

## NUFS Workshop 2015

*Newsletter No. 7*Workshop in November

## &lt;Part 1 &gt;

**Date:** November 14, 2015, 10:30-14:30

**Venue:** NSC College, Building Minami, Room A-31

**Presenter:** Robert Murphy (The University of Kitakyushu)

**Title:** “Neuro ELT: Exciting Advice from Neuroscience That Will Motivate You and Your Students”

**Abstract:** Exciting times are upon us! Neuroscience is now capable of helping us become better teachers. In this session, learn about fascinating new discoveries about the brain that will help you become a better teacher. Which pedagogies are better than others? Science will help you find out! Learn to be more confident about your teaching activities and learn how to design a more effective syllabus--backed by science. We will also uncover several neuro myths! Be prepared to take home a notebook full of ideas based on neuroscience that you can readily apply to your language classroom. Your students will be happy that you came!



**The number of participants: 24**

### 1. Interesting activities you might want to use in your class. Why?

- Students design their own test after the presentations on activities. Students create the rubric for assessment. I like these ideas because students can notice what points are to be learned instead of being taught.
- I want to use “inquiry-based learning.” I want to ask students many easy questions they can understand and let them build concrete happy memories. I want to design a class based on bottom up with lots of experiences.
- Master list, peer assessment, student- created assessment, defense and voting on assessment.
- Student test design- it helps them think about what they have learned.

### 2. What you learned from today

- I learned that equilibrium is important when we design a task. Even though we always have some problems and criticisms, but I should be happy to have such problems because they would help me make some changes to make things better.
- Today, I know that it’s important for teachers to allow students to go find answers about their own questions. Teachers should give students chances to



think about their own questions at the beginning of the class.

- I learned that allowing a lot of bottom up learning to invite students' curiosity is important.
- Teacher shouldn't lead in an L2 class. I previously thought the teacher should lead the students into the world and make them solve the problems by using the language that they are learning.
- So much! It's wonderful and affirming to see where CLT practices intersect w/neuroscience-for example, student-centeredness, intervals of learning and forgetting, student-invested materials-it goes on and on.
- Learning is different from understanding. Understanding is the application of learning.



### 3. Questions and Answers

*Q (1): How do you control the test making/validity while not affecting the students' motivation?*

I'm not sure I understand this question but I will try to answer this with my interpretation of this question.

One of the maxims of neuroELT is, "Context affects cognition", so any change in your teaching (or the syllabus design) will certainly affect the students motivation in some way--often in unseen ways. This is because it's all part of a dynamic system that is largely unpredictable, due to the complex effects of compounding variables. Student motivation is a part of a dynamic system of teaching. That said, I think the best way to have students take a test while raising their motivation is to implement formative assessment.

As we discussed at our session, high-stakes tests only at the end of a course are unfair, and unscientific. Small tests of high frequency with outcomes and designs that are totally transparent to the students is a much better approach to lowering test anxiety.

To learn more about formative assessment, look here: <http://edglossary.org/formative-assessment/>

For great tools to teach with formative assessment, look here:

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/5-fast-formative-assessment-tools-vicki-davis>

*Q (2): Please give me some ideas for neuroELT type activities for elementary school students.*

The above link will give you some great tools. Here are some more ideas that are from me.

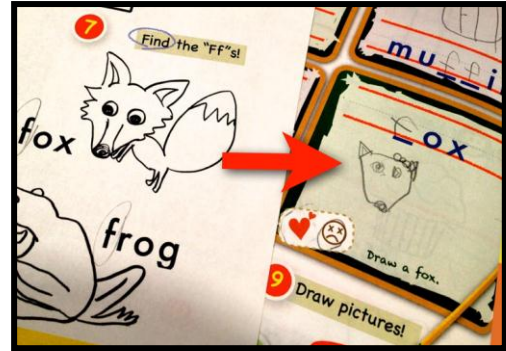
-When using picture flashcards for vocabulary teaching, make sure that you use THREE cards for each word. EACH of the three cards should be match the vocabulary in a different way. By using three different pictures to connect to one vocabulary word, you significantly enhance the student's understanding, and make it MUCH more memorable. Here is an example of what I mean by, three different pictures to connect to one vocabulary word:



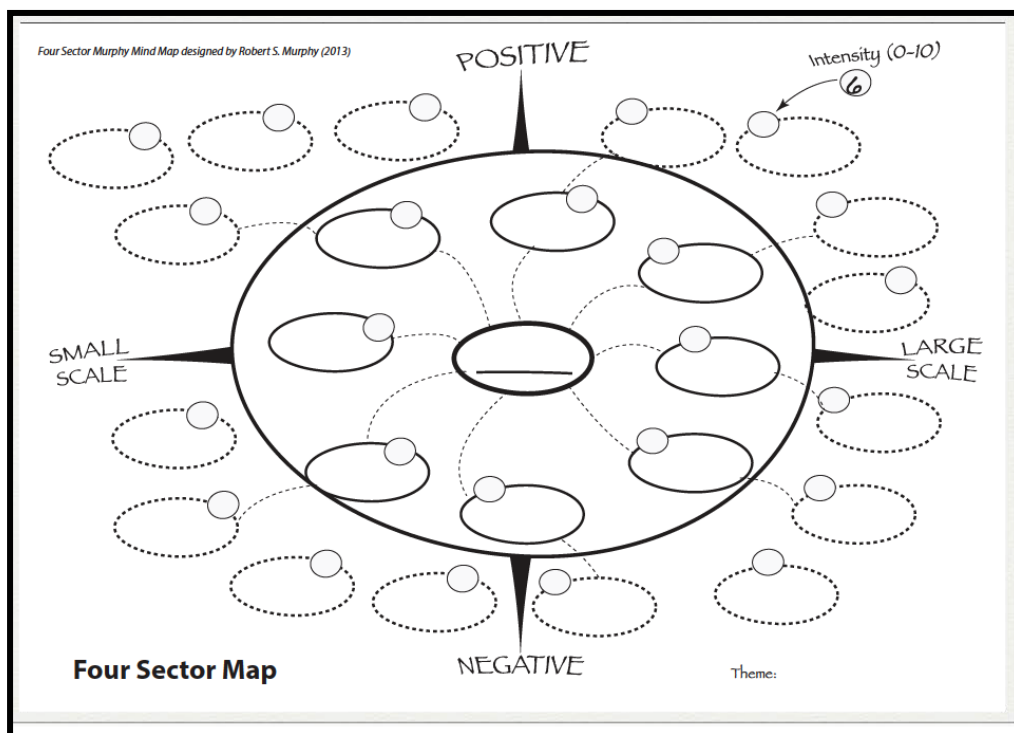
- When teaching kids, you must personalize! Kids are naturally egocentric. If you don't personalize the learning, it will be boring, boring, boring! Also make sure to bring in emotions. Let them show you their emotions. See the activity below. The students personalize the learning by drawing their own pictures, and by choosing the emotion that goes with the word. There is no right or wrong answer for this – it's all personal! You can see below that the personalized fox is different from the textbook picture → the fox now has a bow on its head. This is a good thing. The student is personalizing their work... it adds a special feeling of ownership to the content. This

is not standard in Japanese pedagogy, but it IS standard in neuroELT teaching—and it works very well!

**Q (3): I want to understand more about how to apply the brain science you taught us to teaching my junior high school students. Can you give some lesson ideas and activities for example?**



For JHS, formative assessment is very good (see top). I also have specialized graphic organizers that work very well. See below for one example of a unique graphic organizer. Again, there is not “right” or “wrong” with this task, so it's quite unique to implement in Japanese school settings, but I do guarantee—they work very well! For this particular mind map there are two common usages. A. If students have a list of words to study and they can put all the words into this map, in the appropriate locations. It is up to them to figure out the best locations—deeper understanding for each word is achieved in this way. B. If students have a topic/theme they must write about or present on, give them this map and have them look up (and/or ask you) the necessary words to discuss that theme, and have them write up here on the map.



*Q (4): I couldn't write down all of the six "tweaks" you added in your textbook. Could you list them again for us?*

All of that information and much more can be downloaded here:

<http://fab-efl.com/page11/page8/index.html>

Feel free to send me more questions as they arise. If you do Facebook, let's be friends!

<https://www.facebook.com/r.s.murphy.efl>

Here is the URL to my slides.

<http://fab-efl.com/page11/page8/index.html>

*Hope to hear from you again!*



## <Part 2>

**Date:** November 14, 2015, 14:30-17:00

**Venue:** NSC College

**Advisors:** Kazuyoshi Sato, Nancy Mutoh, Duane Kindt (NUFS), Robert Croker (Nanzan University)

**Abstract:** Monthly report on action research

**The number of participants:** 14



## Workshop in December (Scheduled)

**Date:** December 12, 2015, 10:30-14:30 (Workshop), 14:30-17:00 (Action Research session)

**Venue:** NSC College, Building Minami, Room A31 (1-9-6 Shinsakae, Naka-ku, Nagoya)

<http://www.nufs.ac.jp/cms/cms-files/20150218-113526-1680.pdf>

**Presenter:** Nancy Mutoh (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)

**Title:** "Building the five keys of communicative language teaching into your lesson plans"

Please send an email to Chihaya ([chiha143@nufs.ac.jp](mailto:chiha143@nufs.ac.jp)) to attend this workshop.