Ethnographic Perspectives for the Global Classroom

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This collection of teaching innovations, observations and experiences, highlights a wide range of perspectives and practices from several researchers and educators with various backgrounds. The focus will be on using ethnographic methods to describe different teaching environments clearly outlining context, methods, materials and goals. Through detailed description and examples, the authors aim to bridge the gap between theory and practice by exploring how different methods are applied to specific learning situations and extended beyond the classroom. Using ethnographic methods such as participant observation and multi-level description, the authors will focus on carefully explaining classroom specific methods which have universal application and can be adapted to different environments. Criteria to be considered in explanations includes description of learning institution and context, students background and needs, preparation and methods, rationale, short term and long term goals, outcomes and results as well as suggestions for adapting methods to other contexts. The overall purpose will be to provide educators with diverse perspectives and practical ideas which they can apply to their classes and help their students develop as communicators both inside the classroom and beyond.

Purpose: Provide a detailed description of a lesson or activity from one of your classes.

Structure:

- **Introduction**: Context, subjects, materials, (*who, what, when, where*)

- **Goals**: Purpose, rationale, relevance, pedagogy (*why*)

- **Procedure**: Preparation, planning, explanation, guidance, instructions, style, format (*how*)

- **Materials**: Examples, data, pictures, exercises, student work, methods, syllabus
- **Results and Discussion**: Reflection, feedback, outcomes, significance, conclusions

Cross Cultural Analysis of Speech Acts – Andrew Reimann

Introduction

A major challenge of foreign language teaching deals with understanding cultural differences in communication. There are limited ways to teach cultural information objectively. One of the few observable examples of cultural differences surfacing in communication, discourse analysis of Speech Acts. Much of Comparative Culture Studies or Socio Linguistics focuses on analyzing Speech Acts to discover how different people use language to communicate various meanings and social nuances in culture specific contexts. Speech Acts are the social parameters of communication and are essentially chunks of language associated with specific situations, tasks or events. Most Speech Acts reflect basic human needs and uses for language and are universal or exist across different cultures. This language is easy to translate and is usually in the form of simple greetings and requests or salutations (good morning, please, thank you, good-bye). However there are many cases where situations are culturally unique and do not exist in other cultures therefore the language nuances cannot be translated or transferred easily. As a result, awareness of the cultural interference at this level is essential for successful communication. This paper will describe problems which arise in attempting to teach, explain or translate Speech Acts out of context or without the veil of culture. Hymes (1972) proposed a taxonomy of language performance and usage focusing on the acceptability of an utterance. This report will reflect on Hymes' communicative competency methodology and model for the purpose of understanding and describing how learners of English as a foreign language in Japan develop awareness of speech act discrepancies between communicative situations and ultimately acquire the knowledge, skills and experience required to process and use unfamiliar speech acts in order to communicate more effectively.

Learning and Understanding Speech Acts

The notion of speech situations was originally described by Dell Hymes (1972) as

part of his proposal for the concept of Communicative Competence. Hymes' original idea was that speakers of a language have to have more than grammatical competence in order to be able to communicate effectively in a language; they also need to know how language is used by members of a speech community to accomplish their purposes.

This report will reflect on Hymes' (1972) communicative competency methodology and model for the purpose of understanding and describing how learners of English as a foreign language in Japan develop awareness of speech act discrepancies between communicative situations and ultimately acquire the knowledge, skills and experience required to process and use unfamiliar speech acts in order to communicate more effectively. Before exploring cross-cultural differences however, it is important, particularly with regard to English as a Global Language spoken by peoples of diverse multicultural backgrounds, to consider the following questions:

- Does an ideal speaker-hearer exist?
- Is there a homogeneous speech community?
- Does language serve any function other than communication?
- Should language exist if it has no function at all?
- Is there any linguistic structure that is not associated with language use?
- What are speech acts?
- How are they different cross culturally?
- How can speech acts be analyzed, observed and compared?
- How can speech act analysis be applied to TEFL?

Rationale: Learning English

- Japanese students enjoy English but have difficulty learning communicative skills.
- Japanese like to use English in daily life and there are many loan words in Japanese.
- (baito, mansion, sutresu, keki,) バイト、マンション、ストレス、ケーキ
- Words written in katakana add an elegant, foreign flavour to original Japanese words. (fruits/kudamono, rice/gohan, house/ie) フルーツ／果物、ライス／ご飯、ハウス／家

- 10% of the standard Japanese dictionary are foreign words most of these are English.
- 60-70% of new words added to Japanese every year are English.

Many students take an overly analytical or binary approach to language learning. Translating or relating specific words, phrases, rules or situations between two languages.

"How do you (say, spell, do…etc.) *'$#*!'* in English?"

Japanese have two main communication styles

- (Tatemae) 建前 : Overt, formal, public (soto) 外
- (Honne) 本音 : Covert, hidden, private (uchi) 内
- Most English classes in Japan are teacher or knowledge centered and based on formal (Tatemae) 建前 or (soto) 外 rules and values.
- Communicative or student centered classes, reflect (honne) 本音 or (uchi) 内 values and do not feel natural or appropriate for most Japanese.
- Learning a foreign language is more than just vocabulary, grammar and structure.
- To become good communicators, students need to learn a new culture, way of thinking and communication style.
- This includes learning how to:
- Think critically, infer meaning, ask questions, be flexible, innovative and be more **tekito** 適当
- This is very difficult to teach and to learn without actually experiencing foreign culture.

Speech Acts

- A special situation in which words are used to complete, replace or assist a specific action.
- **Greeting:**　　"Hello.", "Good morning."
- **Apologizing:**　"I'm sorry."
- **Requesting:**　"Please give me the book?"
- **Commanding:** "Close the door!"

Most speech acts reflect basic human needs and uses for language and are universal or exist across different cultures.

- Thank you = Arigato　ありがとう
- Good morning = Ohayo　おはよう
- Good Bye = Sayonara　さよなら
- Give me… = …chodai　ちょうだい

This language is easy to translate

However there are many cases where situations are culturally unique and do not exist in other cultures therefore the language nuances cannot be translated or transferred easily.

- Ganbate, 頑張って　Shoganai しょうがない
- Otskare sama　お疲れさま
- Yoroshiku onegaishimasu 宜しくお願いします
- Chotto…　ちょっと・・・
- Itadakimasu　頂きます
- Gochisosama　ごちそうさま
- Motainai　もったいない
- Sapari　さっぱり
- Natsukashi　懐かしい
- Amaeru 甘える

Hymes (1974) proposed four questions as well as an ethnographic framework for exploring communicative competence and performance:

- Is an utterance...
- **possible** (syntactically, semantically, or pragmatically)
- **feasible** through available tools and channels? (logically, physically)
- **appropriate** in relation to participants and context?
- **actually performed**, how is it received or interpreted?

SPEAKING model of speech analysis (Hymes, 1974).

- **S** - **Setting** and **Scene** - The setting refers to the time and place while scene describes the environment of the situation or type of activity. (classroom, bar, coffee shop, morning, friendly conversation)

- **P** - **Participants** - This refers to who is involved in the speech including the speaker and the audience, interviewer, caller, performer.

- **E** - **Ends** - The purpose and goals of the speech along with any outcomes, functions or effects of the speech.

- **A** - **Act Sequence** - The order of events that took place during the speech including form and content.

- **K** - **Key** - The overall key, tone, mood or manner of the speech. (serious, sarcastic, formal)

- **I** - **Instrumentalities** - The form and style of the speech being given. Channel (verbal, nonverbal, face to face, telephone, SMS,) Code (emoticons, dialect or language variety)

- **N** - **Norms** - Defines what is socially acceptable at the event, the rules that govern interaction and interpretation.

- **G** - **Genre** - The type of speech that is being given. (greeting, joke, apology, lecture)

(Hymes, Dell. *Foundations of Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1974.)

Procedure

- Research, observe, record and describe an example of language in use. (English or Japanese)

- Present results and perform the dialogue

- Is example universal or culturally specific?

- Can it be transferred or translated? Why/why not?

- Discuss implications.

Speech Situation/Language Survey Assignment

- Identify and observe and example of language.

- Analyze and describe how it is used, by whom and in what context.
- Is it used traditionally or in a new way?
- Compare any differences in terms of Syntax (Grammar), Semantics (Meaning), Phonetics (Sound/Pronunciation),

Carefully describe and record all elements of the situation using the **SPEAKING** model.

(Hymes, Dell. *Foundations of Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania

P, 1974.)

Pay special attention to the following:
- Participants including roles, gender, social status,
- Context, time, place, environment, conditions
- Function, purpose result of speech greeting, request, comment, reaction
- Frequency is this a usual or unusual example of language usage

Provide the following:
- A transcript of the observed language (what was said or exchanged)
- A detailed description of the situation and participants
- An analysis of the speech situation, including your opinion or insight into why the language is used in this way.

Ethnography of SPEAKING (students field worksheet)

Example of Language (Sample):

Genre: Type of speech act: (request, greeting, command, apology)

Description: Participants (role, gender, social status) Context (Situation, environment, location) Method (face to face, email, telephone, chat)

Communicative Goal/Purpose: (message, entertainment, relationship)

Format: (Standard, Slang, Casual, Formal, Unusual, Dialectal)

Result: (success, failure, confusion)

Research Method: (Field work, comparative analysis, observation, interview)

Comments/Summary/Analysis/Interpretation/Conclusion

Analysing speech acts helps discover how different people use language to communicate various meanings and social nuances in culture specific contexts.

Cultural Differences

Speech Act: *Relationship Building*

Japanese

- Specific phrases and rituals (よろしくお願いします) or (お疲れさま)
- Interpreted/negotiated meaning *(* どうも *…)*
- Purposefully vague indirect statements *(* ちょっと・・・ *)*

English (U.S. Canada, Australia, UK)

- Elimination of formalities (*Call me Bob.")*
- Humour *(Joke, witty observation, sarcasm, teasing, etc…)*
- Small talk/chatting (*How 'bout those Canucks eh?")*

Conclusion

By simply knowing certain expressions such as *yoroshiku onegai shimasu, please, sumimasen, excuse me* or *chotto, a little,* it is not possible to communicate appropriately or effectively. In order to understand, learners attempt to find parallel examples in their language, culture and experience, but these translations are usually either inaccurate or incorrect. Translating aisatsu as "greetings" and providing some common sample phrase may seem simple however the nuances and representations of these phrases is often not translatable. Speech acts such as greetings, salutations and requests are often the introduction to any course of foreign languages. However memorizing expressions and interpreting or using them well are quite different matters. In foreign language learning understanding the appropriateness of an utterance and knowing the time, place and occasion for speech acts is of critical importance to functioning as an intercultural communicator.

Exploring Culture Shock with Student Auto-ethnographies:
A Lesson for a Cross-cultural Communications Class
Gregory Strong, Aoyama Gakuin University,

This student auto-ethnography task is used in a cross-cultural communications class for third and fourth year university students and as such is based on a chapter from *Understanding Intercultural Communication* (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005) in which the au-

thors describe various conceptualizations of the term "culture shock." A precise definition of this term, which has long since entered common parlance, is that of "intense emotions, " behavioral confusion, and cognitive dissonance that "sojourners" (whether tourists or immigrants) experience while living or "sojourning" in a foreign culture (p. 116). Initially, culture shock is triggered by the loss of such familiar aspects of daily life as the social discourse of greetings and gestures (Bochner, 1986, p.48). The term originates with Oberg (1960), an anthropologist, who meant it to describe "the identity loss" that comes with living in a new culture and the psychological strain of adapting to it.

Yet culture shock should not be viewed entirely in negative terms. While it can lead to stress and depression, it can also promote the means for increased self-awareness, a greater understanding of one's home culture, and a greater acceptance of cultural diversity. Ting-Toomey and Chung (Ibid) also describe how the factors of personality, experience, and motivation for the sojourn all impact on an individual's experience of culture shock as well as the factor of "cultural distance" or the contrast between the sojourner's home culture and the new one (p.119). They recommend various coping strategies such as trying to learn about the new culture, keeping realistic expectations, improving one's linguistic abilities, developing one's tolerance for ambiguity, and maintaining a good social network (pp. 122, 123).

The chapter summarizes several models describing the experience of culture shock. The first of these is that of Lysgaard (1955) who proposes a U-curve model in which sojourners initially experience a "honeymoon phase" in which everything about the new culture is attractive, followed by a stressful, depressing phase in which the differences between their home culture and the new one seem overwhelming, and finally, the period when sojourners adjust to their new environment. Gullahorn (1963) extends the concept into a six-stage W-shaped model with honeymoon, hostility, humorous, at-home, reentry culture shock, and resocialization stages. Finally, Ting-Toomey and Ching (Ibid) enlarge the model to include a seventh stage describing a mid-point in a sojourner's adjustment process when the individual feels ambivalent about returning to his or her home country because it will mean losing the new culture (pp. 127-132). This new model is the "Revised W-Shaped Adjustment Model" shown in Fig. 1 with the y-axis indicating "Low Satisfaction" to "High

Satisfaction" to describe a sojourner's emotions and the x-axis shows the time period (ie. a few days to a few months) over which these feelings occur.
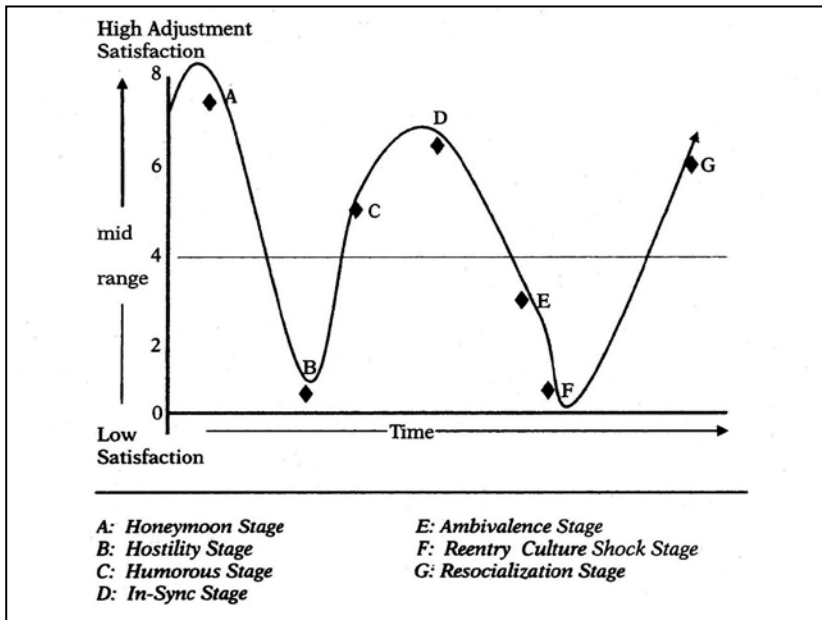

Fig. 1 Revised W-Shaped Adjustment Model (Ting-Toomey and Chung, 2005, p. 127)

Ting-Toomey and Chung include descriptions of how the sojourner feels at each of the seven stages. For example, at the hostility stage, a sojourner is often frustrated by his or her inability to accomplish things that would be easy to do in their home culture while at the humorous stage, the sojourner begins to feel a greater sense of comfort and can see their life more objectively, even finding humor in some of their new experiences. The W-Shaped Revised Adjustment Model also includes the two final stages when sojourners return to his or her native environment and finds it different to what he or she had remembered while at the same time the sojourner may feel a sense of alienation and grief at the loss of the relationships left behind in the new environment. The authors conclude that although these developmental models have limitations in describing the very dynamic process of culture shock, such models are invaluable. They enable us to better understand the range of emo-

tions that sojourners experience in a foreign culture.

In the Classroom:

The student auto-ethnography is a task-based lesson that takes place over three classes; in this case, as part of a seminar on intercultural communication of some 25 university students in the junior and senior years of their undergraduate degrees. The first class starts with the teacher outlining the chapter by providing onscreen projections of the text in order to highlight key vocabulary, concepts, and figures in the chapter, thereby providing an "advance organizer" to aid the students in reading the chapter as it will be assigned as homework. In addition, several general comprehension questions are assigned which will later be collected and marked. In order to ensure that students read the chapter, the teacher gives a paper-and-pencil quiz (requiring sentence definitions of about 10 key vocabulary words) at the beginning of the second class. Further activities in the first lesson include showing students a series of cartoons and scenes from videos illustrating aspects of culture shock. These include the initial culture shock experienced by the aboriginal children apprehended from their home and taken to a Catholic mission school in Western Australia in the 1930s as depicted in *A Rabbit-Proof Fence* and also the "reverse culture shock" experienced by the homesick protagonist in the animated film, *Persepolis* who has been studying in Europe and returns to her native Iran only to find a stultifying and repressive Islamic culture.

The Auto-Ethnography Task:

Once the students have a broad conceptual understanding of the term culture shock and of the Revised W-Shaped Adjustment Model, the graph shown in Fig. 1 serves as a template for their individual auto ethnographies. As homework assigned for the third class, each student in the course graphs their personal experience of culture shock; this might be the experience of living abroad, or merely visiting abroad; or if the student lacks these experiences, that of moving from another city in Japan to Tokyo, or at last resort, a visit to an unfamiliar part of Japan. Students can also personalize their graphs by incorporating emoticons to show different points on the graph and by adding thumbnail photographs of landmarks or

friends or incidents.

Although each graph will assume a rough w-shape, there will be considerable indi-
vidual variation in their shapes depending on how quickly the students adjusted to their new
environments and how much trouble they had in returning to their home country. This is
shown in Fig. 2, in which an American foreign student in the class graphed her experience
as a high school exchange student. She had a longer honeymoon period than the one de-
scribed in the model, experienced less hostility, felt more depressed about returning home,
and took a longer period to re-socialize to her own culture.

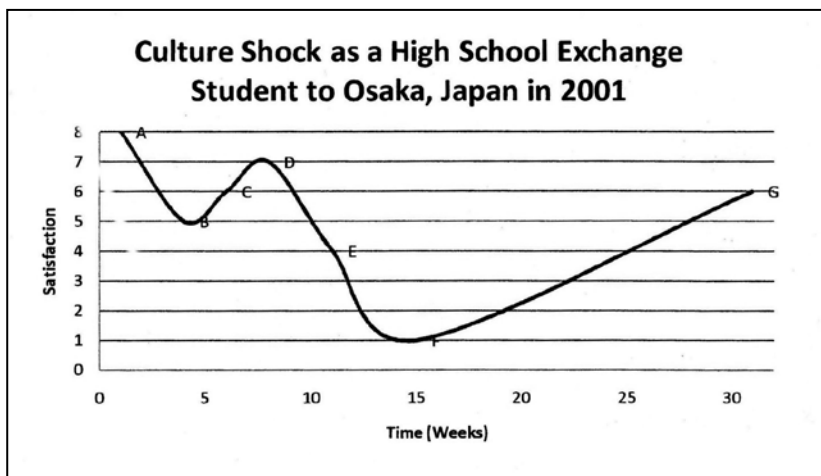## Culture Shock as a High School Exchange Student to Osaka, Japan in 2001

Fig. 2 Exchange Student: Revised W-Shaped Adjustment Model (After Ting-Toomey
and Chung, 2005, p. 127)

In addition to preparing a graph, students are required to complete some reflective
writing, creating a paragraph describing their emotional state at each of the seven stages.
For example, in one assignment in my class, a Japanese student who had spent one year in
Canada describing her honeymoon stage wrote, "Even detergent boxes and food packages
reminded me that I was abroad and made me happy," while in the hostility stage, she noted,
"I had a car accident, but couldn't negotiate with the insurance company because of my
poor English." She recovered her sense of equilibrium later in her humorous stage when
she described returning home from school only to find an eviction notice under her door
because she had forgotten to pay a month's rent: "I kind of laughed, thinking Canadians are

usually slow to act, but when it comes to payment, they are quick to take action. New things happened every day, but I was no longer too sensitive to each incident."

Another Japanese student, one sojourning in Australia for one year, found that her hostility phase was triggered because she had trouble getting an internet connection to contact her friends and family back in Japan, but this was overcome within a few months and she experienced the "in sync stage" when she found she was more comfortable living in Sydney, "got used to the Aussie accent" and "stopped comparing Australia with Japan." Of course, the experience of culture shock is certainly not confined to Japanese students. An American exchange student in the class recalled her experience of culture shock while sojourning in Japan during a high school student exchange (See Fig. 2). During her honeymoon stage, she wrote "Everything in Japan is shiny and new!" while during her humorous stage, she found that she could get away with breaking the school rules such as not eating during class, "When my teacher got upset, I offered her a bite and she accepted." She wrote of her re-entry culture shock back in the U.S., that "There, I realized that everybody looks the same. All the guys are wearing baggy jeans, Abercrombie and Fitch of American Eagle T-shirts and baseball caps" and when she reached the re-socialization stage, she endured a "deep depression that lasted several months."

After students bring their graphs and reflective writing to class, they share these auto-ethnographies with three or four other students in a small group. New groups are formed so that students retell these same stories and present their graphs to other students in the class. This is done three or four times with different groups, to promote student oral fluency and in order to bring the concept home to the class. Alternately, if there is not enough time for several re-tellings, each small group can nominate the person with the most interesting graph to share their auto-ethnography with the rest of the class. Lastly, the assignment is graded by the teacher.

Students all respond very favorably to this activity. It was developed with students at an intermediate level of language ability, but it can also be adapted to students at lower levels of language ability by waiving the writing part of the task. Student auto-ethnographies help students to apply concepts of intercultural communication to their own lives, and therefore to improve their understanding of their experiences. It also encourages self-

reflection and critical thinking among students as well.

Putting the GLOBE into the global classroom

Gregory O'Dowd, Hamamatsu University School of Medicine

Introduction

For Japanese university students to step closer to becoming "internationalized" and true global citizens, it is first necessary to raise their awareness of the world they live in. I have often been surprised by the "gaps" in students' knowledge of the world and the various people who live in it, as well as the various vague stereotypes of other nationalities they hold. To remedy this situation and help better prepare my students for their entry into the big, wide world, I put together a series of lesson elements based on the world map. I called it, "Putting the Globe into the global classroom". The lesson elements are imbedded in a series of class activities and are designed for students working in small groups. The purpose of these activities is to:

(1) build the students' awareness of the countries on the planet they live on,

(2) expose the gaps in their awareness and current thinking about countries,

(3) improve their understanding of the many countries that exist,

(4) develop a spirit of enquiry, and

(5) foster positive values in a balanced and integrated approach to produce a better global citizen.

In this paper I will outline the step-by-step approach I have implemented in my classroom to foster not just greater geographic literacy but to enhance students' sense of the world and build skills to make them better informed global citizens ready to interact with the world.

Stages

1. Ask students how many countries there are and let them guess

How many countries in the world are there? It is a basic question that few know the answer to; indeed, it is not as simple as it may seem as the answer depends on many factors such as diplomatic recognition, membership of recognized organizations and world bodies, etc.. How is a country defined? The Cambridge International Dictionary of English[1] defines a

country as "an area of land which forms or might form an independent political unit with its own government." I add that a country can be recognized when it has defined boarders, a population, a national flag, a head of state, a national anthem, its own currency, ethnic links, is able to defend its own boarders, a political system, a legal system, and historical links of people to a specific location.

As of May 2008[2,3], the United Nations has 192 members, not including the Vatican, and it doesn't give separate recognition to England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as these are recognized as parts of the seat given to the United Kingdom. The United States of America recognizes 194 independent countries around the world, but this recognition reflects the political agenda of the US Department of State. However, I made a list of all the countries that currently exist as well as areas that are in dispute (e,g, including Tibet and Palestine but excluding an independent Kurdish state) and came up with a final number of 259

As for my students, they started with guesses of 30, then 50, and then slowly worked their way up (with my encouragement and hints) until one student hit the figure of 192.

2. Draw map of the world free-hand

Next, I gave the students a sheet of blank A3 paper and instructed them to draw a map of the world (without peeking at their textbook or dictionaries or the students' maps around them). Many students start by drawing Japan in the top center and then include North America, Asia, Africa and Europe. All students included Australia (as that is where I am from) but their knowledge of the southern Pacific is scant as is their knowledge of the India and Middle East which was almost universally absent from their depictions. Their notions of where countries were place was somewhat skewed.

3. Write the names of as many countries on the map as they can think of

After drawing their world map, I asked them to write on their map the names of as many countries as they could think of. Now they started to realize that their maps were lacking; some students began to redraw parts of their maps to accommodate country names. This activity also required the students to think about clusters of countries as well as countries neighboring others.

Next, students re asked to list on the reverse side of their map all the countries in alpha-

betical order, from A through to Z. In this activity, the students first listed countries by themselves and when they had finished they could compare their list with their group members and add to their own lists. I then asked the students to call out the names of countries in each alphabetic category and to add names not on their own lists; the students are reminded that although previous answer to the question of how many countries there were was 192, in actual fact it was possible to add countries names all the way to 259.

1. 4. Ask students to:

> *(1)name 3 countries they would like to visit and explain why*
>
> *(2)name 3 countries they would NOT like to visit and explain why*
>
> *(3)list 5 countries they didn't know previously*

In this stage, I want to bring to the surface some of the students' thinking about various countries. I prepared a handout asking them to (1) name the three countries they would like to visit and explain why they would like to go there, (2*)* name the three countries they would not like to visit and explain why, and (3) list five countries they didn't know previously (referring to the list they made in class) but would like to know more about. In this activity, students revealed how they thought about various countries and showed some of their beliefs about why they perceive some countries as "good" or "bad" as well as stereotypes.

5. Research a country they didn't know previously

From their list of five countries they didn't previously know about, I ask students to choose one country and do some research on it. I ask them to complete a list of information needed (Appendix 1) and be ready in the next class to tell their group members about that country. In this way, each group member can teach the others about a new country and add to their collective knowledge[4,5]. Next, I ask one member from each group to visit another group and tell others about their country; this expands the circle of knowledge further. All students are encouraged to ask questions about the country being presented.

6. Get information (free pamphlets) from travel companies and make a poster

Next I ask students to collect information about a country they would now like to visit, either from their previous list of three or a new country that interests them. In particular, I ask them to visit travel companies and collect free pamphlets on their country of interest. For some countries this is very easy, but students may find it difficult to get information on

traveling to other countries. Students can gain a lot of information about countries by mining the pamphlets. With their new information, I ask students to make an A3 sized poster about their country, utilizing images, photos and information available to travelers, and then to add information from their own research.

7. Share their new information with group members by presenting their poster

When their posters are ready, the students present their posters first to their group members who should also ask additional questions. Then, one member from each group then visits other groups and presents their poster to again expand the students' exposure to more information.

8. Present students with country categories and have them write the names of 3 countries in each category in their notebook

In this stage, I ask students to reveal how they think about various other countries. On the blackboard I present them with a variety of headings (rich, poor, strong, weak, best, worst, beautiful, and surprise) and ask each student to write the name of three countries under each heading in their own notebook. Then students were asked to show their lists to the group members and give reasons for their choices.

9. Ask students to contribute names to each category on the blackboard and be ready to explain why they think that country belongs there

Students were next invited to volunteer to write a county name under the heading on the blackboard as long as they can give a reason for writing it there (Appendix 2). This allowed us to hear about the way students thought about the countries written on the board and allowed some stereotypes to be uncovered.

10. Ask all students to contribute comment about the countries on the board.

With certain stereotypes now uncovered, I could ask the class what they thought about such images and then help dispel negative or discuss overly-positive stereotypes.

11. Show the students newspaper articles with small regional maps showing locations.

Finally, I bring to the students' attention the fact that maps can be found in a variety of places that help their understanding of world events. In particular, newspapers and magazines often print stories accompanied by maps of country locations and local areas to aid understanding.

Survey

At the end of the series of global activities, I asked my students to complete a simple feedback survey with three questions. All twenty-five students returned the survey form and the results are as below:

1. What did you like best about this activity?

drawing the world map = 5   listing the countries = 3

discussing countries with my group = 5   getting information about new places = 12

2. What did you learn doing this activity?

learning about the world map = 2   learning about countries = 30

learning about new cultures = 9   learning about new places = 7

3. Do you think it helped your English study?

No = 2   A little = 5   Yes = 12   Yes, a lot = 6

Overall, I believe these survey results indicate that the activities achieved my stated goals as well as helping the students' English ability to express themselves and their ideas.

Conclusion

The activities described here enable students to build a better understanding of other countries and societies literally from the ground up. Introducing them to the map of the world is a good starting point and a valuable teaching tool for both conveying information and peeking students' interest to learn more about other countries. On the whole, I believe these activities were successful in raising the students' awareness of the globe they occupy with rest of humanity and may provide a firmer basis for their future contacts abroad.

Appendix 1

English IV - English for the International Workplace

Name:……………………….….   Student # ………………………….. Group #…….

1. Country   …………………………………………………………………

2. Area …………………………………………………………………………

3. Population   ………………………………………………………………

4. System of Government   …………………………………………………

5. Head of State   ……………………………………………………………

6. Currency ……………………………………………………………………

7. Exchange rate ………………………………………………………………

8. Ethnicity ……………………………………………………………………

9. Language ……………………………………………………………………

10. Religion   …………………………………………………………………

11. Capital ……………………………………………………………………

12. Major cities ………………………………………………………………

13. GDP ……………………………………………………………………

14. GDP per capita ……………………………………………………………

15. Products & Resources ……………………………………………………

16. Exports …………………………………………………………………

17. Imports …………………………………………………………………

18. Popular foods ……………………………………………………………

19. Popular drinks ……………………………………………………………

20. Tourist sites ………………………………………………………………

21. Other information   ………………………………………………………

National Anthem   ……………………………………………………………

Flag

Country Rankings - Student responses

Rich	Poor	Strong	Weak	Best	Worst	Beautiful	Surprise
America	Haiti	USA	Iraq	Denmark	Iraq	Australia	China
Arab	DPRK	China	Yemen	Italy	USA	France	Sweden
China	Japan	Russia	Japan	Japan	DPRK	Italy	Peru
Germany	S.Korea	Germany	Philippines	France	Congo	Greece	Zimbabwe
Spain	Afghan	UK	Taiwan	Spain	Cuba	Spain	Oman
Denmark	Congo	Spain	Vietnam	Australia	Iran	NZ	Singapore
Saudi	Iraq	Brazil	Iceland	Canada	Israel	Swiss	Kiribati
UAE	Kenya	Portugal	Italy	Sweden	Thai	Denmark	Palau
Italy	Cambodia	France	S.Africa	UK	Pakistan	Finland	Tonga
Sweden	Jamaica	Japan	Cuba	Singapore	Bangladesh	UK	Russia

Introducing multicultural concepts to Japanese university students

Robert McLaughlin Tokoha Gakuen University

Background:

   The following activities were trialed at Yazaki Corporation, a major Japanese automotive R&D and manufacturing corporation. Yazaki employs over 140,000 people in more than 35 countries. From 1998 until the present, Yazaki has had an overseas "cross-cultural training program" for its "freshman" employees. The program is now a year-long one, and has been the focus of a five-page article in a 2009 issue of Japan's largest business oriented magazine, The Nikkei Business Weekly.   The program's aims were to immerse these " students" in job-shadowing and volunteer activities in one of several countries; Canada, the U.S., and Australia. The students were also placed in homestay situations, which often changed over the course of the one-year.   The students were required to write personal journals to reflect on their problems, challenges (and solutions to these) and to submit them to the staff of Yazaki to read and analyze. Important comments were translated into English and compiled.   The students of the program also had both Japanese and foreign-

national counsellors to guide them through their challenges. In addition, the activities described herein were developed at the faculty of Foreign Languages in Tokoha Gakuen University and were applied to students who had been to Canada for homestay and study abroad programs.

Due to these factors (and others), the methods were developed to showcase the concept of multiculturalism, and the growth of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual societies such as Canada, the US, Australia and several European nations. Based on the direct experience with Japanese university students while overseas and the apparent need for programs such as the one used by the Yazaki Corporation, it appears that Japanese university students in general have a very narrow or limited understanding of the developments that accompany the open-door policies on immigration that the countries mentioned above have in place. As a result, students expectations of, for example, who Canadians (or Americans, Australians, etc.) are, and what ethnic background their homestay family or work colleagues will have, are often based on out-dated images and/or stereotypes.

Students are generally completely unaware of the hard data on immigration, and have perceptions of foreign countries based on out-dated images and or the stereotypes presented in the popular media or even in the textbooks used in English classes themselves, such as Eigo Note and the Sunshine English series. This has led to increased culture shock and other negative results.

Materials/Procedure/Activities

As the organiztions in which these activities were developed send many of their students and employees to study in Canada, in particular at the University of Victory in Canada, the general focus of lessons is on Canada. The Embassy of Canada has provided a generous supply of hard data on Canada with bilingual maps and handouts. Having raw numbers in Japanese allows the students to quickly attend to the tasks in the lessons, without stumbling over the conversion of "thousands" and "millions" to their Japanese equivalents. Maps provided by the Canadian Embassy also show Canada's major first languages (English, French, German, Italian, and Chinese) and their relative number of speakers. This impresses quickly on the students the sheer numbers that often counter their assumptions that

Canada is a "white" country populated by English speakers. After this, a two-page essay on the Vancouver Olympics and Multiculturalism taken from an in-house journal "Cultural Studies", written by a professor well-known to the students was used to give a short, but succinct introduction to the topic, from the perspective of a Japanese viewer of the Olympics taken aback by the diversity shown among the athletes and the audience and, notably by members of the Canadian government in attendance.

Next, after the key points from the short article were summarized in English by the students,   and in order to facilitate an accurate picture of immigration and the process thereof (and to later relate this to developments in Japan), key words and relevant terms are used in the following group activity;

Activity One: Match the vocabulary on the left with its definition (that is, from a Canadian view) on the right. Please do this with a partner or in groups of 3-4. Raise your hand if you have any questions.

A. A Canadian	1. An immigrant who has received legal permission to stay in Canada (i.e., A "landed immigrant) or an immigrant who has settled permanently in Canada but has not yet become a citizen.
B. A Migrant Worker	
	2. Persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasians in race (i.e., non-white in colour)
C. A Foreign National (A "foreigner") [rarely used]	3. A person outside of his country who unable or unwilling to return home because of fear of persecution/imprisonment etc., [such people may become Canadians if their fear is based on fact]
D. An Immigrant	
	4. A non-citizen who will stay in another country but plans to return to their original country after some time.
E. A Permanent Resident	
	5. A person born in Canada or who has received a certificate of citizenship
F. A Refugee	
	6. Anyone who is not a Canadian or a permanent resident
G. A Visible Minority	7. A person who has moved to another country for the purpose of becoming a citizen of that country

Activity Two: Matching People with Status of Citizenship. Here, students are given names, data of several notable Canadians, such as the former Governor General Michaelle Jean (born in Haiti), Adrian Clarkson, Jim Carrey, David Suzuki, Joy Kogawa, MP Bev Oda, hockey star Paul Tetsuhiko Kariya, and fictitious persons (e.g., tourists, students,) and members of the presenter's own family. The students must match the above terms with the persons, both in their former and present positions relative to their citizenship status in Canada. This not only allows students to use the key words in a meaningful, context-driven way, but also imparts to the students how immigrants to Canada are part of the social fabric, including in the areas of government, entertainment and business, etc.

   The class then views a short slideshow presentation which roughly overviews the official Canadian approach to multiculturalism, most notably; the official declaration of Canada as multicultural country in the Canadian Constitution, a review of pertinent statistics (e.g., 58% of immigrants are from Asia) and Canada's overt promotion of immigration.   This leads to the third activity;

Activity Three: Discussion on the possible impact of mass immigration on Canadian society.

   In this activity, students work in pairs or groups of three to four to brainstorm on how a history of immigration, and the current statistics have effected Canada. Key words are written on the screen, such as "food, festivals, schools, religion, language" etc. During this time, the teacher can walk among the groups and facilitate discussion and prompt ideas.   After 10 minutes, more slides are shown with images of displaying diversity, e.g. Canadian police officers of Sikh heritage wearing turbans, temples and shrines, a teachers meeting from Toronto (in which the majority of teachers are members of a visible minority) etc. The students then watch a short video produced the Toronto Municipal Government, titled "Toronto's Multicultural Road", available on *YouTube* at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xNWX8YcuII. This 2 minute video succinctly shows the day-to-day life of Toronto's Koreatown, Chinatown and Little Italy. The video is quite accessible to students and uses several of the key words covered to in the previous activities.

The students then have time to reorganize their notes and resume their discussion from the

beginning of this activity.

Activity Four: Ethnographic Study—The Story of One Immigrant To Canada from Obachan's Garden.

This activity is simply to develop empathy with immigrants and further the students' interest in the topic, before discussing Japan's issues with immigration. Obachan's Garden is a film by director Linda Ohama, and is a documentary focusing on the life of her grandmother. The film uses dramatization of Ms. Ohama's Grandmother and her early days in Canada, and interviews (conducted in Japanese).

After viewing several of the key sections of the films, in particular the interviews with the elderly grandmother, the students are asked to discuss and then report the struggles the woman had, and how her current life as a Canadian is shown in the film. This also gives the students a chance to ask questions to the instructor.

Activity Five: Selected Readings on Japan—A pre-discussion Activity.

Though several ESL texts, particularly those geared towards Japanese students, feature chapters on diversity, multiculturalism and immigration to Japan, it was found that two books are outstanding in their approach to the topic; *Keywords for Japan Today*, by Paul Stapleton (Cengage Learning) and *Japan Faces the 21ˢᵗ Century* by Asama, Sheftall and Boyce (Eihosha Press) . The students have now broached the concepts of multiculturalism and immigration on a national, historic, visual and personal level, and are more ready to apply the concept to Japan. The readings are short, precise and ask questions of the reader rather than proselytise the ideas. Such neutral viewpoints are essential to present a balanced view to students in order to lead to a discussion.

Final Activity: Student-lead Interviews—Personal Views and Opinions on Immigration and Migrant Workers in Japan.

Using words and concepts from the activities and instruction, the students engage in interviews in which they exchange ideas and discuss pros and cons to the current situation in Japan.   The interview sheet consists of 10 questions with a final two questions to be

added by the individual interviewers. The questions are largely opinion oriented and neutral in tone, e.g. "what could be the benefits of immigration to Japan?", "what are some challenges that immigrants to Japan could face?", and "Have you considered immigrating to another country?".

Conclusion

In the two sessions, in which these methods and activities were used, the students were responsive and communicative. Without the lengthy, though varied introductory activities, the final activity has shown mixed results with many students unable to respond to the questions, even having read the articles mentioned above. By including the visual prompts, data, and ethnographic portrayal of, and interview with, a Japanese-Canadian immigrant, the students have much greater understanding of multiculturalism and its outcomes. Moreover, they show greater empathy of immigrants and seem willing to discuss the idea of immigration more readily.

Mini Lectures in Content Courses

- Barnaby Ralph: Tokyo Woman's Christian University

Introduction

One of the issues that many Japanese students in Departments of English Literature often have to deal with as they progress through their undergraduate degrees is attending lectures in English. This can be extremely difficult. Imagine, if you can, ninety minutes of rapid, high-level discussion in a second language, all with the fear that an imperfect understanding will lead to failing the subject (Rubin, 1994: 200). Then imagine that this happens several times a week over the course of a year or two.

For the last few years, I have been developing a series of classes based on a 'mini-lecture' format. The idea is that students are given short lectures, which they are allowed to discuss briefly afterwards in small groups. Then, the lecture is repeated and they have to answer a series of focus questions designed to help them internalize the core information from the session. Students do not need anything more than a pencil and a piece of paper. Difficult words or obscure names are usually written on the blackboard to give a sort of

framework of key terms to which they can refer. Generally, two lectures of five to ten minutes each, with each one repeated, are sufficient for a ninety-minute class when discussion time, clarification and follow-up activities are included.

In ethnographic terms (following the broader definition offered by Nunan (1992: 64-68, cited in Corbett 2003: 96) and others), this methodology has been developed following observation of a variety of teaching and learning styles in Japan. It draws upon core skills that Japanese students both have developed in the past and will need for the future in their university studies (for an example of a similar process in English/Spanish, see Berne, 1995: 320). Additionally, there is an element of the cross-cultural in the delivery of mini-lectures. The 'lecture/note/revise' format is familiar to the vast majority of university graduates whose degrees were taken in English-speaking countries. For many, this information is being imparted to the students in the same way that the teacher was likely to have received it – and in the same language. Finally, the use of mini-lectures enables the delivery of both a depth of information and its retention that has significant advantages.

Goals

As noted, this activity is intended to increase familiarity with lectures in English and allow students to develop the core skills that they need. These include the ability to distinguish important points and main ideas from more general discussion, learning how to take useful notes and, finally, exploring a range of effective follow-up activities. It also aids in building a group identity, which is an important part of class morale (Spielman and Radnofsky, 2001: 264).

Unlike almost every other course I teach, I do allow students to speak in Japanese in groups after their first time through a lecture. There is a considerable amount of discussion in the literature about the effect of first or second language on information retention in the long term, and it is difficult to be sure of the best approach to take, but my experience is that allowing a regulated, timed amount of L1 interaction has several positive effects. In the first place, it encourages knowledge transfer, in that the students may already have learned some of the information given in my lectures in their other Japanese-language classes. Allowing them to relate new information to an already familiar framework is useful in terms

of building a structured understanding of core material. Secondly, students have a tendency to slip into Japanese when stressed. By allowing this but limiting its scope, it is more likely that they will try harder to work in English for the remainder of the class period. Finally, a number of studies suggest that L1 glossing can have a positive effect on long-term information retention, as long as it is structured and contextualized appropriately (see, for example, Yoshi, 2006).

Procedure

In order for this type of class to be undertaken, obviously the first thing needing to be done is the writing of the mini-lecture itself. I have included one on the handout, along with some questions and will discuss it later.

Essentially, the procedure is as follows:

Brief students on note-taking skills

If this is the first time students have done an activity of this type in English, cover the essential points of effective noting – use clear keywords, do not attempt to transcribe whole sentences, listen carefully for the main ideas, make sure not to waste time labouring over a point and possibly miss something else…

Create small groups of three or four

Again, trial and error shows that this number is ideal for Japanese students. If the groups are any larger, often either one student will dominate or silence will ensue. If there are pairs, inequalities in comprehension ability have no chance of being equalled out.

Deliver the lecture the first time

My lectures average 5-7 minutes for first-year students, and up to 15-20 minutes for fourth-year students. Speaking speed also varies depending on the general English level of the group.

Allow 5-7 minutes for discussion and note checking

As noted perviously, I usually allow the students to use Japanese here. This is a personal choice, and not essential to the process. I would be interested in your opinions or feedback

on at the end of the session. 5-7 minutes is optimal in my experience for information sharing without too many digressions. During this time, I walk around and answer questions or clarify points.

Give focus questions

I prepare a handout with several focus questions of varying depth and complexity. They can be simply comprehension questions or can ask the student to express an opinion about the information given. Essentially, these questions cover the main things that I wish the students to remember – the framework on which they can hang their comprehension.

Deliver the lecture a second time

Again, this can be varied for class level. For lower-level English speakers, it is often better simply to repeat exactly as before, but, for higher levels, one can restate, expound and even digress. This can aid in information contextualization.

Allow 5-7 minutes for focus question answers

As before, this is a good amount of time for groups to work together without going off on a tangent.

Check answers in plenary

I often get groups to elect a spokesperson to give their answers, but there are other ways to elicit information.

Materials

A sample mini-lecture given to first-year students in a Reading course, along with the focus questions that groups must answer is included. This particular lecture is delivered in five to seven minutes. Experience suggests that this seems to be an optimal length for the majority of students. As you can see, however, the material presented is quite complex. The students who receive this particular material belong to an English Department, but their level is fairly intermediate.

These students receive four lectures in total, delivered over two weeks. They range from the material in the sample lecture through to poststructural thought, introducing a number of central ideas in context. None of the ideas are covered in depth. For first year students, the plan is to demystify key terminology that they will encounter in later years and to

give them the experience of dealing with a difficult lecture in English. For more advanced students, they have to go away and answer some further focus questions, for which they will need to do extra reading. Fourth-year students are also usually given a 3-6 page reading a week before the class and have to answer some discussion questions about it as a pre-lecture warm up activity.

In all of the courses using mini-lectures, students will have to draw on the information received to complete other tasks. In the Cultural Studies course, students spend their first semester developing a sound background knowledge of the main schools of critical theory. In the second semester, they must choose one or more theoretical models as the basis for their graduation thesis. Students who study Classical Rhetoric for a semester go on to take part in debates and deliver orations in various styles in the second semester. Finally, Reading students use elements of literary theory when preparing their book reports. This not only helps them understand the lecture material and develop their critical skills, but also acts as an additional shield against plagiarism.

Results and Discussion

There are two types of results to consider in this final section. First of all is the retention of information. After delivery, throughout the semester lesson points can be related to the lecture material in order to contextualize it and to help the students remember. In the case of longer lecture courses, links to earlier topics can be included in order to attempt to create continuity. At the end of the semester, the information is tested. So far, this has been via exams. Students have only their notes and those of their friends to work from when studying. It is not uncommon to see them forming informal study groups to help each other. Personally, I deliberately do not tell them exactly what form the test will take in order to encourage them to take a holistic approach. The only time students have failed such a test so far has been when they did not attend the lectures in the first place for whatever reason. In almost all cases, information retention is excellent in terms of key concepts, and most students can elaborate to some degree.

The second thing to consider in terms of results is feedback from the students themselves. Like many teachers, I conduct informal feedback sessions at several points through-

out the semester. This helps me fine-tune my course to the needs of the class. Overwhelmingly, the consensus among students is that the mini-lectures are difficult but valuable. A key question is "If you were the teacher, what would you keep in this course for next year and what would you take out?" Mini-lectures are frequently mentioned as worth keeping and, in fact, are sometimes even given first place. I have never had a student suggest that they should be abandoned.

The lectures are short, but students retain the main points for a long time. Think back to your own undergraduate work – if you remembered more than three or four main points per lecture, you're probably well ahead of the curve. Ironically, perhaps, if I go back to lecturing in an English-speaking country, this is a technique I may well keep using.

Appendix: Sample mini-lecture and focus questions

Lecture One: Literary Theory

What is 'Literary Theory'? In essence, it is the theory of how to examine, evaluate and understand works of literature. A literary theorist can analyse a piece of writing, looking for symbols, connections with other works and so on – many of which are things we have been examining in this course so far. Literary theory tells us something about how writing is constructed and why it is effective, as well as helping us to understand what things actually mean. It is a complex and constantly evolving area.

Literary theory really began with Plato and Aristotle, the Greek scholars and philosophers. Plato argued in *The Republic* that literature should be moral and used to advance society. He believed that there was absolute right and absolute wrong, along with ideal, or perfect forms of things, and that good literature was that which helped society become better.

Aristotle was famous for categorizing things, or putting information into groups, and his techniques have become the basis for the way that people in Western society think

and write about the world. One of his important books is called *The Poetics*. This short book is a discussion of early literature, focussing on plays. In it, Aristotle spends a lot of time looking at 'serious' writing, and is interested mostly in Greek tragedy. A 'tragedy' is a sad work, where something bad happens to the characters. One famous example is *Romeo and Juliet*, by Shakespeare, where the main characters die at the end. Aristotle said that tragedy had to make the audience feel pity and fear - pity for the characters and fear that something similar might happen to them.

Aristotle discussed a number of elements that tragedy needed in order to be effective. There are many of these, so I shall concentrate only on the main elements. First of all, a tragedy had to include a 'tragic fall'. This meant that a character or characters had to be in a good, or a high position and then fall to a low one. In the play *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles, the main character, Oedipus, becomes the king of Thebes after killing the old king in a fight. He then marries the queen and is happy in his high position. At the end of the play, however, he finds out that the old king was his father and the queen is his mother, so he has done a terrible thing. He scratches out his own eyes and falls from his high position. This is an example of a tragic fall.

Another important element in Aristotle's idea of tragedy is 'catharsis', which is a great release of powerful emotion. In Greek, this term means 'to make something pure', so it is a way to deal with something terrible emotionally. In *Oedipus Rex*, the cathartic moment is when Oedipus destroys his own eyes as a way of showing how strongly he feels about what has happened.

Irony is also very important. 'Irony' is a reversal. It is a difficult term to understand. In *Oedipus Rex*, the irony is that Oedipus cannot understand that the situation in which he finds himself is a bad one. Teiresias, an old, blind man, can see that something is wrong, however. Oedipus is proud, and is rude to the old man, but, when he realises Teiresias was right all along, pulls out his own eyes. The irony is that the blind man could 'see' the problem, but that the sighted man could not. Once he was blind, however, Oedipus became able to 'see'.

Aristotle did not deal with comedy. This has led many to conclude that Aristotle did not

consider it to be good literature. Some critics, however, think that he did write about good comedy, but that this book has been lost.

Lecture One Questions:

    1) What did Plato think about literature?

    2) Do you agree or disagree?

    3) Why is Aristotle famous?

    4) What are the parts of tragedy and their definitions?

    5) Can you think of a famous tragic story, movie or play? What are the tragic elements?

Human Sculpting in Japanese EFL   J. Dujmovich, Aichi University

Introduction: Human sculpting is a theatrical improvisation technique that can be used in your English language class to draw out participant's creative energy, lead into nonverbal communication modules, and increase collaboration between participants. The activity itself is simple, however the teaching technique requires delicate control and careful, well-thoughtout guidance. In the activity participants use their body to create a sculpture, the entire group becomes one sculpted collage.

Goals: The goals of Human Sculpting are threefold;

i.) To unlock imagination and promote creativity.

ii.) To build empathy and perspective-shifting skills, both important elements of good cross-cultural communication.

iii.) For English Foreign Language (EFL) learners to synthesize their learning in an authentic communication context.

Procedure:

    Any teacher planning on using this Human Sculpting technique should be aware of the emotional and physical demands this exercise makes on participants. It is vital that the instructor create a safe, encouraging, and open atmosphere prior to, during, and following this exercise. As well, the lead into Human Sculpting is critical and should act as a buffer to the activity to which an assessment can be made on whether the group is capable to proceed

with Human Sculpting or not. There are several ways to lead into this activity, one that I use frequently involves unlocking creativity using every day inanimate objects. An object is placed in the center of the room with participants encircling it leaving nothing between the participants and the object. The instructor then offers an opportunity for participants to come forth and demonstrate "different or unusual" uses for the object, transforming that object into something else. For example a pencil may become a stir stick, back scratcher, or even a hat, no idea is rejected. Key to the success of this entry activity is to allow time for participants to connect with their ideas and build confidence in their ability to share those ideas. Once several objects have been offered, and there is good participation flow, it becomes possible to shift gears into Human Sculpting.

1.) Choose a theme and a keyword that the group is familiar with, an example would be using the keyword "healthy" for a group of nurses who have recently completed a study unit on nutrition. Explain to the participants the rules of the activity, that they may enter the circle at anytime and pose. Participants must hold their pose until instructed to disengage. They may build on other's poses to create or change a larger image, but they may not physically reposition others. They may include props (objects found in the room) to build into the scene. During the "sculpting" section of the exercise, participants should NOT explain or describe their poses, it is up to the audience to interpret the meaning of those actions. They will have time during the deconstruction phase to describe their actions and intentions.

2.) Begin the activity by inviting participants to enter the circle and create a pose based on the theme keyword. Encourage the group as much as possible, but at this stage do not force members to actively participate. If there has been sufficient lead into this activity you will find willing participants and someone will "break the ice" and go first. Once the first individual creates an image via a pose, others usually follow soon afterwards. Often one participant will make a gesture or pose that will trigger an idea for another. Participants may add or alter the entire image or a portion of it through their own body pose.

3.) As participants join into the activity a collage will begin to form, take notes at different points to be used later during the deconstruction and debriefing phase. Pay particular attention to ways in which the path of the sculpture is altered, or possible contradictions in participant interpretations.

4.) Once you have passed a certain point when active participation has dwindled, time allotted for the activity has passed, or there is a visible restlessness with those in the sculpture, you may begin your deconstruction and debriefing phase. Begin the deconstruction from the last person to join, gently peel back and discuss the dynamics of the sculpture. Have each participant explain their pose and the reason for choosing such a posture. Refer to your own notes and insights along the way. Once the participant has described their action, they may sit down in the original circle. Continue the process until all participants are back in their original seats.

5.) Depending on the direction of the conversations, insights added by participants, and the theme itself, the debriefing phase may include some self-reflection work as a home-work assignment. Do not rush through the deconstruction and debriefing phase of the activity, these discussions are meant to reach the heart of the topic and offer alternative viewpoints to consider.

Materials: A creative spirit and fearless heart.

Results and Discussions:

It is the experience of this author that Human Sculpting offers a powerful and emotional tool for experiencing other paradigms or notions regarding a given topic. In a Japanese context this activity has been used successfully in both university and corporate settings, the later imbedded in the context of intercultural training workshops designed for cross-cultural team building and creativity or "thinking outside the box". All things being equal, by slowly and deliberately building into the activity and creating a supportive environment one can overcome the stereotypical timidness displayed by the Japanese learner. For the best results an intimate group is desired, and the nature of the activity itself precludes that a limited number of participants can be involved. From experience maximum effectiveness can be achieved with groups numbering between 10-20 participants.

Finally, creative expression transcends language and culture and bonds all humanity. It is our unique creative capacity that propels us forward as a species, and thus should be held

in esteem and nurtured as much a possible. Creative competency must be supported and viewed as a pillar of learning regardless the subject matter. As such, I strongly advocate use of activities such as "Human Sculpting" as an integral part of any well-rounded EFL curriculum.

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