

NUFS Workshop 2007

*Newsletter No. 2***Workshop in June (Part 1)**

Date: June 9, 2007, 10:30-14:30

Venue: Nagoya International Center, Lecture Room 2

Instructor: Tom Kenny (Nagoya University of Foreign University) & Tamami Wada (Nanzan University)

Title: "Listening Strategies for Interactivity"

The number of participants: 27

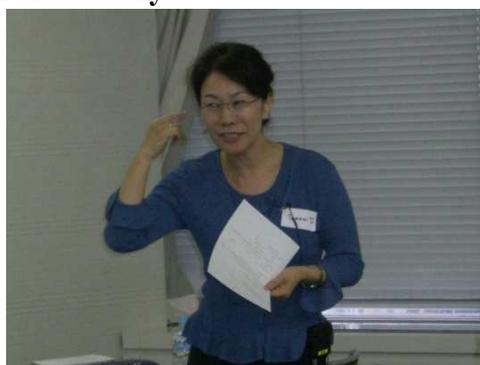
Abstract: In this workshop Listening Advantage authors Tom Kenny & Tamami Wada will demonstrate their approach to listening instruction for young Japanese learners, focusing especially on the importance of Interactivity. They will define Listening strategy instruction, summarize the pros & cons of listening strategy instruction, present a variety of task types and listening transcripts. Participants will work to analyze tasks & Transcripts for level-appropriacy and evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials.

Free copies of the new listening advantage texts will be available, as well as samples of listening material from texts 1 and 2.



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

- Reading a monologue and back-channel, shadowing. It looks interesting and I always feel that I have to teach them.
- To teach back-channeling would be good. To introduce how to make conversation continuous, it is one of the best ways.
- I'd like to introduce conversation skills such as back-channeling, pre-fab reactions and shadowing not only for listening lessons but also reading lesson.



- These skills make students concentrate on the contents of listening or reading passages. Also, it's fun for students to do these activities. I think they make lessons active and enjoyable.
- Using existing dialogues, I would like to teach the interactivities of shadowing because it really promotes the conversation and it gives it flow.
 - Interactive Listening will be a very good activity I can use in my daily lesson because it needs cooperation between two people and it makes students listen very carefully to his/her partner's reading. I think it can be used in various ways.
 - Interactive Listening Tamami introduced. After students do the listening tasks, they could be a teacher for each other. It means that we teachers don't have to tell them answers and explain the reasons all the time.
 - I was interested in both the interactive listening strategies that were used to accompany the movie

‘In America’. Also the new shadowing strategies that are new to me, substitution and anticipatory shadowing, can be great in encouraging my students to be more communicative in their times conversations.

- ‘In America’. We can use this activity as review questions when we start reading the textbook at the beginning of the class.

2. What you learned from today’s workshop.

- Listening tends to be perceived as a passive activity, but it can be a very active one and students’ communicative ability can be developed in many ways through interactive listening. It’s important to turn one-way listening activities into ones where students can interact.
- I learned how important interactive listening activities are. I usually ask students to listen to a passage and do some listening activities but there was no interaction in it. In a real situation, it doesn’t happen. If you hear something, you mostly react to what you heard. That’s natural. I’ll try to create interactive listening activities for my students.
- I learned there are three different ways of shadowing: basic, substitute and anticipatory shadowing. I also learned that teachers should teach students more advanced shadowing so that they can develop their speaking ability.
- Interactive listening is very important in conversation. It assures the speaker that he/she is understood by the listener. Thus, junior high school students must also learn some strategies of interactivity.
- Interactive strategies such as back channeling, shadowing or summarizing. I asked students to repeat whole sentences and it impeded the flow of communication. But using these strategies, their conversation will be more active and interactive.
- I learned variety of listening tasks which make listening activity less boring. And ‘How to make listening difficult’ questions gave me a lot of hints.
- It’s a good way to integrate speaking activities and listening activities in order to improve both skills. Test-listening is not so effective, but teachers tend to rely on just test-listening practice. I’d like to introduce more interactive listening and speaking in my class.



3. Questions and Answers

Q (1): I really enjoyed ‘interaction’ video acted by university students. I was really surprised to see how fluently they can communicate. I want to ask what you taught before these interaction activities. Did you teach them conversation strategies or something like that?

A (Tom): In the classes before they were videotaped, students were introduced to the conversation strategies for interactivity: esp. “guessing the word” (anticipatory) shadowing. One of their explicit challenges in videotaping was to use that strategy.

Q (2): Some people say that it's important to read or speak English with proper intonation, rhythm and pronunciation if you want to improve your listening ability. Do you think it is true? Do you think reading aloud with proper intonation, rhythm and pronunciation help develop listening abilities?

A (Tom): There's a whole world of scholarship on both sides of this question and I am familiar with none of it! Reading aloud will help you improve your pronunciation & intonation, it's argued. Teaching learners to recognize stress and tone units will help them learn to process input. Imitating good models will also help improve pronunciation & intonation. I believe that learners who are cognitively oriented toward audio (i.e., those learners with a good ear & or a propensity toward mimicry) will benefit from reading aloud/shadowing good models. Those who are cognitively oriented toward visual or special will be less likely to benefit. "Each according to his gifts?"

Q (3): I think it's really difficult to teach students when to say "Uh-huh" or "That's great" and so on in a natural conversation. To say these things, they have to understand the conversation. Is it difficult to introduce those phrases at an early stage?

A (Tom): I disagree. Learners pick up supra-segmental tone units quickly and can be trained easily to use prefabricated reactions and back-channeling. All they need to use them is to understand the gist of the conversation and catch the pauses between tone units. I often find learners feel that they're participating more in a conversation simply by using these phrases, and that really boosts their confidence and enthusiasm for using English! (See units 3 & 5 of *Nice Talking With You* by Tom Kenny & Linda Woo (Macmillan Languagehouse) for example guided activities for using these phrases)



Q (4): In junior high school, we have three English classes a week. What part of teaching procedure can we use to introduce interactive listening effectively?

Q (5): Are there activities more suitable for junior high school, first year level?

A (Tom): As I mentioned in #3 above, basic shadowing, back-channeling phrases & short, pre-fab phrases are easy to teach & get students to practice – even at the JHS level.

Q (6): About summarizing, do you have your students summarize the story without script?

A (Tom): Yes, absolutely. And it's very challenging for them to do so. See *Nice Talking with You 2* (Tom Kenny, Macmillan Languagehouse) especially units 5 and 7 for example activities using "It sounds like..." and "so, you mean..."

I want to thank everyone for participating in the workshop on Saturday! It was very rewarding for me to work with such motivated, enthusiastic teachers! (Tom Kenny)

Q (7): How could you incorporate material similar to the 'In America' activity into a program that requires a concrete curriculum for standardized testing?

A (Tamami): There's a simple answer to this: You can choose material or activities related to your lessons or your goal which students can feel that they are learning something. I used to use a lot of songs or movies in my grammar lessons in both junior and senior high schools to review the points I taught. Since most of the junior or senior high schools teachers in Japan are teaching in a curriculum requiring a standardized test, this test will always be essential facet which would never disappear. Sometimes this would interfere with our communicative activities. However, there are always alternate ways of evaluating those activities. Occasionally those standardized test are more harmful than beneficial. Thus, I strongly encourage the use of alternative materials -- should be advantageous for the learner. Good luck.

Workshop in June (Part 2)

Date: June 9, 2007, 14:30-17:00

Venue: Nagoya International Center, lecture Room 2

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

The number of participants: 23

Abstract: The participants discussed their own monthly report in groups. Mr. Sato and Nancy joined the groups and gave them some advice.



Workshop in July (Schedule)

(Part 1)

Date: July 14, 2007, 10:30-14:30

Venue: Nagoya International Center, Lecture Room 2

Instructor: Suzanne Bonn (Sugiyama Women's University)

Title: "Reflective Portfolios and Online Alternative Assessments"

(Part 2)

Date: July 14, 2007, 14:30-17:00

Venue: Nagoya International Center, Lecture Room 2

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

Topic: Group discussion

Please email Chihaya (chiha143@nufs.ac.jp) if you will attend.