

## *Newsletter No. 8*

### Workshop in December

#### “The Effects of Language and Psychology in the Learning of English”

**Presenter:** Kensaku Yoshida (Sophia University)

**Date:** December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 10:30-14:30

**Venue:** Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, Room 226

**Abstract:**

Theories in language learning have gone through a number of important stages. Behaviorism has had the largest influence, with cognitive approaches, such as the cognitive code learning theory based on Chomskian ideas, and SLA concepts such as noticing, focus-on-form and Krashen's input hypotheses exerting huge impacts on more recent methodologies. Another important concept from cognitive psychology is the distinction between declarative and procedural knowledge, which coincides with the basic principles underlying the new Course of Study. The present workshop will look at some practical pedagogical implications arising from these theories.



**The number of participants:** 75

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

- I sometimes did pattern practice, so I was shocked to hear that it's not so useful. However, I'm happy to know a good idea to use pictures. It's easy to start to do.
- Psychological task – I'm going to use this idea next week in small talk because it's fun and students can read context as well.
- The activity that we tried to change declarative questions to procedural ones was interesting because they became meaningful to students.
- Discussion about why Japanese cannot speak English – because I found many new opinions through communication. It's difficult to use discussion but I want to use tasks in communication activity.
- Of course, the photos were interesting because it's a different way of noticing and thinking. Also, writing a short story followed by both declarative and procedural questions and a cloze task, because it's good to practice rather than just think about theory.
- The video – I want to see how many students will see the gorilla.



## 2. What you learned from today's workshop

- The concept of declarative and procedural knowledge was completely new to me. I learned that we should keep this in mind when I make comprehensive questions.
- I learned the importance of providing the students real context to make them motivated to produce communicative skills.
- I learned how we can get out from traditional way of teaching English. It is very important for teachers to tell declarative knowledge from procedural one.
- 'Noticing' is important for learning process. In my everyday class, there are a lot of pattern practices, so I need to let them think about something by themselves and express their thoughts.
- After all, we teachers have to study and watch about study and watch students' interest and abilities. We have to give them proper materials to help their language abilities develop.
- I learned how to make activities more meaningful and useful for acquisition.



## 3. Questions and Answers

***Q (1) In English Expression I, we teach grammar and we have performance test of it. It is focused on content but students have to use the target grammar. If we ask students to use grammar for speaking and writing immediately, it is not effective, as you said, but how can we assess of it?***

A: If you are testing writing and if you are giving the students the option of using their grammar books and dictionaries, then they can use their conscious knowledge to use the grammatical rule in the writing. However, if you want to test 'spontaneous' use of the structure, even in writing, you would have to wait until the students have had sufficient amount of practice using the structure in communicative contexts (e.g. in writing authentic sentences about themselves). On the other hand, if you want them to be able to use the same structure in speaking, you would definitely have to wait until the students have had a lot of practice using it in communicative (and probably authentic) contexts.

***Q (2): Although I understand the importance of assessing writing and speaking skills as outcome of procedural knowledge, I'm not sure whether we should show a model and how to assess them.***

A: A lot depends on how detailed the assessment has to be, if it were simply A, B, C, and D, for example, you could use something like the following chart.

	+Content	-Content
+Structure	A	C
-Structure	B	D

A= both content is comprehensible and structure is accurate

B=content is comprehensible but structure is inaccurate (but still overall comprehensible)

C=content is difficult to understand, but structure is accurate

D=content is difficult to understand and structure is inaccurate (very difficult to understand what speaker is saying)

**Q (3): I am interested in Task and Content Based Reading. Are there things or ways you'd recommend me to use in order to learn more about this field?**

A: Professor Izumi Shinichi is a specialist in task-based instruction and CLIL. (『「フォーカス・オン・フォーム」を取り入れた新しい英語教育』(大修館、2009) ; 『第2言語習得と母語習得から「言葉の学び」を考える』(アルク出版 2016)),

『CLIL (内容言語統合型学習):上智大学外国語教育の新たな挑戦-第3巻 授業と教材』 池田真、渡部良典との編著、上智大学出版 (2016) 『フォーカス・オン・フォームとCLILの英語授業』アルク (2016) 『CLIL (内容言語統一型

学習):上智大学外国語教育の新たな挑戦-第2巻 実践と応用』池田真、渡部良典との編著、上智大学出版 (2012) 『CLIL (内容言語統合型学習):上智大学外国語教育の新たな挑戦-第1巻 原理と方法』 渡部良典、池田真との編著、上智大学出版 (2011)

Brinton, D. (2003). Content-based instruction. In D. Nunan (Ed.), Practical English Language Teaching (McGraw Hill), Brinton, D. M., Snow, M. A., & Wesche, M. B. (1989). Content-based second language instruction. Newbury House, Almost everyone who advocates the strong version of the communicative approach notes task-based learning/teaching as the way to teach.



**Q (4): I teach at JHS. There are too many grammar points to teach in the textbook. It is hard to take time for students to use English to acquire. In the new textbook are there less grammar points?**

A: I haven't seen the new textbooks, but I don't think so. The one thing to think about is this. Even if you had many grammar points to 'teach', how many of them have the students 'learned' and 'acquired'? Our job as teacher is not simply to 'teach', but to make sure the students 'learn' and 'acquire' what we've taught them, There are studies which show that learning the object relative clause somehow makes it easy for the students to understand and learn the subject relative clause even without being taught explicitly. What this means is that teachers do not have to teach every single grammatical rule in the book. (cf. Nishitani, Investigating an Order of Grammatical Difficulty: A Review of Literature). Not all grammatical rules are at the same level of difficulty. Finding out what the difficulty hierarchy says might help teachers to use their time more efficiently in teaching grammatical points.

**Q (5): The role of writing in the CLT approach. What is it?**

A: Writing is ultimately the most important of the four skills, because it can be used to summarize the content of spoken discussions and debates, and to express our ideas in a logical and comprehensible manner, not just to the people we are talking to, but also to other people who can read our ideas and opinions.



## **Workshop in December (AR Discussion)**

**Date:** December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 15:00-17:00

**Venue:** Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, Room 215, 216

**Title:** Group discussion on action research

**Advisers:** Kazuyoshi Sato, Duane Kindt, Juanita Heigham (NUFS)

**The number of participants:** 11

