

Tools for **Active Learning** in the EFL Classroom

Brad Deacon, *Nanzan University*



Today's AL Menu

- What is AL?
- Why is it important for Ss and Ts?
- How can we implement AL and add to our teaching toolbox?
- AL in lecturing research project
- Etc.

KWL Chart on Active Learning

(***Two-minute brainstorm)

K	W	L
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- AL originated in ...- ---	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- How can Ss do AL in my classes?----	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-----

What is Active Learning?

“(a)nything that involves students in doing things and thinking about the things that they are doing” (p. 2).

(Source: Bonwell, C. C., & Eison, J. A. (1991). *Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.)

Five AL Conditions

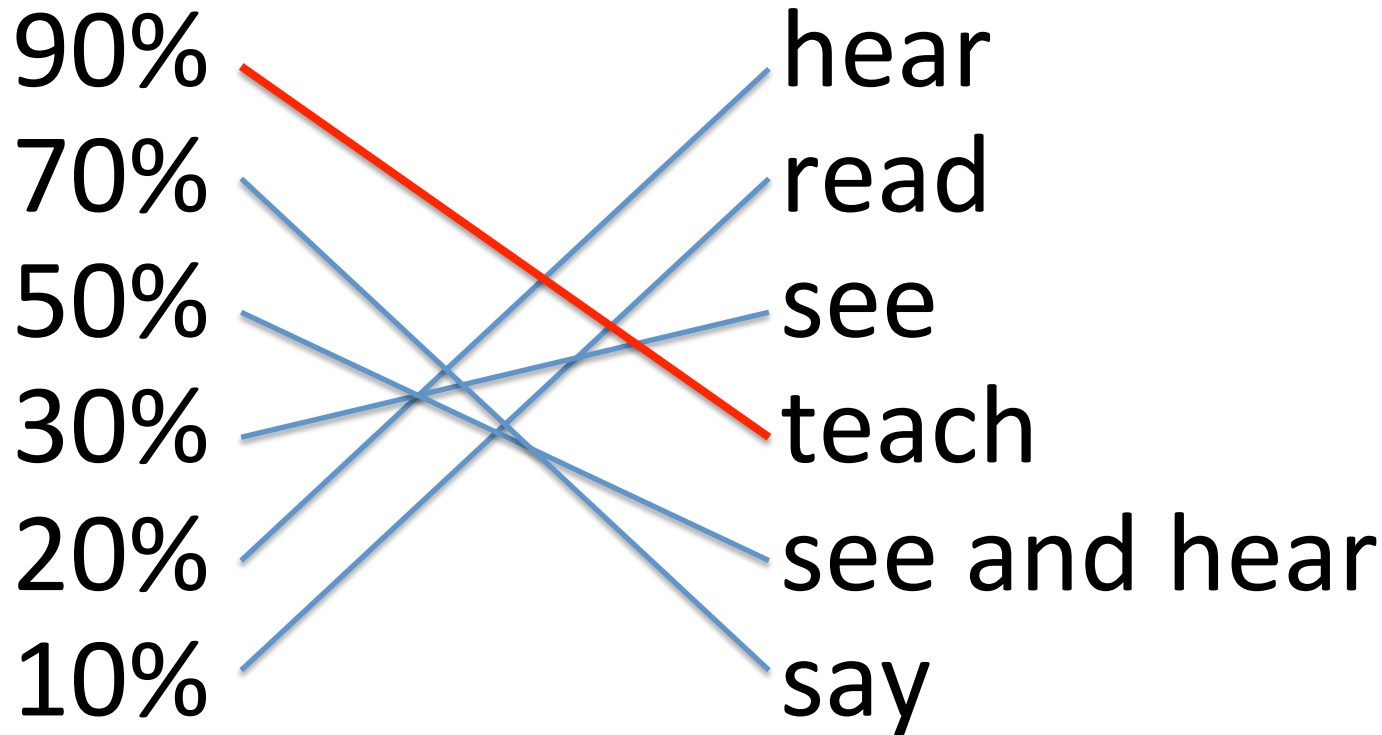
- 1) Ss are involved in more than listening
- 2) Less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and more on developing Ss' skills
- 3) Ss are involved in higher order thinking
- 4) Ss are engaged in activities
- 5) Greater emphasis is placed on Ss' exploration of their own attitudes and values

(Source: Bonwell, C. C., & Eison, J. A. (1991). *Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.)

Five AL Reflection Questions

- 1) How were you involved? (What did you do?)
- 2) What skills did/could you develop?
- 3) What higher order skills did/could you develop?
- 4) Were you engaged in activities? How?
- 5) How were/could you explore your attitudes and values more deeply?

We remember__% of what we__.
(Guess first...)



(Source: Silverman, L.K., "Global Learners: Our Forgotten Gifted Children." Paper presented at the 7th World Conference on Gifted and Talented Children, Salt Lake City, Ut., Aug. 1987.)

After 2 weeks
we tend to remember...

Passive

Reading 10% of what we read

Hearing Words 20% of what we hear

Looking at pictures 30% of what we see

Movies/Videos/Exhibits

Demonstrations

Seeing it done on location

50% of what we see
and hear

Participating in a discussion

Giving a talk

70% of what we
say

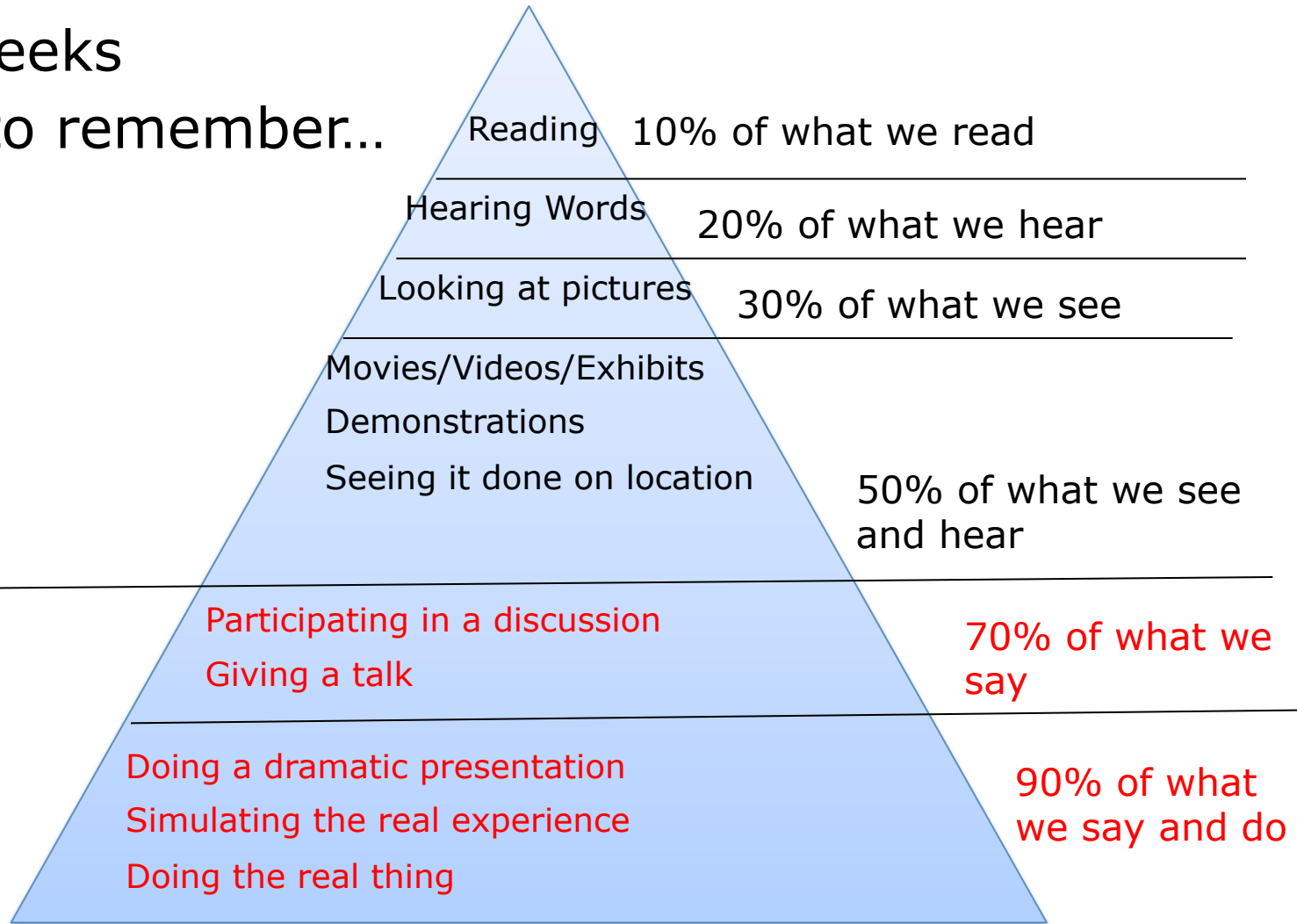
Active

Doing a dramatic presentation

Simulating the real experience

Doing the real thing

90% of what
we say and do



I hear, and I forget;

I see, and I remember;

I do, and I understand.

- Confucious



“Tell me and I forget.

Teach me and I remember.

Involve me and I learn.”

- Benjamin Franklin



Control, Initiative Continuum



TEACHER CONTROL

STUDENT INITIATIVE

(Source: Stevick, E. W. (1980). *Teaching languages: A way and ways*. Rowley, M.A.: Newbury House Publishers)

[In] e_____ “control,” then, the teacher is
g_____ some kind of order, or s_____, to the
learning s_____ of the s_____. In encouraging
him to t_____ “initiative,” she is allowing him
to work, and to g_____, within that s_____.
The trick, for the t_____, is not only to
preserve this distinction; it is also to p_____
just the right a_____ of learning s_____. If
there is too l_____, the learner will be
st_____. If there is too m_____, the student
will f_____ that the teacher has ab_____ him
(p. 20).

(Source: Stevick, E. W. (1980). *Teaching languages: A way and ways*.
Rowley, M.A.: Newbury House Publishers)

[In] exercising “control,” then, the teacher is giving some kind of order, or structure, to the learning space of the student. In encouraging him to take “initiative,” she is allowing him to work, and to grow, within that space. The trick, for the teacher, is not only to preserve this distinction; it is also to provide just the right amount of learning space. If there is too little, the learner will be stifled. If there is too much, the student will feel that the teacher has abandoned him (p. 20).

(Source: Stevick, E. W. (1980). *Teaching languages: A way and ways*. Rowley, M.A.: Newbury House Publishers)

Let's try!



Immigration to Japan



KWL Chart on Immigration to Japan

K	W	L
<ul style="list-style-type: none">---	<ul style="list-style-type: none">----	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-----

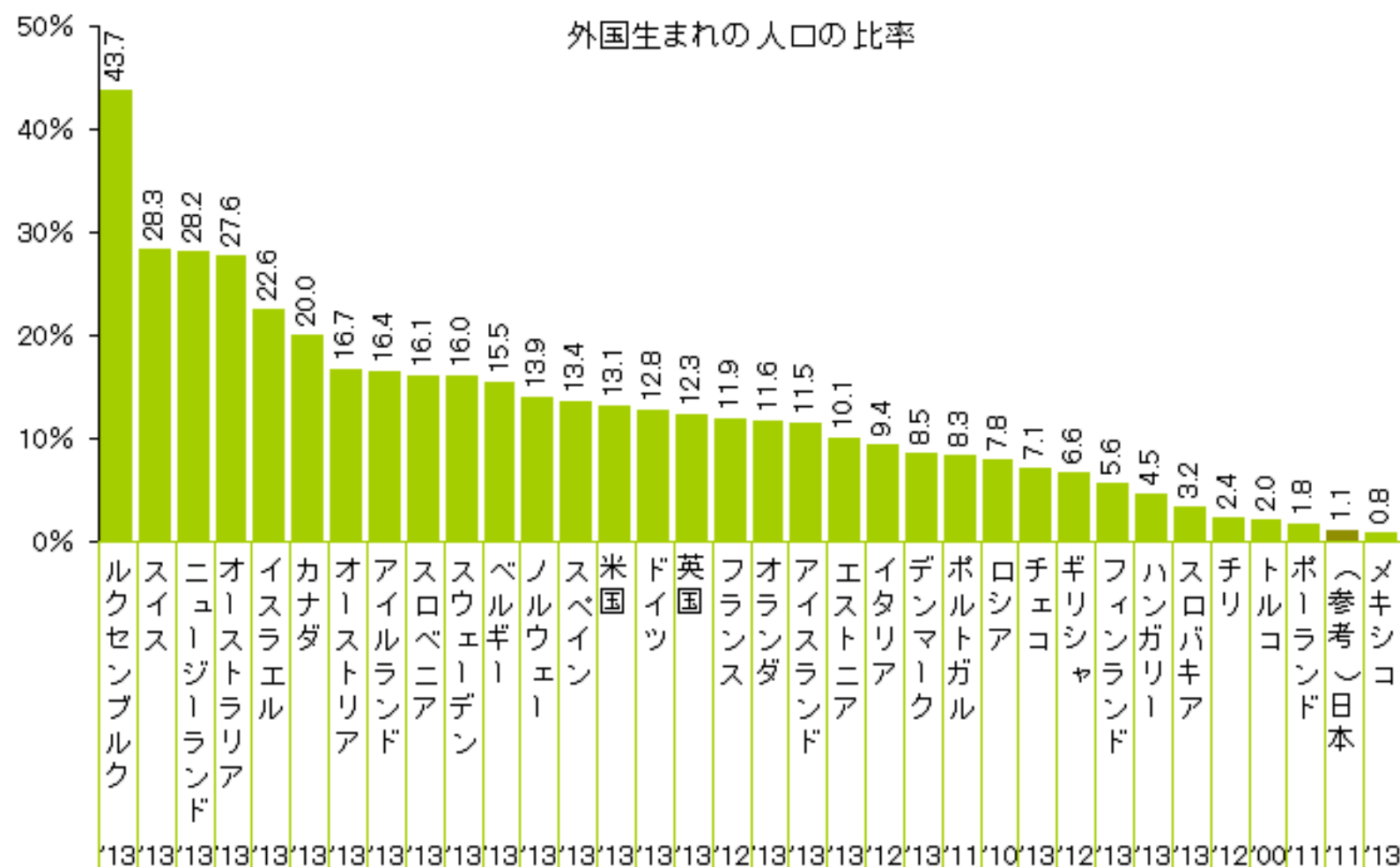
In 2015, what was the % of foreign-born people in the population? And what was the ranking among 34 countries in the OECD?

The United States

Switzerland

Japan

OECD諸国の移民人口比率



(注) OECD諸国以外にロシアの値を含む。国名の下に数字は年次。

(資料) OECD International Migration Outlook 2015(トルコは2013)、日本は国立社会保障・人口問題研究所「第7回人口移動調査」(対象世帯数15,449、有効回収率73.5%(11,353世帯))

Should Japan be a country that has immigrants as 10% of its population?

<Individual work: 2 mins>

Write down all the pros and cons you have in your mind.

<Group work>

Decide which side your group will take (pro or con) and prepare a one-minute presentation in English.

Group work

- Choose: 1) a leader, 2) a secretary who writes notes, 3) a presenter, and 4) a timekeeper
- Share your thoughts
- Decide on your side and reasons
- Write a script in English
- Practice presenting

Presentation Format

1. **Introduction** (2 sentences)

“Good afternoon everyone, (your first names) would like to argue that Japan should/should not adopt this policy.”

2. **Body** (2-3 sentences)

*Explain your idea (information, logic, or a personal story to support it) and give details to support your argument. “We think our idea is great because”

3. **Conclusion** (1 sentence)

*Repeat your main point. “In conclusion, we think....”

Present!

How can we understand the immigration issue?

A. Many academic disciplines and areas (to see the problem from different perspectives)

“Good job, everyone!!!”
Shake hands with your friends!



Teacher Concerns on Implementing AL

- Ambiguous
- Lack of training and support
- Unclear rationale
- Not sure it really works, esp. in large classes
- Lack confidence to do it
- Too time consuming
- Pressure to do other activities
- Feeling that students are passive

(Source: NEC AL teacher interviews on 5/18/2018)

Lectures Research Project



Participants

- University in the central Japan region
- Freshmen and sophomores
- Non-English majors, but high motivation
- Anonymous
- Quantitative and qualitative survey questions

Research Questions

- 1) How do students perceive lecturing as a learning medium?
 - 2) How do students prefer to learn in lectures?
- *** What are the implications for Active Learning?

Q1. I think that lectures are a useful way to learn

Group	Average 6-pt. Likert scale (Strongly agree=6 Agree=5 Somewhat agree=4 Somewhat disagree=3 Disagree=2 Strongly disagree=1)
Freshmen (n=135) On 4/18/2018	4.2
Freshmen (n=117) On 6/28/2018	4.2
Sophomore (n=87) On 5/23/2018	4.5

Q2. I think that lectures are an interesting way to learn

Group	Average 6-pt. Likert scale (Strongly agree=6 Agree=5 Somewhat agree=4 Somewhat disagree=3 Disagree=2 Strongly disagree=1)
Freshmen (n=135) On 4/18/2018	4.1
Freshmen (n=117) On 6/28/2018	3.9
Sophomore (n=87) On 5/23/2018	4.3

Q3. I prefer the following lecture style

(Note: L = Lecture, S = Summary, D = Discussion)

Group	90-min. L	40-min. L 5-min S/D x2	25-min. L 5-min S/D x3	10-min. L 5-min S/D x6	Other
Freshmen (n=135) On 4/18/2018	14	77 (57%)	32	7	5
Freshmen (n=117) On 6/28/2018	9	74 (63%)	25	4	5
Sophomore (n=87) On 5/23/2018	10	52 (60%)	21	0	4

Lecture attendance

Group	Attendees/Total Ss (___%)
Freshmen (n=135) On 4/18/2018	135/150 (90%)
Freshmen (n=117) On 6/28/2018	117/150 (78%)
Sophomore (n=87) On 5/23/2018	87/155 (56%)

Preference for more AL in lectures

(Note: L = Lecture, S = Summary, D = Discussion)

Group	% preferring L+S+D
Freshmen (n=135) On 4/18/2018	121/135 (90%)
Freshmen (n=117) On 6/28/2018	108/117 (92%)
Sophomore (n=87) On 5/23/2018	77/87 (89%)

Positive student comments on lectures

- Increase knowledge – variety, current, relevant, new
- Teacher communication style – easy to understand, interesting (stories, jokes), pausing, using pictures, clear
- Teacher personality – friendly, enthusiastic, funny, serious

Negative student comments on lectures

- Content – boring, too difficult, not relevant
- Teacher communication style – unstructured, just talking, no pausing, too fast, one-way, only explaining, low voice
- Student role – just listening, passive, no chance to check understanding, become bored and sleepy

Student suggestions for improving lectures

- Let students discuss their understandings and opinions
- Give students thinking time (pause)
- Use more visuals (pictures, graphs, videos, PowerPoint, write on the board)
- Be more personal (share stories, jokes, small talk)
- Interact with students (ask questions, answer questions, check understanding)
- Give quizzes or small tests
- Increase the Active Learning...

So what!?

- Ss “Somewhat Agree” that lectures are useful and interesting
- Ss can gain knowledge BUT want chances to share their understandings and opinions more actively
- Need research into absentees
- 90% of Ss want to actively summarize and discuss during lectures
- Ss have active voices
- Ts need to listen to their Ss!

Some AL Activities

- Small group work
- Presentations
- Discussions
- Debates
- Role plays
- Exploring
- Reflecting

KWL Chart on Active Learning

(***One-minute brainstorm)

		Learned
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- AL originated in ...----	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- How can Ss do AL in my classes?----	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- ...- ...- ...- ...- ...