NUFS Workshop 2007

Newsletter No. 3

<u>Workshop in July (Part 1)</u>

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"

The number of participants: 21

Abstract: Looking for creative and alternative ways to assess your students? Most English courses culminate with an exam or essay. In this workshop, you will learn how portfolios provide an alternative to such assessments. They give students control over their work and give them the opportunity to reflect on their English skills. In addition, you will learn how to use online sources to aid in student assessment. Participants will gain a greater understanding of the varied assessments available to them through activities and materials, and are encouraged to reflect on their own contexts in groups and to share ideas about how to implement alternative assessments into their own courses.

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

- Portfolio is what I'd like to try in the next semester. I failed one in the last, but now I got great hints and I think I can modify it for my students.
- The idea of portfolios is interesting but I still cannot find out how I can use it at junior high school.
- 'Final Portfolio' – this is a beautiful, wonderful reflection. I just asked my students to write a semester report before. I'd like to change it into this kind of Final Portfolios. Students would be more satisfied with their growth if they can see the project again. Also this kind of portfolios will be a great treasure for their learning.
- I want to use 'Quia' in my classes. It's very interesting and by creating their own games, students can learn a lot.
- Explore Quia.com – to first make handouts for Ss e.g. Wordsearch then to introduce Ss to the site and create original activities connected to materials from lessons.
- I will try using the internet to download soft wares like PureVoice and Gradekeeper. I'll create several activities using Quia and show them to my colleagues. They are sure to be interested in them.
- RubiStar – I want to utilize RubiStar to make rubric. I'm not good at creating new rubric. I can get new one of I add a little more to it. It's wonderful!
- 'Quia' – I'll make word search using this program and print it out to use in my class as a handout. It seems quite easy to make one.

2. What you learned from today's workshop.

- I learned important aspects of portfolio using alternative assessment. Alternative assessment helps students keep their memory. They can reflect on what they learned and how they learned. They also notice how they can be a life-long learner of English.

- It is important to evaluate using not only tests but alternative assessment!

- Portfolios and other alternative assessments are very important to learn about their learning stages, strength and weakness. We may unconsciously reflect our own teaching and learning but from students' portfolios, we can learn what are happening in their learning. Portfolios are needed for both students and teachers to reflect our learning. I'd like to introduce more projects and more activities in order to do alternative assessment.

- It's really exciting to use many programs in computer. I've never known there are so many interesting ones. We have a computer room in my school so I'd like to use some of them.

- Alternative assessment makes us know the growth of students. Moreover, students themselves know the growth of themselves. It's very important for them.

- It's interesting to make a simple on-line game with software, such as Quia. Students can have fun and at the same time they can review what they have learned again and again.

- I'm very happy to know how to make rubrics very easily. I have been wondering how to make proper criteria for my students' speaking test. The websites introduced today will help me greatly.

- I usually use computers only to make my materials or handouts. But today I learned computers have much possibility to be used in class. Unfortunately, my school doesn't have enough number of PCs for 40 students, but I want to try someday.

3. Questions and Answers

Q (1): I'm thinking of using Pod-casting for listening activities in my classroom. However, sound materials I find on the web are too difficult or too easy, too fast or too slow (It's rare, though). How can you evaluate sound materials? Just listen to them?

I'm not familiar with any resource in which podcasts are evaluated. Only teachers really know their students' levels, and so we are the ones who need to point our students in the right direction in finding level-appropriate listening materials. After doing a quick search in Google using the key words: "ESL, podcast", here are some helpful links for you:

ESL Podcast: http://www.eslpod.com/website/index.php

Long List of Links to Podcasts: http://iteslj.org/links/ESL/Listening/Podcasts/

Video Podcasts for English Pronunciation: http://www.ugoeigo.com/

ELT Podcasts: http://www.eltpodcast.com/

Another website I was recommended is BBC's Learning English:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/

Q (2): I'm wondering how to get started using technology in my professional life.

TESOL, Inc. offers both the experienced and inexperienced online teacher a "Principles and Practices of Online Teaching" certificate program. If you are a bit weary of using technology to enhance your students' classroom experience, this 6-course certificate program introduces you to the multiple online options available to you. If you don't have the time or money to do the complete course, you can take just 1 or 2 classes. I completed the full course last year, and many of the things I showed you on Saturday were what I had learned in this certificate program. Check out TESOL's website for more information: http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/sec_document.asp?CID=244&DID=488

Q (3): Is there a video version of Audacity or PureVoice?

Neither Audacity nor PureVoice has video capability. Some programs in which you can make video are:
iMovies: http://www.apple.com/ilife/imovie/ (For Mac computers only. I had students make their own movies, first recording with a digital camera, and then uploading the video into iMovies, where students can then edit their movie. Lots of fun!)
Windows Movie Maker: This is already on your computer! Check under programs. I haven't used this yet, but colleagues have, and I've heard it's pretty easy.

Q (4): I understand portfolios are important for students themselves and feedback is useful for teachers to reflect their teaching. Do we need both of them?

I believe that the two go hand-in-hand; neither stands alone. In other words, when students make a reflective portfolio, teachers will get automatic feedback. The portfolios aid not only the students in reviewing and retaining what they've learned, but it helps teachers gain an insight into what the students are learning and getting from your classes.

Workshop in July (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 University)
The number of participants: 16
Abstract: The participants discussed their own monthly report in groups. Yoshi and Nancy joined the groups and gave them some advice.

Summer workshop is held on August 6, 7 and 8 at NUFS. Full attendance of these three days is required.

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"Extensive Listening and Reading:

Expanding Learning Opportunities Outside the Classroom"

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Goal

The goals of these three days are: 1) to deepen your understanding of extensive listening and reading; 2) to provide you with hands-on activities about extensive listening and reading; 3) to provide you with opportunities to discuss problems and ideas about extensive listening and reading.

Outline

The seventh NUFS Summer Workshop deals with a hot topic—extensive listening and reading: expanding learning opportunities outside the classroom. Although language teachers know that there are materials out there—including songs, movies, news, podcasts, jazz chants, graded readers, and so on—they usually use those materials <u>in their extra time</u>. Instead, they mainly use their textbooks. However, research shows that successful learners invest time and effort outside the classroom. Then, how can language teachers encourage students to work on extensive listening and reading? There are ways and some successful teachers actually connect classroom activities with extensive listening and reading outside the classroom. Presenters will demonstrate a variety of extensive listening and reading activities so that participants can actually experience them as students. Moreover, participants will work in pairs and in groups for presentations.

Lectures, hands-on activities, group work and presentations by participants are all conducted in English. You can improve and practice your English while learning new teaching techniques. Finally, you will have many opportunities to learn from one another. You can share your own ideas and materials with other participants.

Day One (August 6), Morning (9:30-12:30)
Extensive Listening, Part 1: Songs and Movies
Kazuyoshi Sato, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

I am sure that most teachers have used English songs or movies in their classrooms at some time or other. None of us doubt that songs and movies are great materials for learning English. However, just having students listen to songs or watch movie scenes in class will not make them successful language learners. How, then, can we motivate students by using songs and movies? I will demonstrate several techniques about how to use songs and movies for extensive listening. You will experience rhythm practice by using English songs and perform a movie scene in pairs without actions.

Day One (August 6), Afternoon (1:30-4:30)
Literature Circles
Kazuyoshi Sato, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

Mark Furr made a wonderful presentation about literature circles at 2004 NUFS Summer Workshop. According to Furr, "Reading circles are small groups of students who meet in the classroom to talk about stories. Each student reads the story outside of class, and prepares their Reading Circle role for the classroom discussion." Sato has been trying literature circles in his university class since 2005. Results are surprising! Students' comments show that they could understand the story better by sharing their opinions. Moreover, as they became used to discussion in English with their group members, they could improve their English abilities. You will experience literature circles as learners in this workshop.

Day Two (August 7), Morning (9:30-12:30)
Extensive Listening, Part 2: Graded Readers and Children's Books & Songs
Nancy Mutoh, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

Extensive reading and listening flood learners' minds with English that is easy enough for them to understand and enjoy. This type of extensive contact with English causes it to stick in learners' memories because of its meaningfulness, quantity and repetition. In Extensive Listening Part II, participants will use graded readers and children's books & songs to experience various extensive listening techniques. Additionally, they will learn ways of getting students to do extensive listening outside of class by tying it to in-class follow up activities.

Day Two (August 7), Afternoon (1:30-4:30)
Participants will make an activity by using a children's song. Also, they will experience literature circles in groups.

Day Three (August 8), Morning (9:30-12:30)
Extensive Reading in a High School Classroom
Keiko Takahashi, Ikeda High School
Our high school started extensive reading last year. We convinced our school and parents to purchase graded readers. I will explain how we started the extensive reading program in all English classes and how we managed problems. I will demonstrate how we incorporated extensive reading into our regular English classes. Moreover, I will show you how our extensive reading program affected students' overall English abilities.

Day Three (August 8), Afternoon (1:30-4:30)
Participants will share their favorite songs with focus on English rhythm. Then they will experience literature circles. Finally, they will join a performance contest (performing a movie scene in pairs without actions).

*Participants will write comments about the workshop at the end of each day. We will make a newsletter containing their anonymous comments and distribute it to everyone in the morning of the next day. Participants will also share their comments with one another at that time.

If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact Chihaya (Sugiura Chihaya, secretary).
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