

*Newsletter No. 5**<Summer Workshop, Day Two>***Morning Session****Date:** August 2nd, 9:30-12:30**Venue:** Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, Room 322**Instructor:** Kazuyoshi Sato (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)**Title:** Developing a Lesson Plan**The number of participants:** 18

Abstract: How do you start your lesson? Do you use chorus reading before checking the content of the text? Do you usually skip discussion or a writing activity at the end of the unit? Do you spend most of the time on grammar and translation? Why? In this session, I would like you to challenge your views about your familiar way of teaching. I will demonstrate several useful techniques so that you can experience alternatives that will help to make your lesson more interactive. Finally, I will summarize main points by showing principles for developing a lesson plan.

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

- I want to use 'Retelling' activity, because it has a three-part framework. We cooperated to recall the story and arranged the pictures in order. These activities will expand students' memory span and make it easier for them to speak English.
- Predicting before starting to read passages. It's fun to guess what the passage tells us and discuss it in pairs. After we did it, I couldn't wait to read the passage!
- I want to try 'Guessing unknown words from the context' activity. Usually students use a dictionary if they find unknown words, but in this activity they can find the meanings of the unknown words by themselves without using Japanese. This is a good way to explain English words in other expressions. And they'll have some confidence in using English.
- I'd like to use 'News skit' presentation. In my classes, students wrote their ideas and opinion after reading each lesson. Then they had interview tests using what they wrote. That's all. Now I want them to give chances to make a story or write dialogs and make a presentation in front of other students. I hope such an experience can be a good motivation for them to keep learning English.
- Reading Rate Chart and Reading comprehension Chart. Students can see the goal clearly and encourage them to read more.
- Skit presentation. I sometimes used this activity as a part of speaking practice. As students enjoy making skits and acting, I want to use it as a grammar exercise related to the textbook.

2. What you learned from today's workshop.

- I've found how boring translation method is. I've wanted to change my old teaching style to a

new one for a long time, but I couldn't, because changing requires me to use lots of energy. But today's workshop made my eyes open and gave me the courage to do so.

- There are so many Pre-reading, While-reading, Post-reading activities. I've never thought of those many activities. I'll choose and use some of them in my classes. As they are new for my students, they'll feel refreshed and be motivated to learn English, I hope.
- I realized how fun to see classmates role-play in English. As everybody has to play in English, this activity will never make students sleepy. I'm quite sure it takes long time to have them create their own skit, but I think this is really a good way for them to use English.
- I learned how to use activities that I've only heard before. In addition, I can understand how effective they are because I myself tried doing them today.
- I learned that there's no perfect textbook, so teachers should expand their teaching repertoire. We must have various kinds of activities in stock and adjust them to the textbook and our students.
- I learned there are many ways to have students read the textbook. They will have fun if I provide them various ways. Teachers need to be creative.



3. Questions and answers

Q: What kinds of homework do you think help junior high school students? Do they have to prepare for the new text before the class?

A: In the main, junior high school students don't have to prepare for the new lesson. Instead, they should be given some homework to review what they learned. Three hours a week is not enough for them to learn English. When you give an assignment, you might need to pay attention to students' levels, if necessary. One level is for everyone to master basic grammar, and the other is for those who want to challenge more.

Q: Is it necessary for students to know the meanings of new words before the class? Now in my English class students should know as their homework. But in today's workshop, I found it is not necessary. What do you think? And if we give students homework about words, what type do you do?

A: I just wonder how many students will do the homework. If a majority of your students can do, that is fine. If not, stop it. For junior high school students, I think they need more time to review rather than to prepare for the next lesson. Students are overwhelmed with so many grammatical points one after another. I don't think they can acquire those grammar points in three classes a week.

Q: Many students go to 'juku' and learn the text before my class. They have already known the meaning. How can I do pre-reading activities?

A: For the first and second-year students, the main focus is on speaking and listening, not on reading. When I check the textbooks, there are a few reading sections. But it is necessary, for third-year students to learn to read in English. However, if students have many opportunities to actually use English in the first and the second year, they can develop reading skills in the third year (most of the readings are based on conversations). Anyway, you can introduce some reading strategies in the latter half in the second year. Don't be in a hurry!

Q: I want to know more about how to use semantic mapping for pre-reading activities. I've used this

activity for students' writing, but I've never used this for pre-reading.

A: It is useful for writing as a brainstorm activity. It is also useful for pre-reading and pre-listening. Why don't you try it?

Q: I like post-reading activities and it takes time for students to do this activities. I usually spend 2-3 periods for post-reading activities. What is the balance of while-reading activities and post-reading activities?

A: Don't spend too much time on a post-reading activity, because it is not practical. However, if you can tell students about the post-reading activity beforehand (I think you should), you can get them ready for it. Also, after finishing each lesson, you can assign your students to do parts of the post-reading activity little by little.



Q: I still wonder how to teach new grammar point and improve reading skills which come first. And when should I introduce new grammar point?

A: It depends. Since you are JHS teachers, I advise you to introduce a new grammatical point first, using many examples, and then communicative games.

Q: How much should we give comments on students' worksheet?

A: It depends. You don't have to spend much time on every student's worksheet. Sometimes, you can just check if they did or not, while in other cases you might want to read carefully so that you can give feedback to your students.

Q: Could you show us some examples to evaluate students' reading ability?

A: There are many ways to evaluate students' reading ability. However, as the guidelines of Monkasho says, we have to evaluate students' proficiency in terms of four skills. It means you need to incorporate alternative ways of assessments, including essay writings, oral presentations, etc. as well as traditional reading tests.

Q: In my classes I always use handout, and give them Q and A to make them realize the gist of the story. When students give wrong answers, do I have to take time to explain what is wrong or why they make mistakes?

A: You can give brief explanations. What is important is that you need to use a variety of activities to facilitate students' deeper understandings. Don't think your students can understand everything just in one activity.

Q: Why do you do shadowing silently? I always tell the junior high students to repeat in a low voice. It makes them get familiar with rhythm and pronunciation. Which do you think is better?

A: There are various ways of shadowing. It is OK to tell your students to repeat in their low voice. However, from my experience, they become noisy and cannot listen to the model. So, I always tell my students to move their lips silently. After they get used to it, they can read aloud together with the tape, which is called overlapping.

Afternoon Session

Date: August 2nd, 13:30-16:30

Venue: Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, Room 322

Advisors: Kazuyoshi Sato & Nancy Mutoh (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)

The number of participants: 18

Abstract: The participants made a group discussion for the preparation of presentation.