

NUFS Workshop 2006

*Newsletter No. 9***Workshop in November****Date:** November 11, 2006 10:30-12:00, 13:00-14:30**Venue:** Nagoya International Center, Lecture Room 3**Instructor:** Mathew White (Nanzan University)**Title:** 'Extensive Listening'**The number of participants:** 16**Abstract:** Extensive Listening: From Theory to Practice

For many English programs, extensive listening is still in its infancy. As educators and successful language learners, you've probably already recognized the value

of providing students with a variety of extensive listening materials. Perhaps you've already begun implementing your own extensive listening component? While the potential for language development is extremely exciting, practitioners often encounter a few hurdles, such as where to find interesting materials at appropriate levels and how to orient their learners to the practice. In this workshop we'll explore some of the avenues for creating original extensive listening materials, as well as how to effectively make use of materials currently available.

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

- The use of Action English Pictures. We can have the students recycle the vocabulary, grammatical points and describe the situation in English.
- I'd like to try extensive listening during the winter vacation. Students can keep the record of each time they listen to English movies, songs, stories etc. I also try to ask students to write more short stories and add them in the ER materials. I'm sure students like to read the stories their friends created.
- The activity with the small cards, making a story in pairs. It was very motivating to create the story and it could get the students recycle the words and forms they already know. Also, they will enjoy working in pair and cooperation will help.
- Creating a story using broken-up cartoons seems an interesting activity. I want to try a little easier version of the activity if I have time in my lessons.
- Action logs to get some feedback from students during their vacation and their use of English.
- I want to use the extensive reading and listening. It seems to be a little difficult to prepare for starting extensive reading; however, I really want to start. I've never thought extensive reading and listening are so effective.

2. What you learned from today's workshop.

- It is important for students to have a goal for their own and try to work for it. Then teachers can help them keep going. We can and should develop the materials for our students. Today I learned that there are many creative ways to do it.

- Including story-telling in the classroom to help motivate students and encourage them to be more responsible for their own learning.
- I thought implementing extensive reading or listening would not be easy in my working place because of various restrictions. However, by teaching the students how to learn English including extensive reading & listening, we can still help the students even outside the classroom. Also I learned that it's important to do follow-up activities in order to make students see they are actually learning from extensive reading & listening.
- I got the ideas for teaching English and motivating students using 'English activity record', 'Tape recording in pairs', 'Watching films and list several expressions you liked', 'ESSC' and 'Making audio or visual material'. I'm happy to have so many ideas.
- Extensive listening and reading are enjoyable. I had thought they are too difficult for junior high school level, but today I learned that I can try them for my students by choosing vocabulary and grammar. I think I can make my original materials.
- I learned the importance and effectiveness of extensive reading and listening in class. I'd like to take time to do them in my class and talk about what I learned today with my coworkers. I also want to introduce fun activities using picture cards. I hope I can record English activities with video in my class.



3. Questions and Answers

Q: I'm wondering how to use songs as listening materials. I sometimes make students fill in the blanks while listening to songs, and that's all. Is there any other ways?

Tim Murphey actually did a thesis (or dissertation) on music/songs in the classroom. This later became a book. It's called "Music and Song" and it's published by Oxford University Press (ISBN 0-19-437055-0). His research for his PhD was on the use of music and song in language learning. Some activities that my students have enjoyed are:

1. Cut all of the verses in half and then mix the second halves on the right side, then have the students try and match them together.
2. Give the students the lyrics first. Have them read them and guess whether the song is upbeat (fast and cheerful) or a ballad, rock, whether the singer is male/female, etc.
3. Play a song and have students answer questions about the singer. What he/she looks like... What the other characters in the song look like, etc. Then show them the video.
4. Record 3 or 4 songs and write their titles on the board. Have the students listen to the songs and select which title matches.

5. If you want to work on pronunciation, you can have number the lyrics to a song and assign each student a different line that they have to sing. Play the video or song to model it, and tell the students beforehand that the next time they'll be singing it, so they need to pay attention to their lines. Start the song, and the students must sing their assigned lines to the time of the music. If they can't keep up, stop the song and start again! The students will learn to make the same rhythm and in the process learn how words are connected together in speech.



6. Get versions of the same song performed by different artists. Play the songs and ask students which version they like best. Ask them if the meaning of the song has changed. Ask them which version of the song they'd prefer when they're riding in a car/sitting in the bath/waking up in the morning, etc.

Q: I sometimes hear it is effective to use eyes and ears at the same time. That means it is effective to look at the words while listening to them. I think we can't concentrate if we do two activities. What do you think?

As a teacher, the first question I'd ask myself is, "What is the purpose/goal of the task?" If I want the students to notice differences between the written and spoken form, yes, let's listen and read along. That would definitely be an effective way to realize my goals.

Listening and looking at the same time may also allow them to free up the decoding of words and focus their attention on imagining the story. Also, learners may not be able to understand the story without at least the aid of illustrations (and maybe even words).

However, if I'm trying to get my students to improve their gist listening (listening for just the very basics, such as the topic of the conversation) I do not think it's very effective to have them reading along.

Q: I don't think my pronunciation of English is so good. And I'm not a good performer. Even so, do you think home-made audio material can motivate my students?

Yes. I think that students enjoy it when teachers take chances and admit that they are not perfect. This would probably have the most beneficial effect on the learners who are most concerned with their own pronunciation and performance abilities. If we do learn best when we're in a relaxed state, then your mistakes in pronunciation and acting, if you can laugh at them, can empower your students to take more chances and laugh and learn as well. If that results in them making their own recordings, they're going to be learning more than you could ever teach them anyway. Research suggests that the one who learns the most is the one who says and does the action, so the time spent in the creation of the recordings for EL may help the students more than the time spent listening to them. My goal would be to get the students making their versions of the recordings. Of course, having an AET/ALT point out pronunciation errors in a rehearsal before the recording would also be a great learning opportunity.

Group Session

Date: November 11, 2006 15:00-17:00

Venue: Nagoya International Center

The number of participants: 8

Abstract: The participants made a report about their lesson.



Next Workshop

Date: December 9, 2006 10:30-12:00, 13:00-14:30, 15:00-17:00

Venue: Nagoya International Center

Instructor: Tim Murphey (Dokkyo University)

Title: 'Building English Speaking Classroom Communities'

I'm waiting for your attendance.