

NUFS Workshop 2007

*Newsletter No. 11***Workshop in January (Part 1)**

Date: January 12, 2008, 10:30-14:30

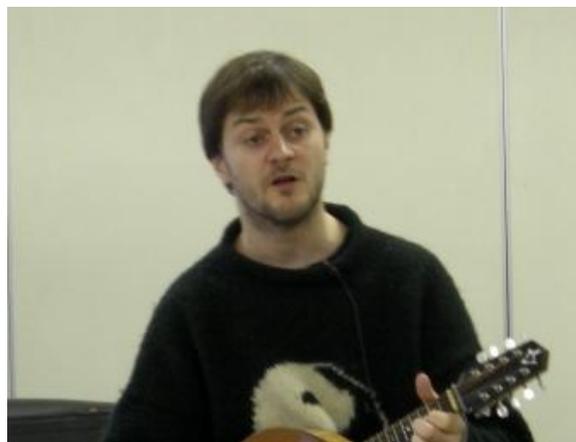
Venue: Nagoya International Center, Lecture Room 1

Instructor: Brian Cullen (Nagoya Institute of Technology)

Title: “Tunes and Tales for Tired Teachers”

The number of participants: 18

Abstract: Do you get tired of just using the textbook day after day? How about your students? Of course, you have to cover the material in the textbook, but there are so many different ways that you can achieve your learning goals. This workshop will give you practical ideas on how to use songs, music, and stories to teach the same material in new ways. Before the workshop, think about how you can bring songs and stories into your classroom and be prepared to share your great ideas with the other participants.



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

- I'd like to master some techniques of telling split stories and imaginary journeys. It's a good way of fascinating students. To master them, I need the soft voice like Brian.
- Story telling interested me a lot. I learned that I could apply various stories into various ways. Grammar learning tends to be boring to the students, but in this way, students would enjoy learning. Furthermore, they would memorize grammar rules for long.
- The song 'Good Friends' is really suitable for the first year students of junior high. I'd like to try with my students. I'd like to try to tell Japanese old stories to my students in English as a routine so that students will get used to listening. I want to try the technique of splitting the story and sitting on the same place.
- Singing with gestures – it is quite difficult to remember the sentences, but with singing and rhythm, we can remember the English phrases and physical movements together.
- As for telling a story, teacher's fluency in English is very important, I think. Maybe we can make mistakes, as you said, but we have to be eloquent to attract students to the story.
- I really enjoyed listening to his songs and doing 'Songs for Listening Practice' using 'Molly Malone'. I'd like to use his idea of dictation: dictation of a couple words, partial dictation and full dictation. I also want to introduce stories as Metaphors such as 'The Two Frogs'. I love this story, I think it is interesting to make students think about the metaphor of the story.
- We can change any stories into the stories which have grammar points students have to study. So I'd like to use a famous story like 'Urashima Taro' and change it into a useful material for them. They know the story, so they will be able to understand a new grammar point without difficulty.

2. What you learned from today's workshop.

- First of all, I'd like to say thank you for relaxing and enjoyable story telling and songs. It's really great approach to give English lessons to the students at the beginning of instruction. As you mentioned, students tend to remember songs and stories rather than the simplest and easiest grammar explanation on the textbook. I decide to collect songs and stories related to grammar lessons. Also, I admire your talented skills for musical instrument. I've learned as well that teachers should have some particular skills entertaining students.
- So far, I've ever used music, for example filling the missing words, but there were no objects, Through today's activities, I realized we need to have clear objectives when we do activities of music, telling stories, and so on. And also, I want to be a good actress to tell stories. I want to practice speaking with good tone like Brian.
- I'm impressed by Brian's comment: "Use the story or songs you like". I was wondering what songs are good for students, but I'll look for something interesting for myself and use them in my class in the future.
- I leaned that listening to music is very effective. For a long time, I have not been sure why everyone recommended using music. I found the answer today. It's very good for students to give chances to listen to native English. And I also believe in Mozart effect. I'd like to use music in my class from now on.
- Most of the time when I am in the class, I am worrying about time and go on with the class in a rush. Today I've noticed we can learn English in a relaxed mood.
- The most important thing is my imagination and creativity. I always look for the good materials made by someone, but today I leaned I should change them for my own purposes.



3. Questions and Answers

Q(1): I'm going to have some students perform story telling, jazz chants or songs for presentation. What kind of stories do you recommend to introduce students? Do you know any useful site in Internet or somewhere with audio?

Sounds great. The type of story depends on your students' level and interests. I would suggest taking stories that you find interesting yourself and adapting them to the level and interests of your students. You can use anecdotes from friends or feel-good stories from books like the "Chicken Soup for your Soul" series, or of course, you can use fairy tales or children's stories. For audio, here's a site that offers kids' stories in audio format. <http://storynory.com/>



Q(2): If possible, I want to use pictures when I tell stories. Do you think it's a good idea?

Of course! Many people use pictures to tell stories in the style of kamishibai. Of course, the most powerful pictures are the ones that learners create in their own minds, but often a picture can help them to visualize a scene more easily. You can also encourage them to retell the story by using the pictures, or ask them to guess more about the characters/locations shown in the pictures. Or they can even draw their own pictures. Check out The Potato Pals. They are for kids, but they are a good example of very simple stories being told through pictures as well as words.



Q(3): Teachers can use English songs to present important grammar points, but how can I reinforce what students learned by using English songs? Students will learn their favorite phrases by heart unknowingly, but can it lead to strengthen their abilities to express themselves?

Learning a phrase unknowingly can be extremely powerful. It is learnt as a lexical chunk. This can be used by itself in expression or it can later become available for grammatical analysis. My English teacher made me learn a LOT of poetry by heart. At the time, I didn't understand it. But years later, my unconscious mind finally figured it out. Any whole language that is learnt will eventually be used by the brain!

To answer your question more directly, you could set up exercises for them to use the language of the songs in other sentences. For example, in a text, the missing words and phrases could be the ones that they learned in the song.

Q(4): What do you think of giving Japanese translations when we use English songs?

Sometimes it can really help. Giving a translation of the whole song is not necessarily the best approach. Sometimes, just translating difficult words or phrases can be much more useful since it provides aid but doesn't make the students reliant on the translation. They should always be encouraged to understand the song in the original language where possible. On the other hand, asking students to translate the songs themselves can be a great exercise and it allows them to think about the meaning much more deeply. Remember to let your students enjoy the songs. Those little songs may be what they remember 10 years after your course is finished!

Workshop in January (Part 2)

Date: January 12, 2008, 14:30-17:00

Venue: Nagoya International Center, Lecture Room 1

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

The number of participants: 17

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





Workshop in February (Schedule)

(Part 1)

Date: February 9, 2008, 10:30-14:30

Venue: Nagoya NSC College

Instructor: Nancy Mutoh (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)

Title: "Brain Maps: Getting all those good ideas organized"

(Part 2)

Date: February 9, 2008, 14:30-17:00

Venue: Nagoya NSC College

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

Topic: Monthly report and group discussion

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