NUFS Workshop 2009

Newsletter No. 8

<u>Workshop in October</u>

\<Part 1\>

Date: October 10, 2009
Venue: NSC College, Room 31
Time: 10:30-12:00
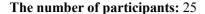**Instructor:** Mathew White (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)
Title: "Intelligent Choices: Designing Lessons that Cater to the Diversity of Learning Preferences in Your Class"

Abstract: Teachers are usually enthusiastic about English and our lessons. Unfortunately, we sometimes find that students do not share our enthusiasm. Is it possible to motivate the unmotivated English learners in your class?
This workshop is designed to encourage respect and appreciation for students' strengths beyond and outside linguistic intelligence. After reviewing different types of intelligence, participants will complete activities and reflect on which intelligences each activity targets. Later, participants will look at their own teaching materials to explore methods for engaging a greater number of students. Please bring a textbook or materials that you plan to use in the future!

The number of participants: 25

1. **Interesting activities you might want to use in your class. Why?**
- I'd like to use the activity of remembering a picture as a way to teach "How many". It's interesting that the use of a picture can help us teach various grammatical structures.
- Remembering the picture – participants concentrated to the picture and tried to remember as much as possible. It can easily get the students' attention. It was fun to recall what we have remembered.
- Picture with bubbles – students think what characters say and English sentences. If I use comics which are familiar to students, they will get interested.
- Categorization is interesting. Students can see the words on the various kinds of points. So students can have flexibility in the way of thinking. And also it can be finished in a short time.
- The bingo game featuring comments/phrases that the teacher uses in class sounds fun.
- Some of the Bingo ideas were interesting. The story telling and acting out are also good ways to make simple exercises more interesting.
- When we teachers come up with activities in the class, being aware of trying to have different intelligence is crucial. If we can analyze and categorize them, we can give more variety and never enable students to get bored with learning.

2. What you learned from today's workshop

- Including multiple intelligence cab enrich our teaching, making activities fun and motivating students.
- My lesson plans reinforce linguistic and inter-person intelligence. Many students like music and drawing pictures. I want to try activities including musical and spatial intelligences.
- When I ask my students to do pair work, they don't start immediately. It means they need time for intra-personal consideration. Sometimes I find pictures on students' notebooks relevant to the content of the reading materials we use. Special intelligence activities will be useful for such students rather than translation. It is different doing some activities with the basic notion of these intelligences from doing without being conscious of them. It will be useful when we explain to students the reasons and effectiveness of the activities.
- Usually when I think of a teaching plan, I think of the objectives first. But I've never planned to reinforce some intelligence. So I was much interested in the system and the topic today.
- I learned category of multiple intelligences. I found my lesson balance is not good. My lessons mainly focus on linguistic only. I try to keep balance to grow their multiple intelligences.
- Not only is it important to use many styles of teaching and integrating different intelligences, but also try to use these in the evaluation phase of the class as well. It's a great thing for the students if the teacher links class content directly with evaluation and they will appreciate this as well.
- A lot of inter/intra personal intelligence I think is vital to communication activities and I can appreciate how simple alterations or caveats can give normal activities that focus on linguistics a good amount of movement(kinesthetic) and logic.

3. Questions and Answers

Q (1): Language will always be a focus, since we are teaching an L2, so I wonder, given the confines of public school English, how realistic is it to endeavor to or expect to target other intelligences productively?

A: While language is the focus, I think it is extremely realistic, productive, and rewarding (for both students and teachers) to target other intelligences. Students who already have high linguistic intelligence can lose their motivation when their classmates are not engaged in the lessons as well. By including a greater variety of intelligences, you are likely to gain the interest and motivation of more students, and that should result in a more positive learning community. Everybody benefits.

Q (2): Students have different multiple intelligences, so we have to include activities which cover different intelligences. As final project, I would like to know the list of different kinds of activities. What kind of projects did you list?

A: Final projects will depend on how many days and how much time students have to complete and present them. The class on Greek Mythology was 7 weeks long, so I showed students some examples of projects the first week, and they decided whether to complete group projects or individual projects in second week. I also gave them some time in class to discuss their projects and consult with me. Each person in a group would have 3 to 4 minutes of presentation time. Therefore, a group of 3 would present their project to the class in a total of between 9 to 12 minutes. Although students could decide on any project that conveyed a myth, here are the projects I suggested for the class:

Project One: Mount Olympus Newspaper/News Broadcast

Create a newspaper or news program that the Gods might have read (or watched on TV). You will need to include popular sections just sports, world news, local news, entertainment, comics, advice column, etc. Make sure that the contents of your newspaper reflect all your knowledge of Greek Mythology. Your project will be graded on the amount of knowledge that you present, the creativity of your project, and your use of English.

Project Two: Interviews

You are a famous reporter and have been given an exclusive interview with one or more characters from Greek Mythology that we have studied. What juicy information would your readers want to know? What questions would you want to ask? How and where would this interview take place? You can either write your interviews as a magazine article, a TV script (do a video to be shown in class), or do an actual performance in class (anyone that helps you will earn some extra credit). You will need to submit the final script for a grade along with any class presentation or video. Your project will be graded on the amount of knowledge that you present, the creativity of your project, and your use of English.

Project Three: Create Your Own Myth

You can write your own myth to explain some natural event. Some examples include the leaves changing color, the origin of a plant or animal or why a plant or animal is a certain color. Choose a hero for your story. Give your hero a name and describe him/her/it. Create some kind of conflict (remember the 5 types of conflict in literature?). The result of the conflict should be the natural event that you described at the top of the page. You can also adapt a myth we've studied to modern times. Your project will be graded on the amount of knowledge that you present, the creativity of your project, and your use of English.

Project Four: Essay on "Heroism"

You can write a formal essay on "The Nature of Heroism". In this essay, you will need to compare and contrast the ancient Greek concept of a hero versus the modern definitions of a hero and what type of new heroes have emerged. Our modern-day heroes may not kill monsters or fight in wars, but have captured the imagination of many people. What qualities do modern day heroes have? You can then present your essay to the class. Your project will be graded on the amount of knowledge that you present, the creativity of your project, and your use of English.

Project Five: Research Project

You can do some research on a myth or fable from a country of your choice. You will need to explain where your myth comes from, what happens in the myth, and what the message or moral to learn from the myth is. Your project will be graded on the amount of knowledge that you present, the creativity of your project, and your use of English. If the myth is short, you may need to do more than one.

Project Six: Create a Board Game (rolling dice and trying to get to the goal)

You can design a mythology game, similar to the Fate game we played in class. Design cards that explain

different myths or fables, and provide the players with an interesting and interactive way to learn. Your project will be graded on the amount of knowledge that you present, the creativity of your project, and all mechanics of good writing.

Q (3): When learning an L2, which level of intelligence is the least important? The most?

A: Hmm… I think that the answer to this question would depend on the individual and the context in which that individual wants to use the language. It's similar to asking, "What's the best way to get to Kyoto from Nagoya?" There is a saying that "getting there is half the journey." As educators, we want to help students gain self-esteem, confidence and mutual respect along their journey.

Q (4): How can we deal with a student who is weak in one intelligence so they fall behind in an activity?

A: There are many ways of helping students. We can allow students to observe others instead of having to complete a particular task themselves. We might let students who have trouble drawing cut pictures from magazines or take images from the Internet instead. We can also allow students who are stronger in that intelligence to teach or assist those students. More importantly, I think is varying the types of activities, so that the student who might be weak in one intelligence can practice it, but can also demonstrate his or her stronger intelligences in another lesson.

<Part 2>

Date: October 10, 2009, 14:30-17:00
Venue: NSC College, Room 31
Advisors: Kazuyoshi Sato, Nancy Mutoh, Mathew White (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)
The number of participants: 22
Abstract: group discussion on action research

Workshop in November(Planned)

Date: November 14, 2009 10:30-14:30, 14:30-17:00
Venue: NSC College, Room 31
Instructor: Hiromi Osuka (Takashidai Junior High School), Miwako Kushiro (Kagamihara High School)
Title: Lesson Demonstration

Please send an email to Chihaya (chiha143(at-mark)nufs.ac.jp) to attend this workshop.