2009).

Listening to stories helps children connect ideas with their experiences and visualize situations they may not have experienced yet. From repeatedly listening to tales, children learn routine patterns of discourse, new and more precise vocabulary, and "story grammar" (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). Furthermore, Bodrova and Leong emphasize the role that storytelling plays in the development of a child's planned, thought-out actions. When children retell or create stories, they "are not absolutely free in their choice of episodes; the story must make sense to other people. In this way, storytelling is similar to play; both lead children from spontaneous to deliberate behaviors" (p. 155). In other words, storytelling also plays a role in the mental and behavioral development of children as their facility to use language simultaneously increases (see also Black, 2018a).

With younger preschoolers or lower-level EFL students, external props are often used to aid understanding. Such props can include the illustrations of a children's picture book, photographs, objects the teacher brings to class, puppets, and so on. In Japan, the traditional storytelling activity called *kamishibai* involves telling a story using a stack of illustrated cards, often set in a special frame, from which the top card is removed in turn as the story progresses.

With more proficient users of a language, the teacher can tell a story by only varying their vocal expression, facial expression, and by using some gestures. In this way, the children's attention is moved from concrete objects in the immediate situation to focus more solely on the spoken words which they actively make sense of in their own minds. There are some traditional storytelling activities in Japan which employ this technique. One is called *subanashi,* where a set script of a short folk tale is memorized by the teacher and told to the children using only vocal and facial expressions and some gestures to aid understanding. These examples demonstrate the long tradition of storytelling in early childhood education in Japan.

Teaching Context: Future ECEs in a Japanese University English Language Program

In 2017, I created a content and language integrated learning (CLIL) curriculum for the required Freshman and Sophomore English classes in the English language program of the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care at a Japanese university. This involved collecting and creating teacher resources and learning materials and conducting teacher development workshops. The majority of these university students will work in child care centers (*hoikuen*) and preschools (*youchien*) in Japan. The main goals of this curriculum are to increase the university students' English ability and further their knowledge and skills in the field of early childhood education (Black, 2018b).

Starting in 2017, an emphasis has been put on teaching English through the four skills, but with slightly more attention to speaking skills. Teachers are encouraged to do this in both the Speaking/Listening and Reading/Writing classes. I was curious whether students also perceived a need for or had a desire to improve their speaking in English. Therefore, in a questionnaire given to all first-year students (*N* = 84) in this department in January 2019, the free response question, "What are your goals for learning English? How do you imagine yourself using English in the future? あなたが英語を勉強する目標はなんですか?将来、どのように英語を使いたいと思いますか?仕事でもプライベートでもなんでもかまいませんので書いて下さい" was added to the questionnaire.

The responses to this question (82% response rate) were categorized into four broad categories. Twenty-nine percent said they needed to use English for travel or study abroad; 26% to talk with non-Japanese people or make friends with people from other countries; 22% envisioned themselves using English in some way in their future work with children; and for 13%, their goal was to be able to have everyday conversation and be able to speak and communicate in English. Ten percent of the responses did not fit into any of these four categories. These responses indicate that students' desire to improve their speaking skills is in line with the emphasis on this in the curriculum. Furthermore, as outlined above, storytelling is a usual, appropriate activity in Japanese early childhood education. Therefore, further activities involving oral storytelling were developed for the required Sophomore English classes; two are outlined below.

Rewriting and Performing Aesop's Fables as Puppet Shows (Sophomore Speaking/Listening Class, Intermediate Level)

The first activity involves the retelling of Aesop's fables in English. For this, Clark's (1995) *Story Cards: Aesop's Fables* were used. This is a set of 48 cards, one for each fable with an illustration of the fable on one side and the story written in English on the other. As these fables contain unfamiliar vocabulary and are written in a short, compact style that may not be readily understood by young children, the task for the university students was to rewrite them. They did this by adjusting the vocabulary, adding more details of the situation and dialogue, and creating visual materials such as stick puppets and two-dimensional scenery backgrounds, to accompany their telling of the fable.

Figure 1

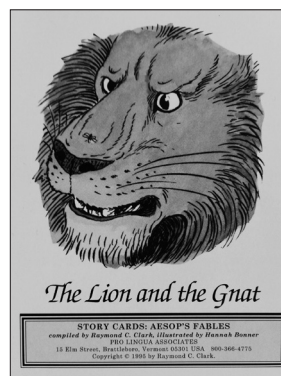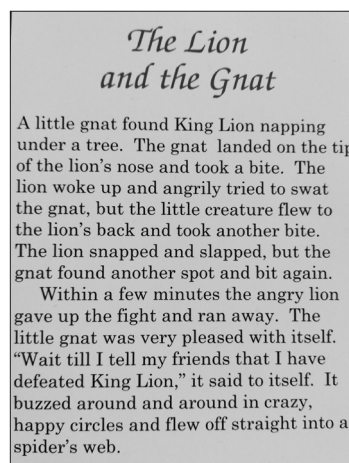Lion and the Gnat *Story Card* by Raymond C. Clark *(1995)*

Figure 2

A Story Card from Lion and the Gnat *by Clark, R. C. (1995)*

Class Routine

- Class 1 (45 minutes): Introduce *Aesop's Fables.* Divide class into pairs or groups of three. Each group chooses a different fable to present. Students work with partner(s) to read and understand the fable, and then rewrite it adding more detail and dialogue, and adjusting vocabulary. When the script is finished, the teacher corrects it and offers suggestions for improvement. Students start planning and preparing visual materials.

- Homework: Finish script and make visual materials.

- Class 2 (45 minutes): Each group practices presenting their fables dramatically with their visual materials. The teacher offers suggestions for improvement, checks pronunciation and so on.

- Homework: Practice for presentation.

- Class 3 (45 minutes): Three or four groups simultaneously give their presentations to different small groups of listeners. After presenting, they rotate and perform their fable to a different group. In all, they present their fable 3-4 times, each time to a different group. Listeners take notes on the content of the fables and question presenters on parts that were unclear.

- Homework: Presenters write a self-evaluation of their performance (Appendix 1) and listeners choose two of the fables they have heard and write summaries of them from their notes.

- Class 4 (45 minutes): The listeners from the previous week are now the presenters and the routine above is repeated.

Observations and Points to Consider

Overall, the students were engaged in the activity and displayed creativity, especially in constructing the visual materials that they used as props. All made puppets for the characters in their fables by drawing the figures on construction paper, cutting them out, and attaching them to wooden disposable chopsticks. They also drew backdrops on A4-sized paper. For example, for the fable *Wolf in Sheep's Clothing* an extra flap of a sheepskin was made that the presenters could flip over to turn the wolf into a "sheep". Much discussion was also had about depicting the gnat in *The Lion and the Gnat*, for the gnat needed to be small, but still large enough to see. The final solution was a larger gnat as a stick puppet and a smaller gnat sticker that the presenters attached to the face of the lion during the story.

Though the pronunciation of some words was difficult at first, the main challenge for these students was to write dialogue for the characters that sounded natural and speak in a way that conveyed meaning through their intonation, use of emphasis, and volume of voice. Especially when they were manipulating the puppets while speaking, variation in expression was lacking. (See Appendix 2 for an example of teacher suggestions.) Another point that needed attention was their movement of the puppets. At first, they did not give the two-dimensional puppets any differentiated movements related to specific parts of the fable. This was discussed within the groups and suggestions arose to remedy this. Furthermore, since each group had three or four chances to perform their fable, by their final performance it was clear that meaning had been conveyed, as evidenced by the accuracy of the summaries written by listeners as homework.

Rewriting Fairy Tales and Reading Them Aloud (Sophomore Reading/Writing Class, Advanced Level)

The second activity involves the writing or rewriting of a fairy tale in English. Students had the option of rewriting a traditional Japanese folk tale, adapting a familiar European fairy tale, or creating a fairy tale of their own. The final part of this activity was to read their fairy tale aloud, in *subanashi* style, to small groups of peers and receive feedback on how to improve their story and presentation.

Class Routine

- Class 1 (90 minutes): Read aloud together *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* (Galdone, 1973) with expression. Then, introduce and give some examples of key features of fairy tales. The ones I used were:

  1. Start with the set phrase: "Once upon a time there was (there were)," and end with "The end."

  2. Use past tense verbs.

  3. Use some onomatopoeia, or words that have a pronunciation that is similar to the word's meaning such as "creak" or "knock-knock."

  4. Repeat a few key phrases such as "I'm coming to gobble you up!" in *The Three Billy Goats Gruff.*

  5. Include dialogue between the characters, so when telling the story, distinct voices for each character need to be used.

  6. In traditional European fairy tales, things often happen in threes. For example, there are the stories of *The Three Little Pigs*, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, and *The Three Billy Goats*

Gruff. Arrange the story so that similar things happen in three different ways or in three main parts.

7. Have the story implicitly teach children something important about life.

- Next, in groups of three or four, students write their own, original fairy tale, or retell in simple English a tale they already know. It should include all seven features listed above.

- Homework: Students finish writing their stories individually. Teacher corrects the stories.

- Class 2 (30 minutes): In the same groups as in the previous class, students help each other to revise their stories and practice reading them aloud with expression.

- Homework: Finish revising stories and practice reading them aloud.

- Class 3 (45 minutes): Students are placed in groups of three or four containing individuals from different groups. In this way, each person in the new group will be reading a different story. Students read their stories aloud and discuss them with members of their new group. They critique each story based on the use of the seven features and the quality of the spoken expression of the storyteller. Then, they discuss (or write) how the story could be made more understandable or interesting for children.

Observations and Points to Consider

There were some observations from the students' engagement in this activity that might need consideration. For example, most of the groups chose tales that are familiar ones in Japan: *Momo Taro*, *Urashima Taro* and so on. These are readily available in English translation elsewhere. However, this seemed to not be a problem. The students still had to modify the stories significantly to include the seven required features. Likewise, though the students worked on the task together in class, they completed it individually. Therefore, all their stories were a bit different. In addition, two groups created original stories. This was more difficult, but they also reported it was interesting for them. They remained engaged in the task, though it took them longer to complete. Finally, most students did not include all seven required features in their first draft, perhaps because of a lack of understanding of those features. Subsequently, the time spent revising in class with help from group members was productive.

Some difficulties also arose. As in the previous activity, students needed the most help with creating natural-sounding dialogue for the characters that

was simple and easy to understand. Finding appropriate onomatopoeia for use in English-language storytelling was also a challenge until they discovered educational sites online with lists of such expressions and examples of their use on the website, Writerswrite (https://www.writerswrite.com/grammar/onomatopoeia/). Finally, it was difficult at first for the students to read their stories aloud with appropriate facial expression, varied intonation, and gestures, but they improved with practice and after receiving feedback from their peers.

Expansion of Cognitive Tasks: Adapting and Evaluating Learning Materials

From trying out these new activities with university students preparing to become ECEs, an area of further expansion was identified. Initially, the students' English language development was the primary goal for these activities. However, both activities also focus on aspects of certain cognitive tasks such as the adaptation and evaluation of learning materials for young children. For example, students had to evaluate the quality of others' stories, visual materials, and performances, and give their classmates suggestions for improvement. One way to help students give peer feedback is to create a list of appropriate sample comments that they can draw from in their discussions. (See Appendix 3 for an example). More emphasis could be placed on explicitly practicing these cognitive tasks.

The way language is used also continues to change. Therefore, the ability to update traditional stories for the inclusive and multicultural classroom would be useful and is another skill that could be practiced more extensively through such activities. Furthermore, culturally specific stories (see Challenger, 1999, 2004, for example), may not be so easily understandable to young children of different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, being able to adapt such tales would be a useful skill for ECEs. Another area for expansion would be to have students evaluate more deeply what lessons such tales may be trying to teach children and how such lessons can be best presented in one's current teaching context.

Finally, the emphasis here was on teachers telling stories to develop their own English speaking and ECE skills. However, as stated in the introduction, in order for preschoolers' language and concurrent thinking skills to develop, it is necessary for them to speak for themselves (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). Therefore, adapting the activities and materials so that not only the teachers, but also the children, are able to tell such stories is another area for expansion.

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Appendix 1
Self-Evaluation of Short Presentation to Small Groups of Listeners

Name:　　　　　**Student Number:**

Date:

	Excellent	*Average*		*Needs improvement*
a. Expressiveness, intonation				
5	4	3	2	1
b. Pronunciation (no "*katakana* English"!)				
5	4	3	2	1
c. Volume, pace, pausing				
5	4	3	2	1
d. Confidence, physical presence, eye-contact				
5	4	3	2	1
e. Use of visual materials, visibility for listeners				
5	4	3	2	1
f. Quality of visual materials (easy to understand)				
5	4	3	2	1

Below write a one paragraph self-evaluation of your presentation (75-150 words). Take into consideration the following questions:

1. What went well for you? Explain.
2. What do you need to improve?
3. What will you do differently next time when preparing for your presentation?
4. Explain in detail about the quality of your visual materials. How can you improve them next time?

You can start your paragraph like this:

Today I gave a presentation about the topic of _____ in class. First, there are some things that went well for me. For example...

Appendix 2

Example of Teacher Suggestions for an Aesop's Fable Presentation Script

The Lion and the Gnat

Student script:

- The lion: "**That is** enough! I don't care if you win, just go away!"
- The gnat: **"Yeah! I won!"**

Teacher suggestion:

- The lion: "*That's* enough! I don't care if you win, just go away!"
- The gnat: "Yeah! I won! *I won! I won, won, won, wonnnnnnnn!*"

Example of Teacher Suggestions for an Original Fairy Tale

The Three Fruit Boys

Once upon a time, an old man and an old woman lived in a certain place. One summer day, the old man went to the mountains to **mow the lawn**, and the old woman went to the river to do the laundry. As the old woman was doing the laundry in the river, **big melons were r**ushing down the river with a, "Zundoko Zundoko, Zundoko Zundoko" sound. "What's that? A big melon is floating down the river!" The old woman took it home, broke it open to eat it, and a boy came out from inside. **"I was surprised that a child was born from fruits,"** said the old woman. "**God has given a child to us who want**

children," said the old man. The boy was named Melon Taro and **grew up well**.

- *cut some grass*
- *a large melon was*
- *"How surprising!" "A boy has come out of the melon!"*
- *"We really wanted a child. God has given us what we wished for."*
- *grew up to be a strong child*

Appendix 3

Suggested Format for Writing Summaries of Aesop's Fables

If you were a listener today, write summaries of two of your classmates' presentations of an Aesop's Fable. Each one should be 75-150 words long.

Summary Sample Format:

Title
Today, ___(names)__ gave a presentation on the Aesop's Fable titled _____. This is a story about _____. First _____. Next, _____ _____ _____. Then, _____. _____ _____. After that, _____. Finally, ___ _____ ___. In conclusion, children can learn _____ _____ from this story.

[JALT PRAXIS] BOOK REVIEWS

Robert Taferner & Stephen Case

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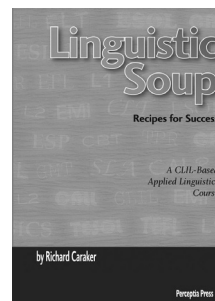
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Linguistic Soup: Recipes for Success

Reviewed by Martin Hawkes, The University of Shiga Prefecture

As someone who teaches both an introductory second language acquisition (SLA) class and an applied linguistics seminar, I know that it can be a challenge to find and create appropriate materials. Textbooks published overseas and aimed at students in countries where English is the dom-

inant language are inaccessible for many Japanese students. Furthermore, creating original content can be a time-consuming endeavour. With this in mind, I was pleased to see a title aiming to address a potential need for busy teachers. *Linguistic Soup: Recipes for Success* describes itself as a content and language integrated learning (CLIL) (Ball et al., 2015) textbook that uses topics in applied linguistics as its subject matter. It appears to be aimed at Japanese university students and is especially appropriate for those who intend to become English teachers in the future.

Linguistic Soup contains seven units, each of which is divided into two sections. Most of the units focus on topics, such as SLA theories, communicative competence, and educational psychology, typically found in introductory SLA textbooks. Unit 2 is the one exception as it has more of a sociolinguistics focus, but this one actually proved to be the most popular with my students. Odd-numbered units provide input with a pair of reading texts, while the even-numbered units focus primarily on listening. Audio files for the listening activities can be accessed for free online through the publisher's website, and a teacher's guide is available upon request.

I found the units to be well designed, and they contain a variety of different text types, tasks, and exercises. The author has clearly tapped into his years of experience teaching CLIL courses by including the type of engaging collaborative activities thought to be particularly effective for CLIL, such as jigsaw readings and focused discussions (Coyle et al., 2010). Language focus is largely limited to lexis, with no explicit focus on grammatical structures. A set of vocabulary items is introduced near the beginning of each unit. Some of these items are of general academic relevance while others are more specific to the individual topics. My students, who have IELTS scores between 5.5 and 6.5, found the vocabulary to be challenging, yet it enabled them to discuss the topics with greater ease. Teachers who like more of a structure-focus in their CLIL materials will have to identify appropriate grammatical targets in the texts or students' output.

In addition to the main units, there is an extensive appendix section. The author has included three writing assignments and a presentation project, which are tied to specific unit topics. There is also a helpful student guide for participating in discussions with presentation tips. Not including these in the main units allows an individual teacher more flexibility when working through the book.

The way the textbook is structured around seven topics with several supplementary assignments lends itself well to use as a sole textbook for the type of 15-week, one-semester course often found in Japanese universities. However, I was interested in using *Linguistic Soup* in my seminar classes, which usually contain only around six students. I found the book could be used effectively to gently introduce new topics. Over two 90-minute classes, we looked at a single unit, which served as a departure point to do further reading and carry out small research projects. To provide authentic texts I used *How Languages are Learned* by Lightbown and Spada (2013), among others. For example, after completing Unit 3 (Individual Differences), we then looked at questionnaire design, and students conducted their own survey research projects looking at L2 motivation. One of my students even decided on the topic for his graduation thesis after completing one of the units. In this way, this textbook could be used to provide an overarching structure to a longer course of 30 classes.

Overall, I found *Linguistic Soup* to be easy to use and full of effective tasks and activities. Even though I did not use it exactly as it had perhaps been intended, it has an intrinsic flexibility that makes it appropriate for a variety of content-based learning contexts. Preparing materials for such courses can be extremely time-consuming. Therefore, I can imagine this kind of CLIL textbook could be especially valuable for teachers who are asked to teach a CLIL course but have limited time to prepare original materials from scratch. It is also appropriate for teachers who wish to supplement it with applied linguistics projects.

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Julie Kimura & Ryan Barnes

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Contact: Julie Kimura — jaltpubs.tlt.pub.review@jalt.org

! Evolve Level 2 (2nd ed.) — Clandfield, L., Goldstein, B., Jones, C., & Kerr, P. Cambridge, 2018. [Evolve Level 2 is part of a six-level English course that gets students speaking with confidence. This student-centered course draws on insights from language teaching experts and real students while focusing on the most effective and efficient ways to make progress in English.]

Inspiring voices: 15 interviews from NHK Direct Talk — Kobayashi, M. Fujita, R., & Collins, P. J. Kinseido, 2021. [Students can watch 10-minute-long interviews with creative problem solvers. This coursebook builds students' fluency, develops their critical thinking skills, and motivates them to explore a variety of contemporary global issues. Lesson plans include background readings, comprehension tasks, and activities that culminate in mini-projects. Downloadable audio for self-study.]

! Movie time! (3rd printing) — Bray, E. Nan'un-do Publishing, 2020. [Students and teachers will have the unique opportunity to watch a great film together. The coursebook contains 16 units that include language development activities, a journal for recording reactions and ideas, as well as opportunities for in-class performance.]

Science at hand: Articles from Smithsonian Magazine's Smart News — Miyamoto, K. Kinseido, 2020. [Students learn relevant vocabulary and discuss scientific topics that they have read about. Downloadable audio for self-study.]

* English for careers in pharmaceutical sciences — Noguchi, J, Amagase, Y., Kozaki, Y., Smith, T., Tamamaki, K., Hori, T., & Muraki, M. Kodansha, 2019. [The coursebook was developed using an English for Specific Purposes approach, which aims at making students aware of genre approaches, how to examine them, and how to master them. Students can access audio files online.]

! Unlock Level 2: Listening, speaking & critical thinking (2nd ed.) — Dimond-Bayir, S., Russell, K., & Sowton, C. Cambridge (2019). [Unlock Level 2 is a part of a six-level academic-light English course created to build the skills (CEFR Pre-A1 to C1) that language students need for their studies. Teachers using this book can develop students' abilities to think critically in an academic context right from the start of their language learning. The coursebook can be supplemented with a mobile app and online workbook with downloadable audio and video.]

* Writing a graduation thesis in English: Creating a strong epistemic argument — Smiley, J. Perceptia Press, 2019. [This book helps students prepare for the main task of their academic careers. Students will develop an understanding of argumentation and develop a robust relationship between themselves and knowledge. The teacher's guide is available through the publisher's website.]

World insiders: Authentic videos from Insider — Yoshida, K., & Allan, A. Kinseido (2021). [This textbook is based on the US-based news site. Students learn English through videos that are accompanied by reading passages as well as listening activities that support all four language skills. Teacher's manual available with useful features, including vocabulary tests.]

Books for Teachers (reviews published in *JALT Journal*)

Contact: Greg Rouault — jaltpubs.jj.reviews@jalt.org

* Language learning motivation: An ethical agenda for research — Ushioda, E. Oxford University Press, 2020.

* Pop culture in language education: Theory, research, practice — Werner, V. & Tegge, F. (Eds.). Routledge, 2020. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367808334

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David McMurray

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the way classes are taught and extracurricular activities are handled. The graduating class of 2022 not only needs to use the internet to attend classes, but also to pass interviews with prospective employers. The essayist for this issue's Teaching Assistance column came from Hong Kong. Hin Ming Wong majors in English drama at a graduate school in Japan. Some of her peers stayed behind to study from overseas by email and video conferencing. Along with a TA from America, she recently helped to organize and judge a debate in English held between students located at Seinan Jo Gakuin University in Kitakyushu and at The International University of Kagoshima. The logistics required a blended learning delivery mode to virtually link students and teachers who were communicating online from home with counterparts who were physically in the classroom.

Blended Debating Draws Crossfire from Students at Home and in the Classroom

Hin Ming Wong
The International University of Kagoshima

Popular debate venues have historically been legislative assemblies, public town halls, academic institutions, coffeehouses, or in the streets. A recent debate held between students at Seinan Jo Gakuin University and The International University of Kagoshima took place on a video conferencing platform. Because of COVID-19 related travel restrictions, five students based in northern Kyushu were asked to study at home and refrain from physically attending the extracurricular activity. Forty-eight students in the south of Kyushu were free to come and go on campus as long as they wore masks and disinfected their hands with alcohol before entering a large classroom equipped with personal computers, where the debate was held.

To carry out this activity, the coaches of the debate teams agreed that blended debating (a hybrid of online and classroom discourse) was the optional forum. Integrating technology and digital media with traditional instructor-led classroom activities was thought to give students more flexibility to customize their learning experiences. A professor of English coached the team from Kitakyushu. On the day of the event, the teacher warmed up the audience—students from both universities—with an online presentation about sustainable development goals (SDGs). After giving his opinion that keeping schools open during the pandemic was a laudable sustainable development goal for achieving quality education around the world, all students had an opportunity to raise their hands in agreement—by digital screen icons or physically with real applause in the classroom.

Debate Procedures

After the lecture, a series of three debates began. Traditional debate is a process that involves formal discourse between two teams on particular topics in which arguments are put forward for opposing viewpoints. The vibrant topics selected for this experimental event included: COVID-19 vaccinations, the Tokyo Olympics, and the best practice of language course delivery modes. Three teams were asked to debate from one of three points of view for each topic: getting a COVID-19 vaccination should be required, should be decided by the employer, or should be voluntary; the Tokyo Olympics must be cancelled, must be postponed, or must go on; The best language course delivery mode is remote learning, is face-to-face learning, or is blended learning. Two teams from Kagoshima and one team from Kitakyushu participated in each debate. Each team had four students. The teams followed the predetermined rules for three-way debates set by Nishihara (2021) in which the first speaker introduces the team's viewpoint, "the second speaker asks questions to others, the third answers the other teams' questions," (p. 38) and the final speaker has to summarize the key points raised by the team. During the debate, each member had three minutes to present in English. They all needed to draw upon debate skills such as presentation ability, time management, and critical thinking.

Research Focus

In this article, I will focus on the strategies taken by the second and third speakers: the questioner and the answerer. Time management was key to carry out those two roles; it was hard for these university students to ask questions for a full three minutes. Furthermore, it was stressful for the students who took the role of answerer to think and respond to rapid-fire questions. In debating terminology, this exchange of communication is known as the crossfire period. Here are the essential points that I wanted to validate:

- Crossfire is at least as important as the introductory and concluding speeches.
- Performing well in crossfire requires preparation and practice.
- There is only enough time for a limited number of questions and corresponding number of answers.
- Crossfire is a very important part of debate and judges are inclined to vote almost exclusively for the team that did the best at asking and answering.

Observations

The idomatic expression, 'the gloves and masks came off,' perfectly describes the crossfire period of the debate that I observed. It was an exciting final match. At the start of the debate, to determine the best language course delivery mode, the following two questions were raised by a team member who defended the efficacy of remote learning: "Despite COVID-19, why does your team think blended learning is a good way for students to be educated?" and "Why does your team think face-to-face learning is best?" The spokesperson for blended learning asked the crossfire question, "Both face-to-face and online learning classes are convenient ways for students to take a class, so why should they just choose face-to-face teaching?" Finally, the face-to-face team asked, "Things are getting better. It is not so dangerous to come to class with masks and washed hands during the COVID-19 period, don't you both think?" (see Figure 1).

After a round of questions, the team spokesperson who supported a blended learning style replied, "If students know the techniques of how to take online classes as well as face-to-face classes, it will be easier for them to maintain the current system and to ensure they receive quality education until the end of the COVID-19 crisis. Online classes are only one of the choices we can have." The face-to-face team answered that, "Students prefer to make new friends, and teachers barely have enough time to prepare the online classes for students. Further-more, students can easily focus on the teacher who is present in the room. The teacher can quickly see who looks confused; who is out of focus in the class. Also, teachers can help students to solve problems when they do not understand the lesson at hand. Additionally, not all students have their own computer to download the necessary software applications to have an online class." During this crossfire melee, the team that supported online learning immediately replied that, "students can easily download those apps by smartphone. Nowadays, all people own at least a smartphone" (see Figure 2).

Figure 1

Time pressure spurred the learning of debate skills

Figure 2

Wielding dual smartphones at the debate duel

Figure 3

On-screen team watching the TA support an on-site team

Discussion

I think the most difficult part of the debate was answering the slew of questions the teams had prepared. The teams could have tried to predict which questions they might have to field, but they were unsure as to the kind of questions the other team could ask. The third speaker was required to prepare an answer before the timekeeper of the roundtable debate called on them—within six minutes or so from when the question was first posed.

The best way to make good use of time is to make a list of questions ahead of time. Advice by Stefan (2017) continues to be valid during the Coronavirus pandemic: For debate teams to win, they must prepare questions in advance. Questioners may decide to only use one (or none) of those questions as they adapt to their opponents' responses, but thinking of questions ahead of time helps when facing a crossfire of questions and answers under the pressure of a timed performance. If debaters can think about the topic, questions, and answers ahead of time, they will be even more likely to think of good questions during the debate. Therefore, questioners should try to prepare as many questions as possible or repeat their questions, thus ensuring that they can fully use their allotted time. Talking for a full three minutes—rather than quitting early—allows their own team's respondents to simultaneously prepare answers for fielding upcoming questions from the opponents.

However, during online debates, unforeseen problems can arise, and debaters need to think and act accordingly. When accepting the most valuable player certificate during the award ceremony, the student explained that during a Zoom session, he could not clearly hear the voices and sometimes the video was interrupted. He felt sorry for the opposing university teams, and definitely wanted to have a face-to-face debate next time (Kisaki, 2021).

Conclusion

Acting as a judge in the debate afforded me the opportunity to observe how students developed keener interpersonal behavior and sharper communication skills when they debated. Debate really did enhance their critical thinking skills. According to Matthew (2021), even during the COVID-19 pandemic, when social distancing and zooming have come to the fore, debating continues to be "an excellent school tool to encourage higher-order and critical thinking skills. It teaches students to structure and organize their thoughts while also developing their analytical and research skills" (p. 1). The experience could be useful for the students' future careers and implies that they could be better prepared when asked to make public presentations or participate in business negotiations. For me as the judge and for the TA who assisted (see Figure 3), it was a good experience to learn more debating skills, to analyze the strategies of crossfire communication, and ultimately to form better judgment skills. It was very challenging for graduate students to organize this debate event because we worked in roles such as emcees, timekeepers, and judges. Extracurricular debate is not an activity just for the teams who join, it also includes all the people who organize and watch the debate. The audience also formed their own opinions, considered who they thought should have won the contest, and had an opportunity to express their thoughts afterwards.

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Jerry Talandis Jr. & Rich Bailey

The Writers' Workshop is a collaborative endeavour of the JALT Writers' Peer Support Group (PSG). Articles in the column provide advice and support for novice writers, experienced writers, or nearly anyone who is looking to write for academic purposes. If you would like to submit a paper for consideration, please contact us.

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.writers.ws@jalt.org • Web: https://jalt-publications.org/psg

Accessible Publication Opportunities

Rich Bailey

Tokai University, Shonan Campus

Applying for a full-time English teaching position at a Japanese university can seem overwhelming. Each university seems to have its own set of documents, each designed to be as complicated and confusing as possible. There is also the dreaded three publications requirement; something not usually required for most EFL/ESL positions around the world where the focus is more on teaching experience. To make it even worse, there is little to no guidance about what constitutes a publication nor how they are evaluated.

For many part-time teachers and those new to Japan, this three-publication requirement can be a major obstacle when applying for a full-time teaching job, especially if time is short. In this Writers' Workshop column, I will explore some of the options available, focusing on the ease and speed of getting published in this context.

Research Articles

Obviously, the "holy grail" of publications would be a research-based article in one of the large, well-known, peer-reviewed international publications such as *TESOL Quarterly*, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *JALT Journal*, or *JACET Journal*. However, as ideal as publications, these high-impact journals would be, the very low acceptance rate and lengthy submit-to-publish times make them unlikely options for most teachers just starting out.

Book Reviews and Practical Teaching Papers

Other options often available include book reviews, shorter non-research-based pieces, and lesson activities like those found in the *My Share* column in this journal. While there is still competition for these publication opportunities, they are easier to find and have a much shorter time frame.

JALT Special Interest Groups (SIG) and Chapter Journals and Newsletters

Many of these organizations have their own publications and are often hungry for new members and contributions. I recommend checking out the resources at the following URL and find an organization that interests you: https://jalt.org/main/publications

In-house Journals

Many universities have their own journals, and some of them allow part-time teachers to submit. Many of these journals are also peer-reviewed but are usually easier to publish in and can have a time frame of less than a year. If you teach part-time at a university, I recommend finding out if it is possible to submit to the in-house journal. If not, another option is to collaborate with a full-time teacher or reach out to other part-time and full-time teachers in your network to find a partner.

For you full-timers, I would encourage you to also reach out to the part-time teachers in your network and offer to collaborate. This is a great way to support your colleagues while simultaneously advancing your own career. I have successfully worked with four part-time teachers in this way to publish in my university's in-house journal. Mutually beneficial professional development is the way to go.

Graduate School Thesis

As part of my research for writing this column, I spoke with a friend who serves on a hiring committee at a Japanese university for his perspective on publications, and this was one of his suggestions. He said that a solid and well-written MA thesis indicates the ability to research, edit, write, and stay the course; things that hiring committees view positively.

Conference Proceedings

This is probably the fastest and easiest option available for newcomers and part-time teachers for publications. Many conferences offer presenters the opportunity to write a short paper based on their presentations for publication (usually online) after the event. This is a win-win opportunity as it provides both a conference presentation and a publication for your CV.

In the end, having three publications is just one of the requirements when applying for a full-time teaching position. Of course, it can be very competitive for full-time jobs, and some publications carry more weight than others which can make a difference when a hiring committee evaluates your application. However, you will have to consider your own situation in regard to how much time, resources, and energy you have and decide what you are willing and able to do.

If you have any questions or comments, especially for other options I did not address, please feel free to reach out to me at psg@jalt.org.

[JALT FOCUS] SIG FOCUS

Robert Morel & Satchie Haga

JALT currently has 30 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) available for members to join. This column publishes an in-depth view of one SIG each issue, providing readers with a more complete picture of the different SIGs within JALT. For information about SIG events, publications, and calls for papers, please visit https://jalt.org main/groups.

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.sig.focus@jalt.org • Web: https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/sig-news

Collaboration is a cornerstone of JALT activities and the same goes for SIGs. While many people often think of collaboration within a SIG, there is an ever-growing amount of collaboration between SIGs as well as among SIGs, chapters, or other groups. This year, the SIG Focus column would like to highlight SIG collaboration in all its forms. Please feel free to contribute or suggest ideas by emailing us at jaltsigfocus@gmail.com.

The Business Communication SIG

Michael Phillips

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, BC SIG Coordinator, Publications Chair, and Publicity Co-chair

Alan Simpson

University of Miyazaki, BC SIG Program Chair and Publicity Co-chair

Hello, and welcome to this brief overview and introduction to JALT's Business Communication (BC) SIG and our recent collaborative activities. For those readers unfamiliar with us, BC's basic aim is to develop the discipline of teaching English conducive to participation in the world business community, involving all aspects of BC, business skills, and business focused training. We also wish to provide instructors with a means of mutual collaboration and a platform for sharing best practices—that is, sharing research, developing teaching methods, and building a community of professionals who want to study, learn, and teach BC.

As a SIG, we are always interested in building something new: collaborative bridges between corporate, academic, and private business English (BE) instructors. We feel that BE teaching in Japan has a strong and developing future. As the importance of Asian markets grow, so will the need for BE as a lingua franca (BELF). Furthermore, we hope that this need for interactive English will also have a knock-on effect on university and school education practices over the coming years. Naturally, BE pedagogy is not an isolated or discrete field—it involves interactions and shared content with other similar content areas such as intercultural communication and pragmatics to name a few.

In the recent past, the SIG has held a number of significant collaborative events, such as *The Evolution of Business Language Training in Japan* conference in Fukuoka, a "PechaKucha" inspired forum at the JALT International Conference (both in 2016); a *Cross-cultural and HR Management Challenges in Japan* forum, an *English for Specific Purposes Conference* at Keio University, and the *Business and Intercultural Negotiation Conference* at Kansai University (all in 2017), *The Spark: Igniting Global Innovations in Communications for Global Business-*

es Conference at Toyo University (in 2018), another *English for Specific Purposes Conference* in Osaka, and a talk on "Ready-made Mind Maps to drive a TBL or PBL Learning Cycle" (both in 2019), and, more recently, three online talks titled "Business English as a lingua franca and the CEFR companion volume in the Japanese context", "Mediation, Interaction and Pluricultural Competence: How can the new CEFR help English teachers?" and "Business Writing with an Attitude" (all in 2020).

As a factor for success, we have always endeavoured to work closely with other JALT groups including, for example, the Fukuoka, Kyoto, Nankyu, Osaka, and Tokyo Chapters, as well as the CALL, CEFR, CUE, GALE, ICLE, Pragmatics, TBL, and Vocab SIGs. We have also worked closely with a number of great education sponsors (e.g., Cambridge Centre, Cambridge University Press, Eigo Live, Englishbooks, Macmillan Education, Oxford University Press, Pearson, Q-Leap, RSA Japan, Tryalogue Education, and Widgets Inc.) while trying to raise interest in their brands, products, and services. We have also been closely involved with other similarly-minded teaching organizations, such as The Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research (SIETAR) Japan, and, in particular, International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language Business English Special Interest Group (IATEFL BESIG), not to forget the universities where our members work and whose students volunteer for us and/or do poster presentations at many of our events too—and of course PanSIG. The intercultural, international, and interdisciplinary collaborations that these connections offer have been at the core of our event history to date.

In contrast to the "old pre-covid paradigm", JALT now also provides many new avenues and opportunities for interacting and collaborating, and the recent shift to, and experience with, emergency remote teaching (ERT) and online learning is the latest iteration of that. While the situation with COVID-19 in Japan is still fluid (and appears likely to remain so for the foreseeable future) it has produced several major paradigm shifts in how SIGs deliver and receive educational content. The flow-on effect is also clear, as our sibling SIGs and Chapters take advantage of the practicality with which members can collaborate, not only locally, but internationally too, on shared platforms such as Zoom.

To that end, BC has not been exploring a conference (or shared conference participation) for 2021 (partly due to the uncertainty of reduced grants for 2021) and is instead looking at a "back to basics" seasonal concept—that is, collaborative events held every three months or so. This means we will either approach individuals, sponsors, SIGs, or Chapters to hold shared events regularly. The first of these new formats was a wonderful Zoom-hosted talk in June, "Entrepreneurial Ideas for Teachers", fronted by Todd Beuckens (the founder of elllo.org), followed by 10 short "elevator pitch" style open mic presenters, then followed by another two hours of discussions, networking, and socialising in the post event "cocktail lounge". The success here bodes well for future events in ways we did not consider previously, and we are, naturally, open to expressions of interest from anyone wishing to collaborate: please feel free to contact us via our official SIG webpage (https://jalt.org/groups/sigs/business-communication) anytime.

JALT's Mission

JALT promotes excellence in language learning, teaching, and research by providing opportunities for those involved in language education to meet, share, and collaborate.

使命（ミッション・ステートメント）全国語学教育学会は言語教育関係者が交流・共有・協働する機会を提供し、言語学習、教育、及び調査研究の発展に寄与します。

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JALT MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

- A professional organization formed in 1976
  - 1976年に設立された学術学会
- Working to improve language learning and teaching, particularly in a Japanese context
  -語学の学習と教育の向上を図ることを目的としています
- Almost 3,000 members in Japan and overseas
  - 国内外で約 3,000名の会員がいます

https://jalt.org

Annual International Conference

- 1,500 to 2,000 participants
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- Hundreds of workshops and presentations
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- Job Information Centre
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https://jalt.org/conference

JALT Publications

- *The Language Teacher*—our bimonthly publication
  - 隔月発行します
- *JALT Journal*—biannual research journal
  - 年2回発行します
- JALT Postconference Publication
  - 年次国際大会の研究発表記録集を発行します
- SIG and chapter newsletters, anthologies, and conference proceedings - 分野別研究部会や支部も会報、アンソロジー、研究会発表記録集を発行します

https://jalt-publications.org

JALT Community

Meetings and conferences sponsored by local chapters and special interest groups (SIGs) are held throughout Japan. Presentation and research areas include:

Bilingualism • CALL • College and university education • Cooperative learning • Gender awareness in language education • Global issues in language education • Japanese as a second language • Learner autonomy • Pragmatics, pronunciation, second language acquisition • Teaching children • Lifelong language learning • Testing and evaluation • Materials development

支部及び分野別研究部会による例会や研究会は日本各地で開催され、以下の分野での発表や研究報告が行われます。バイリンガリズム、CALL、大学外国語教育、共同学習、ジェンダーと語学学習、グローバル問題、日本語教育、自主的学習、語用論・発音・第二言語習得、児童語学教育、生涯語学教育、試験と評価、教材開発 等。

https://jalt.org/main/groups

JALT Partners

JALT cooperates with domestic and international partners, including (JALTは以下の国内外の学会と提携しています):

- AJET—The Association for Japan Exchange and Teaching
- IATEFL—International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
- JACET—The Japan Association of College English Teachers
- PAC—Pan-Asian Consortium of Language Teaching Societies
- TESOL—Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Membership Categories

All members receive annual subscriptions to *The Language Teacher* and *JALT Journal*, and member discounts for meetings and conferences. *The Language Teacher*や*JALT Journal* 等の出版物が1年間送付されます。また例会や大会に割引価格で参加できます。

- Regular 一般会員:¥13,000
- Student rate (FULL-TIME students of undergraduate/graduate universities and colleges in Japan) 学生会員(国内の全日制の大学または大学院の学生):¥7,000
- Joint—for two persons sharing a mailing address, one set of publications ジョイント会員 (同じ住所で登録する個人2名を対象とし、JALT出版物は2名に1部):¥21,000
- Senior rate (people aged 65 and over) シニア会員(65歳以上の方):¥7,000
- Group (5 or more) ¥8,500/person—one set of publications for each five members グループ会員(5名以上を対象とし、JALT出版物は 5名ごとに1部): 1名 ¥8,500

https://jalt.org/main/membership

Information

For more information please consult our website <https://jalt.org>, ask an officer at any JALT event, or contact JALT's main office.

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Joining JALT

Use the attached *furikae* form at post offices ONLY. When payment is made through a bank using the *furikae*, the JALT Central Office receives only a name and the cash amount that was transferred. The lack of information (mailing address, chapter designation, etc.) prevents the JCO from successfully processing your membership application. Members are strongly encouraged to use the secure online signup page located at:

https://jalt.org/joining.

Scott Gardner jaltpubs.tlt.old.gram@jalt.org

The Nickname of the Rose

Scott Gardner jaltpubs.tlt.old.gram@jalt.org

Let's play a little self-revelation and English conversation game I call FFP—*First Five Primes*. To play, take the first five prime numbers and attach to each one a fact, concept, or memory that is relevant to you, like this:

Scott Gardner

- 2 = ice trays in my office fridge (but no wet bar)
- 3 = times I threw up in class in elementary school
- 5 = t-shirts I own that my mother would probably disapprove of
- 7 = kilometers from my house to school
- 11 = volumes in the *Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers* series on my bookshelf (don't ask if I've read or even opened them yet)

Wasn't that fun? This game evolved from another game I made up for English classes called *Who Am I with Pi*, using the first five numbers of π (3.1415...), but that game had problems. The numbers involved were really close together, and "1" showed up twice. I finally gave up on it one day when a student looked at me earnestly before we started playing and asked, "Why *pi*?" Suddenly the whole thing seemed silly. Doing it with prime numbers allows me to spin a plausible analogy about numerical and personal "uniqueness" that makes the students feel like they're exploring something meaningful about themselves. I also prefer this new game because it "goes to 11" (if this column had clickbait capability, I'd link here to the film *This is Spinal Tap*).

Speaking of uniqueness, in the FFP list above, under "3" I could have said "nicknames I acquired before graduating high school": Scrub, Ganglia, and Grendel. My father gave me the first one, but he never told me why. For all I know it could have been because my parents used to bathe me in a mop bucket. The other two nicknames were given by classmates. "Ganglia" (literally, a group of neurons in the body) arose from a traumatic frog-dissecting experience we all shared in science class. As a nickname the correct form probably should have been

the singular *ganglion*, but who knows, maybe my friends thought of me as a grotesque, pulsing mass of nerves. To me "Grendel" was the most benign of the three. It had a nice *Grimms' Fairy Tales* feel to it, even though Grendel was actually a savage, rampaging monster in the ancient poem *Beowulf*, which we read in English class.

I think it's OK to try out nicknames with my students if I get to know them well enough. Sometimes the names stick—like with my seminar student Reo, who I call "DiCaprio", much to his liking. And sometimes they don't—like with Takayuki, who I tried to call "Takoyaki" (octopus fritter) until he said he'd been trying to escape that nickname his whole life; when I tried the more exotic sounding "Calamari", he silently turned and walked away.

One of the more pointless things you can do is try to give *yourself* a nickname. I tried this in elementary school. On the first day of sixth grade our teacher passed around self-information sheets, and one of the questions, right after "first name" and "last name", was "name you prefer to be called". On a whim, I wrote "Melvin". For the whole year, Teacher called me out with a sarcastic, drawn-out "Mel-vin!"

Nicknames don't really work when self-ascribed because they are supposed to be given to you by others to signify unique relationships, to express private knowledge of you that strangers don't have. Either that, or they emerge as the first word that comes to the mind of people who couldn't care less, like my high school art teacher who started calling me "Thumbs" after an incident on the pottery wheel. "Sukotto-chan" is a name I sometimes hear these days, one that suggests a close relationship between the speaker and me. On the other hand, "Gard-nerd"—another short-lived nickname from high school—seems to show playful teasing at best, and loathsome disdain at worst. It shouldn't surprise you that I don't like any of those names.

The more intimate the relationship, the more intimate the nickname, right? I've tried out several different pet names for my wife, but she never seems to like any of them. My personal favorite was "Sweet Potato Pie", but she just looked at me and asked, "Why pie?"

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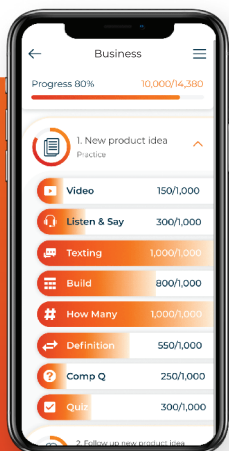
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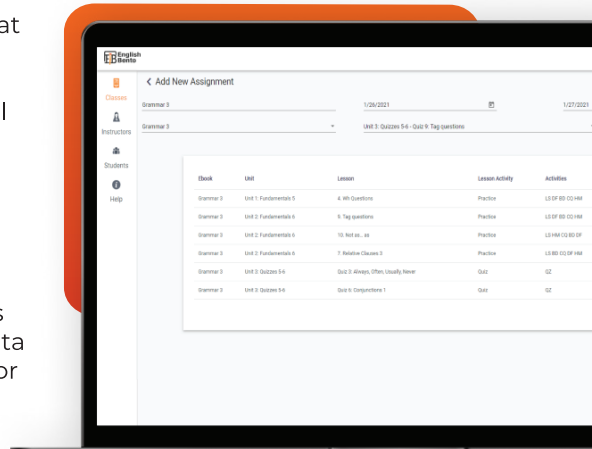
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