

# Motivating Students to Speak and Write for True Communication

NUFS Workshop 2017

Junko Yamanaka

Aichi Gakuin University  
Chukyo University

# Bilingual information-gap activity

## Purpose

- To enjoy communication in English
- To enjoy thinking and guessing
- To review English vocabulary
- To review Kanji

# Today's workshop

- Part 1 (A.M.) Speaking
- Part 2 (P.M.) Writing

# Communicative language teaching

Some principles of CLT

- Students **use** the language to communicate
- **Authentic** and **meaningful** communication should be the goal of classroom activities
- **Fluency** and **accuracy** are both important goals in language learning
- Communication involves the **integration** of **different language skills**

*(Longman Dictionaries of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)*

# Difficulties in EFL classrooms?

- Pair work?
- Group work?
- Information gap?
- Task based approach?
  
- Do students feel it is “real use” or “practice” ?
- Is “true communication” in L2 possible in EFL classrooms?

## “True communication” is there when:

- Students *enjoy* communication in L2
- Students *enjoy* thinking
- Students “*want to*” say something or they “*want to*” write about something even in L2
- Students *want to* know what others think

(Ideally, )

- Students are so involved that they forget they are using L2 (or do not care about the language)

# Take these elements into your lessons!

- 1. Thinking / critical thinking elements
- 2. Content-based approach
- 3. Opinion gap activities
  
- Or all of those together!

# A content-based activity

- Science lesson in English



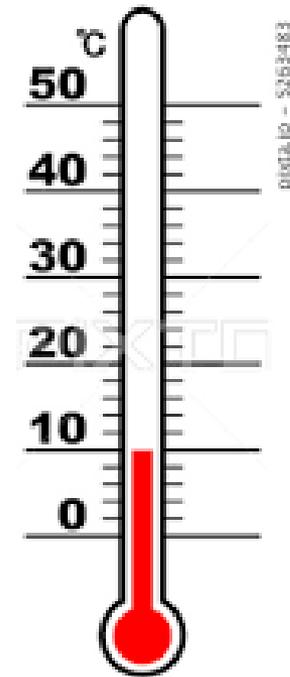
# Important words

- Solid (things that have shapes)
- Liquid (water, juice, etc.)
- Gas (air, CO<sub>2</sub>, etc.)

Odd-man-out game!

# Other important words

- Temperature
- $\sim^{\circ}\text{C}$  (degrees Celsius)
- Melt





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When does it melt?

solid



liquid

at (    ) °C?



# Number dictation

- 1. 1,525
- 2. 1,400
- 3. 1,064
- 4. 962
- 5. 800
- 6. 660
- 7. 185
- 8. 60
- 9. 35
- 10. 0

# Work in groups

- At which temperature do they melt?
- Match each material with a temperature

# Opinion gap activities

- Review from 2014

# Let's try a lesson!

**Level: Basic**

**Title: The Guy with Green Hair**

From

*Impact Topics &  
Impact Issues 1*



# Through expressing their opinions in English/ discussing

They

- think about a topic or an issue
- express their opinions
- know their classmates' opinions
- adjust their ideas or change their mind
- learn to be flexible and open-minded
- learn to be cooperative
- *learn the language by doing the above*

# With the right material and right approach:

- Japanese students *do* enjoy talking and discussing.
- They like to know what others think.
- They don't hesitate disagreeing with others.
- They enjoy communication.
- They get *motivated!*
- They learn the language.

# Under what condition?

- The topic is interesting and relevant to them
- The issue is clear.
- The issue is presented with an impact, using easy English.
- Strategies are used to help students overcome shyness and linguistic insufficiency.

# Let's try a new lesson!

**Level: low intermediate**

**Title: Cosmetic surgery**

From  
*Impact Values &  
Impact Issues 3*



This approach has all the three elements mentioned earlier

- 1. Thinking /critical thinking elements
- 2. Content-based approach
- 3. Opinion gap activities

# I like this approach because:

- Students *use* English.
- Students can handle sophisticated topics using rather easy English.
- There is a lot of language help in the text, so it is not frustrating to express ideas in English.
- The communication is *authentic* & *meaningful*
- There are no right or wrong answers.
- The teacher is not really “teaching” but *helping students to communicate*.

# This approach can involve four skills

Some principles of CLT include

- Communication involves the integration of different language skills

*(Longman Dictionaries of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)*

# Opinion exchange activity

- Use a pen name.
- Write your opinion.
- Read someone's opinion.
- Write a reaction comment.
- Read the reaction comment on your opinion.

# *A cool-down writing activity!*

## **Free writing** (10 minutes)

- No dictionaries, no erasers.
- Keep writing. Do not stop moving your hand.
- Do not worry about grammar mistakes.
- Messy or dirty is OK!
- If you do not know a word, write Roma-ji.
- The more number of words, the better.

# Free writing (timed writing) recommended in every writing class

- Fluency training
- Lowering anxiety
- Fosters thinking in English (not translating)
- Should be done along with accuracy training

# Communicative language teaching

Some principles of CLT include

- Fluency and accuracy are both important goals in language learning

*(Longman Dictionaries of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)*

## Students' comments (2012 remedial class)

A: 毎回授業の始めにフリーライティングをして感じたことは、それまで英語を書くのがあまり好きではなかったのに、回数を重ねるごとに**英語への抵抗がなくなってくるのを感じました。**

B: 始めたばかりの頃は、全然書けていなかったのですが、回を重ねるごとに増え始めて、**英語が頭にだんだん浮かんでくるようになり、**とても楽しくフリーライティングをできるようになっていました。

C: 最初はとにかく何を書いたらよいかかわからずに文章を日本語で考えてから英語に直して書くようなやり方で上手く書けなかったが、**回を重ねるごとに直接英語でも文章を書けていると思った。**

D: フリーライティングをやることによって間違いを気にせずに行えるため、気にせずいろんな文章に挑戦できるのでとてもよかった。間違いを気にするものだったら何も書くことができなかったと思う。

E: 第1回と第10回以降を比べると、明らかに文字数が伸びました。慣れというのもあると思いますが、英語力も成長したと思います。

F: It was very fun. I was happy to know my growth. My first writing was 100 words. But last writing was 400 word. It's big growth. (No editing)

G: 10分間でどれだけ書けるか毎回楽しかった。

# Writing for true communication

- Opinions expressed in writing and the reading of them can be *authentic* and *meaningful* communication

between students

between students and the teacher

or beyond!

# How can students write a persuasive opinion essay?

- “Controlled paragraph writing” works!
- Let’s see how students can write a good “one paragraph” essay.

# 1. Teach about paragraphs

- Paragraph shape
- Indent
- One paragraph, one idea
- Main idea often comes at the beginning



## 2. Tell them to:

- Choose a topic
- Make the main idea clear
- Put the main idea sentence at the beginning of the paragraph
- Give three good reasons to support the main idea.
- Add details to the reasons.
- Be consistent—stick to the main idea
-

# Some examples by my students

- Topic: Pets
- Main idea: Dogs make better pets than cats
- Cats make better pets than dogs

# Supporting reasons

Tomomi 1. Dogs can be watchdogs.

2. Dogs are faithful and intelligent.

3. Walking a dog can be fashionable.

Satomi 1. You don't have to walk your cat.

2. Cats play alone and it is cute to see.

3. Cats don't become as big as dogs.

Sho 1. Cats are quiet, while dogs bark and are noisy.

2. Cats have freedom, while dogs don't.

3. Cats can warm us in the futon.

# A template

Cats make better pets than dogs. First of  
all, [REDACTED] . \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. Secondly, [REDACTED]

\_\_\_\_\_ Finally, [REDACTED]

# Let's try it with "Cosmetic Surgery"

People should not have cosmetic surgery. First of all, [REDACTED]. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. Secondly, [REDACTED]

\_\_\_\_\_ Finally, [REDACTED]

# Example

People should not have cosmetic surgery. First of all, it can be risky. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. Secondly, it costs a lot of money. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Finally, you can look beautiful just by putting on make up! \_\_\_\_\_

# Let's think of opposing ideas

People should have cosmetic surgery. First of all,  . \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. Secondly,

\_\_\_\_\_ Finally,

# The effects of controlled paragraph writing

- The logic becomes clear.
- The essay becomes persuasive.
- Even if the essay has many grammar mistakes, it can be somehow understood .
- It is in fact much more effective than trying to correct all of their errors, because correcting errors does not always improve their English.

# Who is the audience?

- You write so that someone will read it.
- You want someone to read it, so you write it.
  
- Who will read your essay or letter?
- Who are you writing to, and for what purpose are you writing it?

# High school students and uniforms

- Do you think Japanese high school students should wear uniforms? Why or why not?
- Who can be the audience?

# The audience determines “register”

- Friend?
- Classmates?
- Teacher?
- Customers?
- Internet users?
- Judges for an essay contest?

The degree of formality?

# Do not write like you talk!

- *Written language* is different from *spoken language*.
- 間違っ **ちゃったんじゃないか** と思う。
- 間違っ **てしまったのではないか** と思う。
- I wanna go.      I want to go.    I would like to go.
- It isn't true.      It is not true.
- I'm happy.      I am happy.

# How to write good descriptive essays

- The place I like very much
- The best movie I have ever seen
- My ideal friend

Use five senses!

vision, sound, touch, smell, taste

Use metaphors!

The snow was shining like diamond dust.

# Have you found hints?

- How can “communicative” activities or writing tasks provide opportunities for real communication?
- How can the teacher motivate students to really “want to” say something or write about something?