

The Word

September 2020 | Volume 30 | Issue 1

Hawai'i Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, the local affiliate of TESOL, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building a community of professionals teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in the state of Hawai'i.

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Submissions



Topics

I welcome any topic which would be of interest to HITESOL members or ESL professionals in Hawai'i. We are interested in, for example: recommended Internet sites (or a tech type column), book reviews, a grad student's perspective, field trips/learning outside the classroom, reports from members working overseas, content-based teaching ideas, using video and music in the classroom, online teaching, CALL, a "gripes" column, DOE news/concerns, K-12 news, neighbor island news, applying theory to practice, interview with someone in the field, blended learning, and other topics. (You do not have to be a member of HITESOL to submit an article).

Format & Style

Articles should be no more than 4 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 12 point, attached as an MS Word document. Accompanying photos or clip art are optional but welcome. Please also include a short biography statement about the author (email address optional). In general, articles are written in a fairly informal, non-scholarly style. Please refer to previous issues of *The Word* to get a sense of the types of articles which appear in the newsletter, or contact the editor with questions.

Submission Deadlines

You can send an article at any time and it will appear in the next issue of *The Word*. Please note that the deadline for submissions will be posted on the web site regarding the upcoming issue.

Please submit the articles via E-mail to Lisa Kawai at lkawai@hpu.edu

Hawai`i TESOL Officers

Elected Positions

President
Vice President
Membership Secretary
Treasurer
Program Chair
Socio-Political Action Chair
Newsletter Editor
Members at Large

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Social Media Chair
Graduate Student Representative
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Hawai`i TESOL

Message from the Hawai`i TESOL President

Aloha and welcome to a new academic year – one perhaps unlike that which we have ever seen – of networking and professional development with Hawai`i TESOL!

The corona virus pandemic and its manifestation as COVID-19 have changed the landscape of education and language teaching, as it has much of the rest of life as we have known it. How long the pandemic will last, and what its repercussions will be, remain unknown. However, Hawai`i TESOL will continue to do its best to support all its members in these uncertain times.

All Hawai`i TESOL events this academic year will be held virtually – including our conference (barring any unforeseen circumstances, of course). Beyond our Opening (Distanced) Social, we are planning for our usual Practical Workshop in late fall, our Annual Conference in February, and our Language Experience in spring. We hope you will be able to join us virtually at any or all of these events.

The Hawai`i TESOL Executive Board encourages you to let us know how we can best serve you in these unprecedented times. Feel free to contact me or any of the Executive Board members with your thoughts and ideas.

Times like these are times of great challenge, but also times of great opportunity. We hope you will be able to take advantage of the opportunities that present themselves and emerge better and stronger. Even in these unprecedented times, Hawai`i TESOL hopes to continue to grow the organization and to serve your professional development and networking needs. Thank you for your continued interest in, and support of, Hawai`i TESOL!

Sincerely,
Anthony Silva
President, Hawai`i TESOL



Online Teaching Insights

By Clarissa Tekeiaki

I became a TESOL major at BYU-Hawai`i because I love English, people, and teaching. Sitting next to a student and explaining something they hadn't previously understood is so rewarding. During my under-

graduate experience, I got a job as an English language tutor for international students in the EIL (English as an International Language) program on campus. I loved being surrounded by wonderful students and seeing their progress. I couldn't wait to graduate and start my first full-time teaching job in my own lively classroom full of students.



graduate experience, I got a job as an English language tutor for international students in the EIL (English as an International Language) program on campus. I loved being surrounded by wonderful students and seeing their progress. I couldn't wait to graduate and start my first full-time teaching job in my own lively classroom full of students.

That was before what my sister affectionately (or not so affectionately) calls "the Rona." On a normal school week in March, COVID-19 turned my university, and my plans for the

future, upside down. Suddenly all the classes of my last undergraduate semester, my job as a tutor, and the plans for my first "real" teaching job moved online. Soon I found myself, as thousands of teachers and

students across the world, sitting in front of a computer screen all day. I learned, tutored, planned, and taught all through the lens of a laptop camera.

At first it was discouraging; it just didn't feel the same as sitting next to someone, talking them through their writing assignment or practicing speaking fluency. Even worse, my hopes of finally teaching in my own classroom didn't seem so exciting when I found out that that classroom would be online. However, I pressed forward (and

am still pressing forward). As I experienced online learning for myself, both as a tutor and as a student, I learned a few things that I plan on applying in my first classroom . . . an online classroom.

Use Technology

First, I learned that I didn't necessarily need a lot of new technology tools but that I needed to adjust and expand the way I was already using technology in my teaching. BYU Hawai`i uses the common learning platform, Canvas, which is helpful for keeping the syllabus, the course calendar, recorded instructional videos, quizzes, due dates, discussion boards, announcements, and links to Zoom meetings all in one place. Teachers and students are familiar with this platform; however, most have not previously needed to rely on it so heavily. I learned that when teachers create an online class, they must include extremely detailed, clear expectations for assignments, procedures, and learning material, either in the form of written instructions or oral explanations in a recorded video. If students know what is expected of them in an online class, they will be much more likely to meet those expectations.

In my tutoring, I also learned to edit papers with the students

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Online Teaching Insights

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I tutored in real time over Google Docs and have them send me pictures of their speaking assignments before our sessions started. These small tweaks allowed me to use technology more thoughtfully and creatively and allowed meaningful learning to continue in a very different environment.

Embrace the Differences and Be Flexible

When BYU Hawai`i transferred all classes online, students were encouraged to return home if at all possible, but whether they were in another country or in a dorm on campus, most everyone was learning individually in isolation. Suddenly, they could no longer learn, work and socialize in the midst of a busy campus community with ample opportunities to use their developing English skills. Additionally, many of the students had traveled home to countries in vastly different time zones. Some had poor internet connection. I tutored many students who were home in Japan and Korea who would wake up at 3:00 or 4:00 am to attend class.

Although these were obviously not ideal circumstances, I noticed how different professors dealt with the challenges. Some were rigidly tied to procedures, assignments, and policies which had worked well in-person but were not conducive

to online learning. However, it was the teachers who were willing to be flexible and embrace a new form of learning as an exciting challenge that succeeded the most. I saw professors realize that three synchronous meetings a week was not necessary or beneficial, so they would record a video for the class to watch instead or set up an asynchronous written or video discussion board. These teachers found ways to differentiate learning for the unique situation of each student instead of simply cramming the square peg of an in-person class into the round hole of the internet. I'm grateful that I was able to learn from these professors how to bravely adapt and make the very most of this new setting.

Encourage Personal Learning Autonomy

Because the fundamental purpose of language is communication, online learning posed a real problem for English language students and teachers. Students could only gain so much English exposure and practice from a few online classes. Additionally, learning a language takes a lot of work and requires support and accountability that can be difficult to provide through online learning. I felt these challenges very acutely because of my role as an EIL tutor for the university. It was

my job to help students practice their growing English skills and provide the support and encouragement they needed.

I soon learned that our online tutoring sessions together were much too short to give them all the help they needed, so I learned to focus my energy on giving them tools to learn for themselves. Of course, I did all I could to help them with their assignments for classes, but I no longer limited myself to their coursework. I realized that many of these students had sacrificed a lot to be learning English, and even if they were just focused on passing a class, they had a deeper motivation somewhere under the surface. As I talked with my students about why they wanted to learn English and what specifically they wanted to improve, I was able to give them ideas of what they could do individually to improve. Then, I helped them create specific, meaningful goals for their personal English learning. Soon, they were reading interesting books, writing letters and journal entries, listening to Ted Talks, and calling their English-speaking friends to practice speaking. It was rewarding to see them take their learning into their own hands and not let a virus stop their progress.

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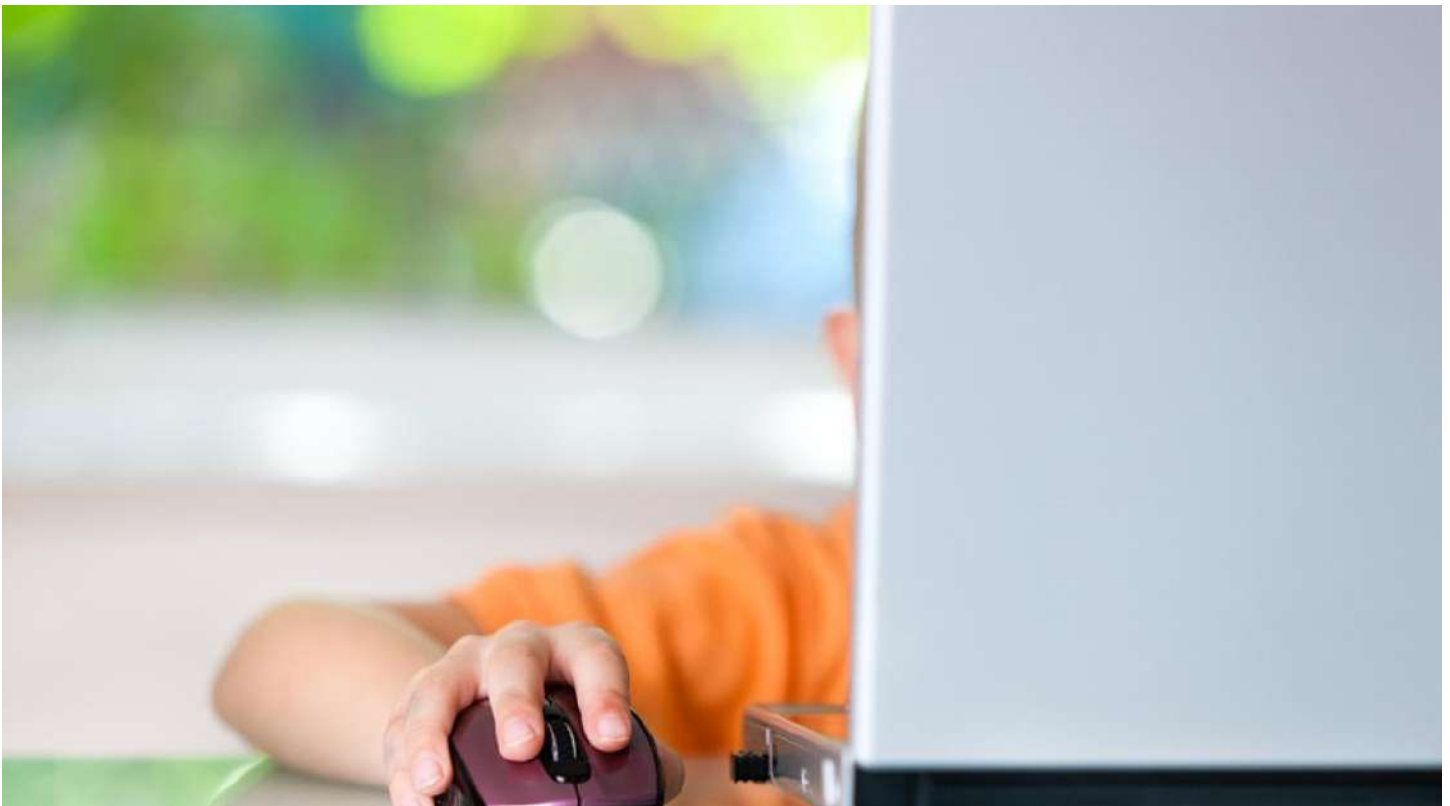
Online Teaching Insights

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Conclusion

Very soon, I will embark on a new adventure as an adjunct faculty member at BYU Hawai`i. I will get my own students who I will do my very best to teach, assess, support, and inspire. Although they will be an ocean and a computer screen away, I am confident that we will be able to connect and learn together in a meaningful way. As I expand and refine my use of technology, flexibly embrace a new medium of learning, and encourage student autonomy and ownership of their English skills, teaching will be just as rewarding as I've always hoped it would be.

About the Author: Clarissa Tekeiaki is a recent graduate of BYU Hawai`i with a BA in TESOL. She is now a member of the adjunct faculty for the EIL (English as an International Language) department at BYU Hawai`i, teaching English language classes to international university students. During her undergraduate experience, she managed the EIL tutoring program, taught English on two education internships in Kiribati, participated in original research, and presented at the National CRLA convention and Hawai`i TESOL. She can be contacted at clarissacoralee96@gmail.com.



Contingency Teaching for Contingency Learning

By Reed Riggs

In this article, I will attempt to relate recent changes in my teaching to two areas of research. I did not change my teaching practices as a direct response to this research, but I think connections in either direction—building teaching practices from research or using research to analyze teaching practices—can put a new lens over how I teach to better consider which practices to keep and which to continue changing. Teaching is typically solitary work, since teachers rarely find time to go and observe other teachers. Research, on the other hand, normally involves comparing and analyzing data from multiple settings. By comparing my teaching to research concepts built from large data sets, I hope to offer readers, and myself, a chance to engage in reflection regarding my practices and the goals my practices might serve. We will look at a micro-summary of my teaching experiences, followed by connections to two research concepts, namely “contingency learning” and “contingency teaching.” This article will conclude with a look at recent changes in my teaching through the lenses of those research ideas.

I started teaching basic literacy skills to non-literate adult native English speakers at a community service center in 2004. I then went to teach English in China in a variety of institutions and to a variety of age groups. I completed an MA in Chinese language education at Sichuan University, and then went on to teach Chinese at UH while completing my PhD there. I am currently in my second year as a Chinese instructor at BYU-Hawaii. I can now look back at a progression in my teaching beliefs, goals, and practices. Over the years I grew as a result of various trainings and certificates. For the first half of those years, I focused on getting students to talk. I believed then that the main goal of language education was to get people speaking, and the way to accomplish this goal was to get students to talk a lot in class. As I wrapped up seven years living in China, I began to reflect on my and my Chinese-learning friends’ behavior when interacting with Chinese people. Talking a lot may have benefited us in terms of speaking abilities, but all that talking took away time from another important social act: being a good listener. I soon learned that UH students who

did internship work in China often talked too much—just like I, and my friends, did when we were there—and employers found this disruptive to the workplace. I also learned from my Second Language Acquisition (SLA) courses at UH that learners need a lot of exposure to input—hearing and reading the language-in-use—to mentally process how the sounds, words, and grammar are used in various social, professional, written, and other contexts. My teaching now places more importance on helping learners become more sociable as good listeners during conversation with friends, colleagues, and family as a long-term development goal. For adult readers at the community center where I started, reading a novel was a milestone, and few of them never got that far before quitting the program. Putting these ideas together, I see that people speak when a social or work situation calls for speaking, but strong listening and reading abilities better connect people and expands worldviews.

From psychological research, contingency learning (Ellis, Römer, & O’Donnell,

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2016, p. 62) is the unconscious, or *implicit*, learning of the probability that one thing is connected to another thing. It's how we recognize everything in the world around us, including the forms, meanings, and contexts of language use. Contingency learning in language research has mainly looked at how people living in a new country pick up and use verbs in grammatical constructions in similar patterns to how native speakers use those same verbs in those same grammatical constructions. I aimed to keep this article free of research jargon, but a quote from this area of research can lend authoritative support for this idea:

Implicit learning supplies a distributional analysis of the problem space: our language system implicitly figures out how likely a given construction is in particular contexts, how often they instantiate one sense or another, how these senses are in turn associated with different features of the context, and so on. To the extent that these distributional analyses are confirmed time and again through continuous exposure to more input, generalizations and abstractions are formed that are also largely implicit. (Ellis et al., 2016, p. 66)

In short, learners unconsciously observe how sounds are used in words, how words are used in phrases (syntax), and how words and phrases are used in social-situational contexts. Through this observational experience, learners each build their own mental linguistic system while being mostly unaware of the process as it happens. Problems in classrooms can arise if learners are deprived of opportunities to observe how these parts of language are used across different grammatical and social contexts, such as when a teacher fills lesson time with explaining rules about sounds, words, and grammar.

Of course, it is a normal

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Contingency Teaching for Contingency Learning

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professional practice for teachers of any subject, including languages, to pre-plan teaching points and ensure that those points are covered in each lesson. However, in my experience, continuously introducing new words, new grammatical constructions, and new social situations of use prevents “old words” from distributing across more and varying contexts, exactly what each learner’s contingency-learning brain needs to develop this new language. Outside of classrooms, words are never “old” versus “new,” but are frequent versus infrequent. An infrequent word may be specialized for a certain professional or emotional context, and so it may wait to appear until that situational context comes up. But in language classrooms, when normal teaching fills our interaction time with pre-planned teaching targets, little time is left for the natural re-use of words across different contexts over time.

A more relaxed, dialogic solution can be found in Waring’s (2016) notion of “contingency teaching,” which “requires being responsive to the moment” (p. 148). This can look like a whole-class discussion about student ideas, a text, pictures, etc. Conversation Analysis research uncovers principled structure within the ways people take turns during a discussion,

which often appears chaotic and random until analyzed closely. For instance, English and Chinese speakers don’t simply use subject-verb-object grammar in all sentences when they talk with other people. It is more normal to respond to a specifying question (e.g. “How long until you get there?”) by using a simple phrase (“About ten minutes”; notice: no verb). If one tries to respond using more complex grammar, which teachers often ask learners to practice (e.g. “I will take about ten minutes to get there”), outside of classrooms this might sound like the responder is accounting for some problem in the situation (see Hall, 2020, for more about responding to specifying questions versus *wh*-telling questions). Grammar practice rarely resembles social practice.

In my current teaching, I want students to gain content knowledge about history, geography, food, people and other topics, alongside proficiency in the language. I hope students will connect with cultural content in personal ways on a moment-by-moment basis. However, when I present a tight sequence of information, we end up treating me, the instructor, as the central distributor of new knowledge, leaving few opportunities to re-use “old words” words in these new contexts. To better enact contingency teaching, I still bring my real-world cultural knowledge to our interaction,

but I also invite students to remember and think up real and imaginative ideas to contribute to our discussions. Students can (re)use whatever language and topics they remember from past lessons. We blend my real-world content with their personal and fictional ideas. This has been especially productive for keeping novice through intermediate proficiency students interacting as a whole class, listening mostly, but speaking when they want to. We use language, pictures, and a white board to ask different kinds of questions, agree, disagree, announce news about who did what, and react with a variety of emotional phrases. Contingency teaching through real and imaginative ideas invites learners to control topics. It allows space for me to model uses of words, grammar, and actions across contexts so students can engage in contingency learning.

References

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Acknowledgement: I thank Diane Neubauer for her helpful comments on early and later

drafts of this article. Any errors are my responsibility.

About the Author: Reed Riggs is a Chinese language instructor at Brigham Young University–Hawai`i. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Hawai`i in 2018 and has been working in language teacher education in Hawai`i since 2012. He has presented workshops for language teachers across the

United States and internationally, in China and in France. His research ties language teaching practices with research in Conversation Analysis and Usage-Based Linguistics. He hopes to highlight more areas where teachers and researchers can work together and gain from each other's work. Email: rsriggs@go.byuh.edu or reedsamuelriggs@gmail.com

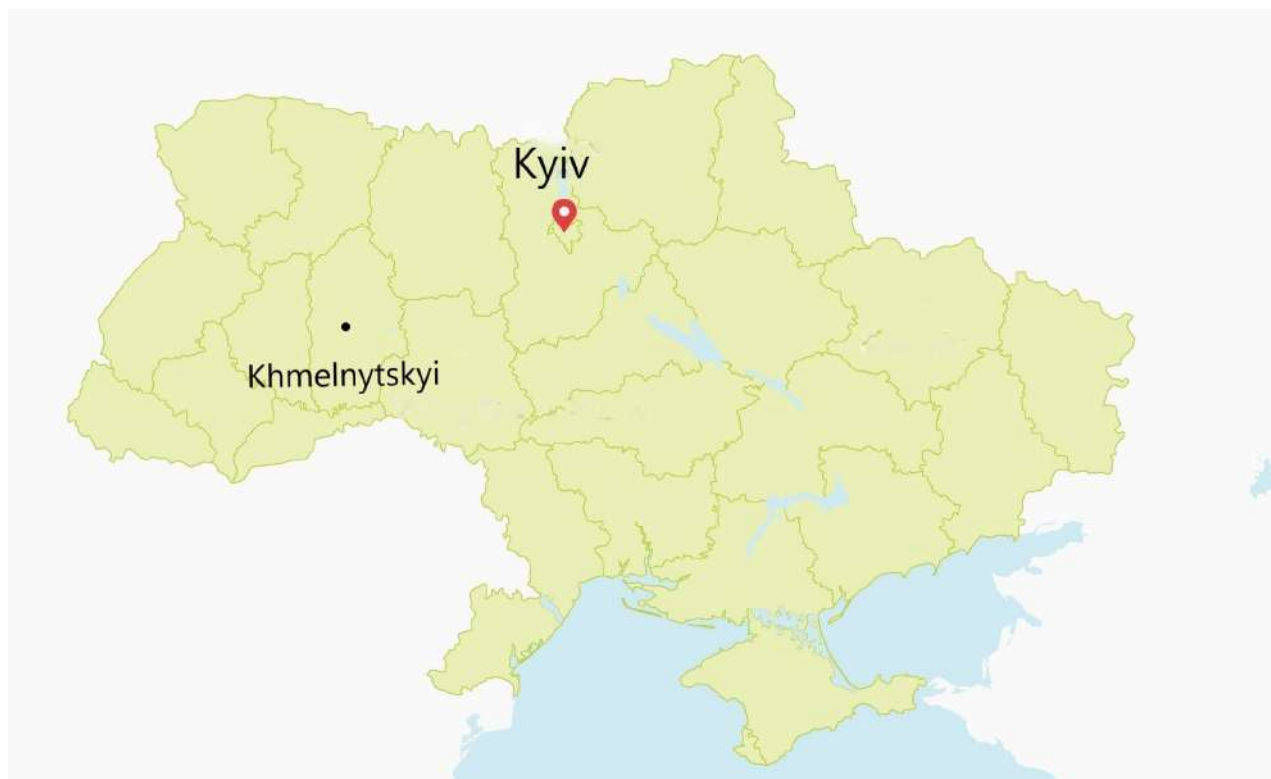


Ukrainian Connections



TESOL Ukraine Spotlight

By Sally La Luzerne-Oi



A Bit of History about the Partnership

In 2000, Hawai'i TESOL President at that time, Donna Prather, wrote an article for *The Word* relaying a request from the TESOL International Association suggesting that U.S. affiliates consider forming partnerships with international affiliates. She asked if any HI TESOL members had a connection with an international one. Sally La Luzerne-Oi had spent the 1995-96 academic year as a Fulbright Scholar in Ukraine precisely at the time that Ukrainian teachers of English were working to form an official affiliate of TESOL which became a reality on October 31

1996. She shared this story in response to Donna's article, and interest in collaboration grew as result. After some hard work over the next few years, the partnership became official at the TESOL 2002 Convention in Salt Lake City when representatives from TESOL Ukraine and Hawai'i TESOL both signed a formal Partnership Agreement and celebrated over dinner. Since then, the members of both affiliates have connected in a number of ways, including meeting at the annual International TESOL Convention. Watch for stories about present-day TESOL members and events in future issues of *The Word*.

Recent News From TESOL Ukraine

TESOL Ukraine has not let the coronavirus stop professional development efforts for members. TESOL Ukraine President, Lena Iliencko, wrote Unfortunately, we were not able to hold our annual meeting, TESOL-Ukraine Jubilee Convention "25 Years of TESOL in Ukraine: Honoring the Past and Shaping the Future" in Kyiv though we had been preparing for it and looking forward to it with such excitement. More than 300 TESOL-Ukraine members and other English language teachers from secondary

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TESOL Ukraine Spotlight

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schools, universities, and private schools as well as 32 Ukrainian and American presenters had registered for participation in the Convention before the pandemic. More than 100 teachers had submitted their papers for the Convention Book of Papers, and we are pleased to inform you that an electronic version of papers from the Young Researchers and TESOL Ukraine Conferences has been published. You can peruse those papers at the following link. TESOL papers start on page 209. http://www.tesol-ukraine.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/FORUM-Conference-TESOL-Ukraine_2020_.pdf

Other professional development events included:

- Webinar on Five Tools for Online Teaching by Francisco Resto, June 24.
 - Webinar on Teaching with TubeQuizard by Olha Lysak, June 25.
 - Webinar on How disadvantages of online teaching can become advantages. I did it and you can. By Iolanta Didzhiulite, June 25.
 - TESOL Ukraine Teacher Development Event on English Teachers as Change Agents in Kryvyi Rih, June 27- July 2.
 - Webinar on Choice Boards: A Tool for Engaging Learners, Providing Differentiation and Promoting Learner Autonomy by Kate Wilkinson, July 1.
 - Webinar on Using Graphic
- Organizers for Better Teaching and Learning by Wendy Finlayson, July 1.
 - Webinar on Making ESL Exams More Human for Our Students given by Luis Perea, July 5.
 - TESOL 2020 Virtual Convention online July 16-18.
 - TESOL Ukraine Teacher Development Event on 21st Century English Lesson Essentials, in Kryvyi Rih, August 10 to 15.

For more information about TESOL Ukraine and past issues of its newsletter, visit the TESOL Ukraine website <http://www.tesol-ukraine.com/> You might also want to like TESOL Ukraine on Facebook.

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TESOL-Ukraine
Public group

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+ Join Group More Join this group to post and comment.

RECENT ACTIVITY

Irina Zuyenok shared an event. 3h

Writing Centers & Tutoring EFL Students
with Richard Schlight

DESCRIPTION
The mission of TESOL-Ukraine Association is to provide internati... See More

GROUP TYPE
General

LOCATION
Ukraine

TESOL Ukraine Member Profile

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In this issue, we are profiling our Ukrainian colleague, Nina Lyulkun. Nina was a member of TESOL Ukraine from its inception, and she served as the organization's third president from 2001-2003. During her presidency and in the following years, Nina worked tirelessly to bring TESOL Ukraine and its members online. Just two examples of her projects were a blog for the Hawai'i TESOL/ TESOL Ukraine partnership and an online conference for students. In these times of COVID-19 when classes as well as professional development events have gone online, Nina's efforts and foresight definitely come to mind.



Nina Lyulkun

Name: Nina Lyulkun

Institution: Khmelnytskyi National University

Please tell us about your institution.

For many years I worked at Khmelnytskyi National University. Now I am retired and live with my son in Poland.

Khmelnytskyi National University is the biggest higher educational institution in the Podillya region. It trains specialists in 40 areas and conducts educational, methodological, and scientific work. The University was founded in 1962. Since that time it has been transformed from the general technical faculty of the Ukrainian Printing Institute to Khmelnytskyi National University, which has the highest IVth level of accreditation.

Nowadays there are many universities that offer educational services in Ukraine. But KhNU gets global recognition, introduces new technologies and teaching methods, and is actively involved in various international projects including conferences and exchange programs for students, teachers and scientists.

What is your position at this institution?

I worked as the Head of the Philology Department. Now I work as an online tutor, preparing students for TOEFL, IELTS, and TOEIC. Many of my students have already entered the best Polish and Ukrainian universities, and I am proud of them

Please tell us something about the city where your institution is located.

Khmelnytskyi is a city in western Ukraine. It lies along the upper Southern (Pivdennyi) Buh River. Originally a Polish military post, it dates from the late 15th century. The fort was seized by Cossacks during the mid-17th century. In 1793 it passed to Russia by the Second Partition of Poland, and in 1795 city status was conferred on it. In 1954 it was renamed in honour of the Ukrainian Cossack leader Bohdan Khmelnytsky. The modern city is a rail junction on the Odessa-Lviv and Chernivtsi-Korosten lines; its industries have included light engineering, food processing, and manufacturing of consumer goods. Its educational and cultural facilities include the National University, a theatre, and a philharmonic hall.

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TESOL Ukraine Spotlight: Member Profile

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What are your professional interests?

I am interested in improving my on-line teaching skills. Like many other teachers, I am scrambling to find ways to support students from afar through distance and online learning.

Here are some points I would like to highlight in distance teaching:

1. **Simplicity Is Key.**—it is critical to design distance learning experiences that have very clear instructions and utilize only one or two resources. It's also best, when possible, to provide resources like readings as PDFs that students can always access.
2. **Establish a Digital Home Base.**—you need a single digital platform that your students can always visit for the most recent and up-to-date information. I use Zoom or Skype and highly recommend these platforms for my colleagues.
3. **Efficiency is key** when designing distance learning experiences.—planning is going to take more time and require a high level of attention to detail. You will not be able to correct mistakes on the fly or suddenly pivot when kids are disengaged.

It's important to bear in mind that cultivating an engaging distance learning experience is hard. It takes time and an incredible amount of patience. If you are new to the experience, you're probably going to feel like a first-year teacher again. That's OK! Tackle the challenges step by step, keep your students updated on your progress, and stay positive. You can do this!

What are your personal interests?

Like many Ukrainian women, I love embroidery; I am also keen on self-development, so I often watch various educational channels.

How long have you been a member of TESOL Ukraine?

I had been a TESOL-Ukraine member since 1995— it was the best time in my life. I was TESOL-Ukraine President at the beginning of the 2000's, which was a huge step in my

professional development. I participated in many international programs; one of them is Webheads in Action.

Webheads is a world-wide, cross-cultural, and vibrant online-community of educators with an open enrollment for anyone who wants to join. Webheads in Action was created in 1997-8 by Vance Stevens, in Abu Dhabi, Maggi Doty in Germany, and Michael Coghlan, in Australia, for ESL learners and facilitators as a student-teacher community. It has expanded to encompass a myriad of educators involved in e-learning in TESOL EVOnline (Electronic Village) and other language or cultural-based curricula. Webheads meet online regularly to explore the latest synchronous and non-synchronous communications technologies, including video and voice, to adapt and demonstrate new innovative ideas for e- learning and classroom curriculum. These educators also display a deep warmth and dedication to helping others. They are evolutionary and enterprising scholars who are harmonious and know how to have a lot of fun.

Can you suggest a website where Hawaii TESOL readers can learn more about you, your institution, or your region?

<https://www.khnu.km.ua/root/page.aspx>



About the Author: Sally La Luzerne-Oi is co-liasion for the Hawai'i TESOL/ TESOL Ukraine Partnership.



Non-formal Education for Migrants as a Tool for Integration: The Case of Syrian Refugees in Gazikent Center in Gaziantep, Turkey

By Iryna Doroshenko

According to the UN Refugee Agency, Turkey currently has around 4.1 million refugees, 3.7 million of them come from Turkey (Turkey, 2019). One of the biggest concerns of international organizations is limited access to education. As mentioned in the report, only 30% of Syrian secondary school-aged refugees are engaged in secondary education while the target is 40% (Themes, 2019). The biggest problem of Syrian children is a low level of Turkish language proficiency which is limiting their ability to be enrolled in Turkish educational institutions and be integrated into society.

After having volunteered for 2 months in Gazikent centre, I analysed the main reasons blocking the integration of Syrian refugees:

1. The lack of Turkish language proficiency. According to Dilek, Belet, and Yaşar (2018), most of the Syrian students who

- start learning Turkish as a foreign language have difficulties reading and writing due to the differences in the alphabet.
2. Psychological trauma. Due to the traumatic experiences, many Syrian children have to work with psychologists to overcome psychological trauma. Many social centres in Turkey provide psychological counselling for free.
3. Xenophobia and discrimination. According to a survey, 'one-third of respondents have faced xenophobia and racism' (Arab News, 2020). This is the reason why many Syrians live as a separate community, predominantly using their language and maintaining traditions.

One of the possible solutions to the problem is the engagement of children and youth in non-formal education. For example, in 2018 UNICEF had the initiative to fund

access to non-formal education for 65,000 Syrian children and youth (UNICEF, 2018). Gazikent centre in Gaziantep, Turkey, is a bright example of successful enrollment of Syrian refugees in the Turkish educational system. The centre provides free English classes for children and youths conducted by international and local volunteers as well as other non-formal education activities. Furthermore, due to the agreements with the local authorities and schools, there is also an opportunity to attend the Turkish language classes. The main peculiarity is that students attending the classes come both from Turkey and Syria. According to my observations, children tend to be shy and reserved at the beginning of the course. However, the use of non-formal education tools (e.g. energisers, ice-breakers, etc) proved to be effective in terms of the development of group dynamics. In particular, we

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Non-formal Education for Migrants as a Tool for Integration

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could observe Turkish children helping Syrian children when they were facing problems due to language barriers (concerning both English and Turkish). Another benefit of such activities is the development of cultural sensitivity and appreciation of cultural diversity. Finally, one of the main objectives of the educators and volunteer working in the centre is to reduce discrimination and xenophobia.

To conclude, Syrian refugees are facing numerous challenges when it comes to obtaining an education. The main obstacles include language barrier, xenophobia and discrimination, and psychological trauma. One of the possible solutions is the engagement of the target group in non-formal education.

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News from Abroad



Peer Assessment of Oral Academic Presentations: A Way for College Learners to Achieve Confidence

By Verónica Ghirardotto

Oral Academic Presentations for college students: Benefits and challenges

Oral academic presentations (OAPs) are nowadays a key requirement for students taking undergraduate courses in different universities around the world. In addition, the English language has been the main vehicle of instruction between learners and instructors from diverse cultural backgrounds during the last couple of decades. This internationalization (Baker & Hüttner, 2016; Jenkins, 2017), has urged undergraduate learners to prepare and deliver oral presentations in English, which implies attaining a good level of mastery of ESL and EFL.

One of the main advantages is that OAPs give opportunities for learning to both learners and teachers. Students who listen to classmates delivering talks in English can learn about different topics from their peers rather than from their teachers, and instructors can pay attention to students' oral production in a focused manner (Hincks, & Edlund,

2009). However, one of the challenges learners face is the lack of presentation skills, which generally include the inability to employ intonational cues to organize content into coherent chunks, the difficulty of making eye contact with the audience, and the need to constantly refer to notes, or even read aloud from them.

Peer Assessment of OAPs

One way of improving presentation skills has been the inclusion of peer assessment (PA) in the course curriculum. Research about student presentations in undergraduate courses in ESL/EFL situations has shown that PA can have positive results since learners feel more motivated as they simultaneously become presenters and raters (Planas Lladó, Feliu Soley, Fraguell Sansbelló, Arbat Pujolras, Pujol Planella, Roura-Pascual, Suñol i Martínez, Montoro Moreno, 2014; Lu, 2018). However, according to Brown (2004) one of the main weaknesses of PA is that learners can be subjective when judging their peers' performance. Students can be either strict or lenient

with their classmates. Moreover, learners may not be very skilful at detecting mistakes. Therefore, the reliability of PA could be brought into question.

The value of PA is that it is a skill in which self-reflection is developed. In the case of OAPs, PA helps both the reviewers and the reviewees who receive peer feedback. For the reviewers, PA allows them to see the strengths and weaknesses in classmates' performance and to reflect on their own speaking skills for presentations. For the reviewees, PA grants them the chance to be judged by equals and to obtain an evaluation on which to work through remedial activities in difficult areas. In turn, being independent thinkers can help students become judges of their own learning and gain active participation in preparing and doing OAPs. Additionally, PA enables teachers to foster learner autonomy and can be of great value for instructors provided they are able to apply it systematically in a course.

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A PA Form for Oral Academic Presentations

The findings reported in this article build on previous work on oral presentations in Phonetics and Phonology and in the field of peer assessment during student oral academic presentations. As regards the use of intonational features to organize discourse, Brazil, Coulthard and Johns, (1980); Brazil, (1997); Yule, (1980); Brown and Yule, (1983); Barr, (1990); Wichmann (2000) and Pickering (2004), among others, mention that management of pauses, intonation and prosodic cues to organize ideas efficiently into oral paragraphs are important setbacks which hinder listeners from having easy access to the information being presented.

PA of speaking skills has been studied as an alternative assessment procedure both in ESL and EFL (Patri, 2002; Cheng & Warren, 2005; Falchikov, 2005; Ahangari, Ressekh-Alqol, & Hamed, 2013). Azarnoosh (2013) considers that the worth of this form of alternative assessment lies in the fact that both teachers and students are active participants and controllers of the evaluation processes.

In an action research study conducted with students from an English teacher training program at a university in southern Chile, the

implementation of a PA form to judge classmates' presentation skills was an alternative for improvement (Ghirardotto, 2016). The results indicated that after the post-test, the experimental group's scores (EG) were closer to the teacher's scores than to the control group's ratings (CG), showing alignment to a tendency described in Patri (2002) where the findings suggested that participants could assess as reliably as the teacher, provided a rating criteria is made explicit.

More revealing findings were obtained from another part of the study in which participants reported their perceptions towards PA of OAPs. Most participants in both groups (EG=40% and CG=60%) perceived that PA would help them minimize their weaknesses. The main reason underlying this finding was that learners were able to reflect on the mistakes made by their classmates when they listened to the presentations. In addition, half of the participants in both groups felt they were better prepared for speeches after the PA activities.

Tips to use a PA Form to improve OAPs

- Prepare and deliver short OAPs: learners can make small groups and choose a topic to prepare an outline of a short OAP out of a list

of topics or any other subject from their own choice. It is beneficial to let them work with whatever makes them feel at ease and motivated. Students can then engage in a search for information to expand ideas on the topic of their choice. The teacher can monitor and help learners during the preparation of the outline. Learners can start rehearsing the OAP. The teacher's support is important to give them positive feedback on their performance and help them gain confidence. The OAP can be of around 5 to 6 minutes and learners can deliver it as a group presentation, taking turns to speak for 2 minutes at the most. It can be useful to record the presentations if teachers obtain the students' permission to do so. Keeping a corpus of recorded presentations allows for future analysis.

- Use a PA Form: adapt one to your own learners' needs. I suggest the form presented in the study by Ahangari, Rassekh-Alqol, and Hamed (2013) because it has been designed on a five-point Likert scale, which makes it user-friendly. This form has been adapted and used in Ghirardotto (2016) (see Appendix) with success as it contemplates in detail

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several aspects of OAPs – topic sentence, opinion on the issue, main and supporting points, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation, coherence, manner, and interaction. When implementing the form, explain every aspect with examples.

- Training the students in the use of the form: in different sessions, learners can listen to recordings of the OAPs they prepared and use the form.
- Making the most of a PA Form: gather and tabulate results. There is no need to complicate things with statistical software; percentages may also reveal tendencies. Encourage students to make comments on the form that may bring about changes for future use. It may also be beneficial to motivate learners to speak about their attitudes, feelings and beliefs towards delivering the OAP, being recorded, being evaluated by peers, or assessing partners through a form.

To conclude, when PA is incorporated into the teaching practice, students can become more sensitized to its advantages for their own benefit by adopting strengths from peers and modifying weaknesses in their own

speech as evidenced in their partners'. The inclusion of PA activities in assessment processes for skills' development of OAPs can gradually become a regular practice of alternative assessment at college in ESL and EFL contexts, as PA can act towards confidence-building attitudes towards OAPs.

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Peer Assessment Form for Oral Academic Presentations

Title of the presentation: _____ Date: _____

Introduction	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
	5	4	3	2	1
Topic sentence					
1. Is it suitable?					
2. Is it clearly stated?					
3. Does it contain appropriate vocabulary to the topic?					
The opinion on the issue					
4. Was it well-argued?					
Body: Details supporting the main points					
5. Are they enough?					
6. Are they related to the topic?					
7. Do they contain grammar and vocabulary suitable for the topic?					
Conclusion					
8. Does it briefly restate the main points?					
Language Use					
Grammar					
9. Do self-corrections of grammar structures allow the speaker to be understood?					
10. Do grammar mistakes enable the speaker to get his/her message across?					
Vocabulary					
11. Does the speaker use "routine expressions" familiar to the topic?					
12. Is the vocabulary enough to allow the speaker express him/her ideas?					
Fluency					
13. Do pauses interrupt the flow of ideas?					
14. Are pauses enough to allow the speaker for planning ideas?					
Pronunciation					
15. Do mistakes in phonemes allow the speaker to be understood?					
16. Do mistakes in word stress and intonation still help the speaker to be understood?					
Coherence					
17. Can the speaker link ideas smoothly with connectors into a linear sequence of topics?					
Manner					
18. Does the speaker sound confident? (not nervous)					
Interaction					
19. Is there interaction with the audience?					
20. Does the speaker show mutual understanding with the audience by answering with suitable responses to the questions and the topic?					

Adapted from Ahangari et al. (2013)

Implementation and Reflection of a University Reading Course with Integration of EdTech

By Yukie Saito

In the issue of *The Word* published in May 2020, I shared my preparation for asynchronous and synchronous classes for one reading class at a university in Japan. As mentioned in the previous paper, the course's main objective was for the students to be able to use English as a tool for global communication and to acquire ICT skills through this reading course. Originally, only four out of 14 classes were to be online, but in the end, all of the classes were conducted online. In this paper, I will share how I implemented classes using ZOOM and a Learning Management System(LMS) to

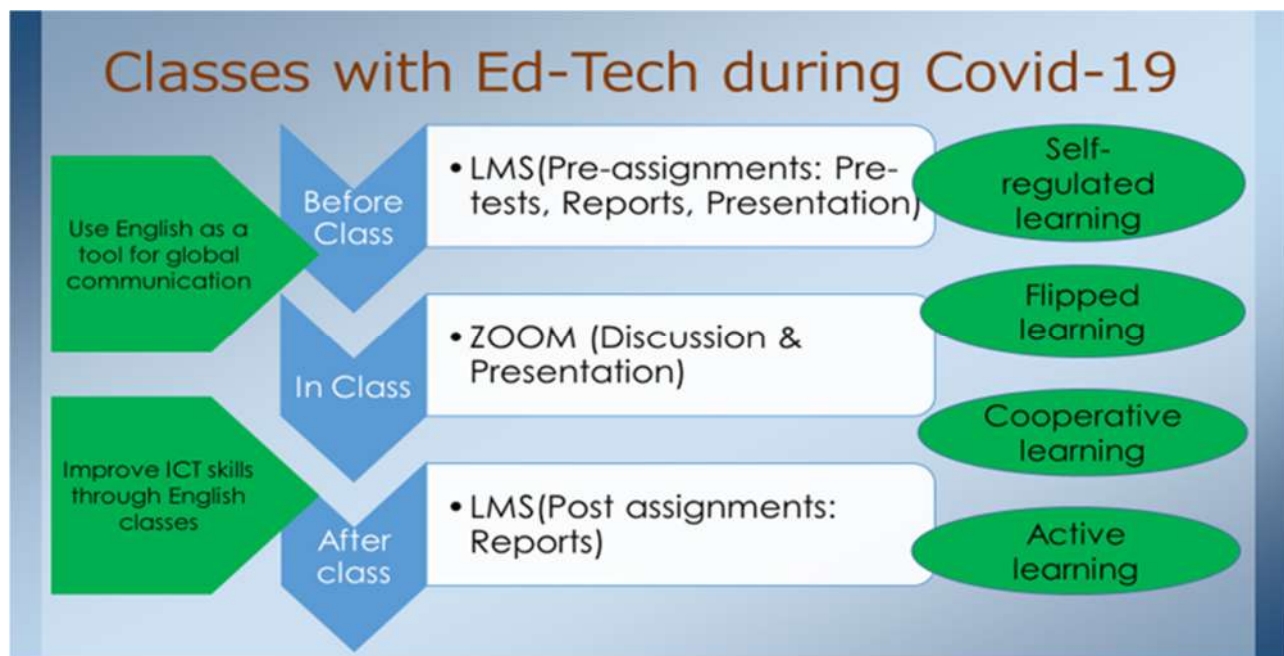
achieve the objective.

The main EdTech tools used for this course were ZOOM and a Learning Management System that the university is adopting. Originally, I was planning to use Google Classroom but decided to use the LMS that the university introduced. The first-year students in the course were required to take online classes unexpectedly because of the spread of Covid-19. Thus, having them be familiar with the LMS that the university uses should be a priority instead of letting them use another LMS, Google Classroom, which could be another burden for them. The

university's LMS is convenient and useful because it can be used to assign students tests, individual reports, and individual and group projects. Tests on the LMS can be automatically evaluated, teachers can assess their assignments and give feedback, and students use the LMS to prepare for each lesson, work on assignments, and review their study.

The figure below shows the summary of how I use ZOOM and the LMS for self-regulated, flipped, cooperative and active learning to achieve the objective.

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Implementation and Reflection of a University Reading Course with Integration of EdTech

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There were three major tasks in the course, and the first task was discussion in breakout rooms on ZOOM. As shown in the figure, the focus of ZOOM classes was for students to have a discussion and make a presentation. Before ZOOM classes, students were to take tests with questions from the textbook, *21st Century Reading 4* from Cengage Publication, and prepare for the discussion. For example, one topic from the textbook was about online classes with a passage titled “A School in the Cloud”. They read the passage and worked on reading comprehension questions in a test on the LMS. Based on their understanding, they had a discussion about the following discussion questions: *What kind of facilities do you think are the most important for a university?; What constrains have you experienced in your educational system?; What do you think makes a good teacher?; and What do you think the future of learning is?*. In a ZOOM class, after being assigned to breakout rooms, they chose a facilitator and a reporter. The facilitator's role was to ask every student in a group to express their opinions. The reporter's role was to make a report about the summary of the discussion after the breakout session. As a post assignment, they chose

two of the discussion questions and wrote their opinions in a report.

The second major task was individual TED talk presentations. In individual TED talk presentations, they were to choose one TED talk they would like to share with classmates, tell them why they chose the TED talk and its summary, and prepare two discussion questions related to the TED talk. On the date of the presentations, students were assigned to breakout rooms, and a presenter made a presentation and let other students share opinions about the discussion questions. Following the discussion, the presenter made a conclusion. In breakout rooms, there were five or six students, and they made a presentation in turn. For example, one student chose a TED talk titled “Forget shopping. Soon you’ll download your new clothes”. The TED talk by Danit Peleg was about an invention of making downloadable clothes with a 3D printer. The student gave the reason why she chose the talk and made a summary. Following that, she let other students discuss the questions that she had prepared: *Are you particular about clothes? and Would you be happy if you could make your clothes with a 3D printer?*. At the end of her presentation, she concluded that the most important thing is how to apply the great technology. I could not look at all the students’ presentations

because the presentations were conducted in the six breakout rooms at the same time. However, I was able to see the students making a great presentation, and other students were engaged in the presentation by listening to the presenter attentively and sharing their opinions while hopping in and out of the breakout rooms. As a post-assignment, students wrote feedback on other students’ presentations on the LMS.

The third major task was group presentations to propose a new service and product to solve problems in society, such as problems related to Covid-19. In the presentation, they included the background to support the need for the new service or product and its details and uniqueness. In the last two ZOOM classes, seven groups with four or five students made a group presentation. For example, one group made a presentation to propose a subscription service for an app to offer comedies. According to them, the service was to solve the problem of many people having a lot of stress being forced to stay at home. They explained that the service is unique because the AI system chooses the best comedy for each user. Users can also enjoy comedy with smartphones anytime and anywhere. It can also be beneficial for comedians who lose opportunities to perform

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Implementation and Reflection of a University Reading Course with Integration of EdTech

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during the time of Covid-19. They also made the service's philosophy "Make even the fewest moments of your life happy". Each student in the group made a part of the talk in the presentation showing PowerPoint slides effectively. As a reflection, one student in the group wrote the following feedback:

"There were many classmates' good comments, so I think our presentation was very good. I was eventually praised about our corporate philosophy I had created by my teacher. I'm glad to hear that. I think it was good to prepare our presentation early with

members of the same group."

As shown in the comment, students were able to receive feedback about their presentation from classmates because I asked them to write feedback in the chatbot on ZOOM after each presentation. Also, as she wrote, they prepared for the presentation well in advance. I heard that each group prepared for and practiced a presentation using ZOOM outside the class.

The sudden change to the online classes was challenging for the students; however, it has become a valuable experience to use and appreciate EdTech. In a questionnaire survey after the

course, all of the respondents answered they could use ZOOM to take part in online classes actively. During the course, the students worked hard and adapted to the sudden change, which was very impressive. Reflecting on the course, I would like to seek the better practice of online classes with EdTech for the fall semester.

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Make Feedback Count!

By Samir Omara

There have recently been different national and international changes to education; changes can be challenges and opportunities. Teachers need to act upon the shift from lecturing to facilitation, from teacher-centered to learner-centered approaches and from summative to learner-oriented formative assessment. They need to plan, deliver, and reflect on teaching, students' learning, and assessment differently to develop quality teaching and learning.

Feedback is one of the formative assessment techniques that help students learn and develop effectively. Hattie (2009) thinks that feedback is "critical to improving learning as it both influences students' motivation to learn and their ability to do so" (p. 137). There are different types of feedback; feed up, feedback and feedforward. Feed up refers to the instructions given by teachers to help students achieve learning outcomes from the very beginning of learning. Feedback refers to the instructions given by teachers to students on how they go through learning. Feedforward refers to the instructions given by teachers to help students move on to the next step in their learning.

Teachers should keep their feedback focused on the students' learning processes and related to learning outcomes. They should use feedback that meets the students' needs and learning styles on time. They should prompt students' thinking and help them define, implement, and self-assess improvements. They should identify and recognize students' successes. New technology helps to deliver different types of feedback remotely, quickly, and flexibly. Online platforms, digital applications, and social media help teachers and students communicate instantly and productively.

To move from lecturing to facilitation, teachers should be facilitators, not lecturers. They help students to learn by themselves, they help to enable students to be independent and

autonomous learners. To do so, they develop the qualities of guides, coaches, and inquirers. As guides, teachers help students throughout the learning processes and offer help when needed. As coaches, they help students develop skills practice and provide role models for students. This helps develop their awareness of students' backgrounds, needs, challenges and opportunities to provide advice and support. As inquirers, students develop their questioning skills by asking deep questions to develop higher order thinking skills "HOTS." To develop project-based learning (PBL) and flipped learning, teachers raise deep questions for students to practise critical thinking skills. They also observe, monitor and scaffold students' learning based on understanding their interests, needs, abilities, learning styles and individual differences as well. In face-to-face or online instruction, teachers begin with students' input, differentiate multi-disciplinary curricula instruction, promote students' collaboration, and use formative assessment.

Formative assessment is an in-process form of assessment conducted throughout the teaching and learning processes. It helps to monitor students' progress, develop teaching and learning and provide constructive feedback. Quizzes, storytelling, show and tell, presentations, rubrics, questioning, observations, exit tickets and projects are some techniques of formative assessment. Teachers should give constructive feedback of different types (feed up, feedback, and feedforward) that help students to learn, develop and grow.

To give feed up, teachers direct students towards goals. They help students get instructions to develop learning outcomes from the very beginning of learning. They help them to learn where they will go throughout their learning journey. To give feedback, teachers help

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students learn how they learn, perform, and grow. They help them learn about their current learning. To give feedforward, teachers highlight to students next learning steps towards improvement. They help students to move forward throughout their learning journey.

According to Wiggins (2012), effective feedback is “goal-referenced, tangible, transparent, user-friendly and actionable” (p. 13). Effective feedback is goal-referenced. Teachers give developmental and non-judgmental feedback. They ask questions and give reflective comments that help students define goals and learning outcomes. They share descriptions of what students need to achieve. Effective feedback is tangible. Teachers highlight actual results based on goals and learning outcomes. To do so constructively, they observe students, assess their portfolios and watch videos that show students’ learning and progress. Effective feedback is transparent. Teachers share goals, learning outcomes and

assessment rubrics with students from the very beginning. They regularly share feedback comments, reflections and thoughts with students, colleagues, and parents. They provide students with equal opportunities to discuss and respond to feedback. Effective feedback is user-friendly. Teachers deliver oral, written, verbal and non-verbal feedback in different ways that meet the learning styles and capacity of different students. They use simple and accurate language that is the most suitable to students’ age, background, and level. Effective feedback is actionable. Teachers give specific comments, thoughts, and actions for students to reflect on and act upon throughout their learning journey. They give timely, consistent, and ongoing feedback to help students move from where they are to where they could go based on their pace.

Chickering and Gamson (1987) think that feedback is one of the seven principles of good teaching practice. Feedback helps language teachers and instructors develop their students

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through direct and online instruction. To give effective feedback in language classrooms, teachers use positive body language. They provide formative feedback to develop students' growth and mindsets. They keep feedback positive by using "feedback sandwich" (giving a corrective comment between two positive comments). They give time-bound and frequent feedback and engage students in feedback activities. They are specific and they give students their own time and space as well.

Since March 2020, COVID-19 pandemic has been running its course, therefore most countries have started social distancing, quarantine, curfew, lockdown, and other measures. The coronavirus outbreak challenges have impacted education; schools have been closed and online instruction has been used in different modes. To respond to life challenges and educational changes, language teachers and instructors give online instruction, courses, and sessions. They give online feedback to their students remotely. To provide students with remote and effective online feedback, teachers should address students by their names to raise their self-esteem. They should give immediate and regular feedback to keep students engaged. They should give specific and balanced feedback to help students act upon and develop their learning processes. They should ask critical questions and give reflective comments using positive tone to help students be recognized and to develop their higher thinking skills.

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Goal Setting for Educators in the Time of COVID-19

By Richard Miller

With career challenges being forced onto many educators, it is time to look forward to the upcoming academic year and ask yourself what your job and career prospects will be in the next year. This is not an easy answer as the COVID-19 pandemic has left many questioning the viability of higher education. One of the most famous university presidents in America, Gordon Gee, President of West Virginia University, has referred to the threats at this time in higher education as “an existential moment.”

While there is uncertainty throughout the economy and the world, many have a hard time getting motivated to do much and get overwhelmed by boredom. Danckert and Eastwood (2020) refer to a lack of agency when there is a loss of control. This is particularly difficult in times of lockdowns and uncertainty. As those currently working as educators, or those looking to start, it now more important than ever to keep improving your employment marketability. One sure way of moving towards improving your professional development is by articulating your goals.

Something that is taught in business programs that educators should consider enhancing their career development is using a

systematic approach to goals and goal setting (Miller, 2012). This concept is taught for a good reason: goal setting works. Study after study has proven that the most effective businesspeople use goal setting to become high achievers and to get a lot more done (Locke, & Latham, 2013). Extrapolated to the areas of professional development, it can be a powerful way to keep active while improving your CV and skill set.

In order to create clear goals, it is essential to step back to view the ‘bigger picture’ of your professional life. This is a far-reaching way that helps to decide how your resources and time should be spent. If you are not sure, then this is the time to decide what your long-term objectives are going to be. Where are you expecting to be in a year, a few years, or even a decade from now? Envisioning where you plan to be will help you to clarify what you need to do. But, keep in mind that things change and therefore your goals will need to be reviewed and updated regularly.

Begin by articulating what your longer-term objectives are; then you need to write down your goals. These should then be divided into one-year short-term, two-to-five year medium-term and longer-term goals that are then regularly reviewed and modified as

necessary.

An effective way of getting your goals organized in a coherent and well-focused format is through the use of ‘SMART’ goals (Doran, 1981). This acronym is for the following: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-constrained. Embracing SMART helps you to concentrate on what you want to do, what you are able to actually do, and where you want to go in the future. Once you have decided on where you want to be in the long term, look at the areas of your professional development needs improvement. I have developed a “balanced-scorecard” approach that asks educators to reflect on four areas: education; research/publishing; experience; and service (committees etc.) (Miller, 2011). Review this from the perspective of your long-term objective, then decide where to focus your energy.

Note that by defining the need, one’s mind and resources tend to swing into action, and you can then properly decide to move forward in a focused and confident fashion. One example might be, ‘improve education credentials’ for your resume. In this instance you must write down exactly what the required credentials are, what time-constrained deadline would be realistically

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achievable, and how relevant the credentials would be towards achieving what you want.

In the current environment, though, while working on



achieving goals distractions and stress can be obstacles. A way that helps to keep you on track is what Raymond Aaron (2008) calls the MTO approach. This is an acronym for “Minimum”, “Target” and “Outrageous.” In other words, setting down the tasks and objectives in a systematic way that lets you always achieve at least part of your goal, while reaching for a lot more than you might have been able to achieve. This technique is effective in moving projects forward (after all, a body in motion tends to stay in motion) and can help kick start both an individual and an entire team that is working together. The

MTO can be for a short or longer period of time (such as a morning, a day, a week, or longer).

- M-‘Minimum’ is the amount of work that you are bound to get done with a minimal

amount of effort. This ensures that you have at least achieved something because psychologically, it is important not to get discouraged and to gain and maintain momentum. The argument is that if we make a goal too large, it can become too much to achieve (at least in our own estimation) and we tend to give up. This then defeats the purpose of goal setting for those who tend to give up after finding a task to be too daunting. So, by setting a goal that we are bound to achieve, we can keep our enthusiasm levels up and

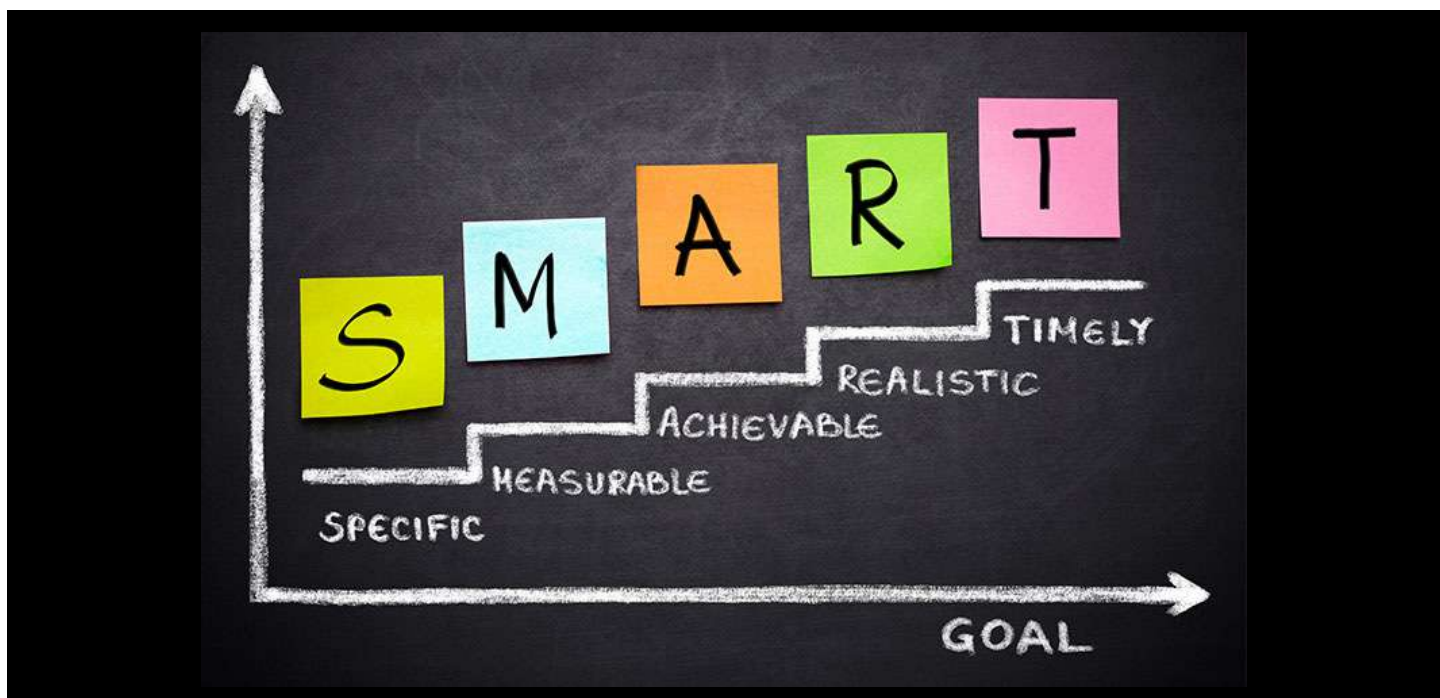
we are always able to achieve something that goes towards the overall goal and helps us feel in control.

- T-Target, is what you might already have had in mind, and what you want to achieve during that time frame.
- Outrageous is when you really reach for something that is very difficult and achieves much more than the target. Additionally, if it happens to get achieved, it is a major accomplishment for that particular time frame.

One of the best uses for the MTO method is to get oneself moving on (and maintaining) a goal-oriented, daily routine, or short time-frame. This approach also works well in regular slightly longer, focused periods (such as the coming week). Finally, it can also be incorporated into the SMART goals and the short, medium, and long-term goals (Miller, 2018).

Be sure to make notes to document what you are doing as it is very important for your goals to be articulated, either on a screen, or on a hand-written page. By reviewing goals that have been clearly laid out and updated every day, it helps to instill a sense of discipline in that we tend to adhere to and ensure that any downtime is effective and allows us to regain control.

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This can be very important for achieving everything you set out to do (and more), regardless of the external world problems, leaving you in a better position.

Note: parts of this article were adopted from Miller (2018)

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Experiencing Pragmatics with *Ugly Betty*

By Hitomi Abe and Ayako Suezawa

Having students acquire pragmatic competence and an understanding of target language sociocultural norms holds the key to teaching a target language. One of the key areas of pragmatics is speech acts, which contains functions (e.g., requests, apologies, suggestions, commands, and offers), and appropriate responses to those acts. Textbooks play an important role in most English classes although they don't include sufficient pragmatic information to help students communicate appropriately (Siegel, 2016). This study sheds light on a teaching approach that can be used to supplement text material by having students experience pragmatics, which can help motivate them to actively learn the target language pragmatics.

Some studies suggest the possibility of students becoming aware of the differences in pragmatic rules between their native language and English or other target languages through classroom instruction, discussions, and roleplays (Cohen, 2016; Hilliard, 2017). Limberg (2015) asserted that if students are encouraged to think for themselves about culturally appropriate ways to speak in certain situations, then they may awaken their own pragmatic rules, which may or may not be appropriate in the target language. Furthermore, according to Limberg, class discussions that compare students' native language and culture with the target language and culture help raise the students' pragmatic awareness of cultural norms. As students may be unaware of the pragmatic and cultural differences between their first and the target language, these discussions help them to avoid negative pragmatic transfer when they use their target language. Instruction to appropriate pragmatic input and giving students many opportunities to discuss and practice spontaneous speaking in the classroom would lead to improving their

pragmatic competence.

We assume that using exercises for pragmatic experience will be particularly useful for students. This exercise encourages an active participation of students in observing scenes in the target language culture, providing them with opportunities to produce what they had noticed, and creating a short dialogue. Through our teaching experiences, we have found that using movies and TV dramas for studying English highly motivated students. In particular, we chose to use *Ugly Betty*, an American comedy-drama TV series (Hayek, S., Horta, S., Goldstick, O., Silverman, B., Tamez, J., & Fields, J., 2006-2010), because it attempts to address the problem of the lack of appropriate materials, it is relatively short, and the characters and situations are easy to explain to the students.

Procedures

In this study, participants (N=106) (who were all first-year female students majoring in Contemporary Social Studies at Doshisha Women's College, a four-year college in the city of Kyoto, Japan) experienced and observed pragmatics in the classroom. They watched scenes in *Ugly Betty* and compared their own answers and *Ugly Betty's* characters' ways of making refusals, requests, and apologies in English. They discussed their answers with their classmates and commented on the differences that they noticed. They also created a role play to practice pragmatically appropriate speech acts in English.

Participants' Comments

Situation 1

Regarding Situation 1, participants were asked to imagine what they would say when they had to break up with their romantic partners. They saw a scene of *Ugly Betty* in

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which Betty was rejected by her boyfriend. In their imagined scenarios, some of the participants in the study chose to use direct expressions to break up with their partners, such as “I don’t like you anymore,” or “I want to break up with you.” When participants such as these recognize that their own responses tend to include more direct expressions than the native English speakers’ generally use, it helps participants develop perceptions of pragmatic differences between their first language and English.

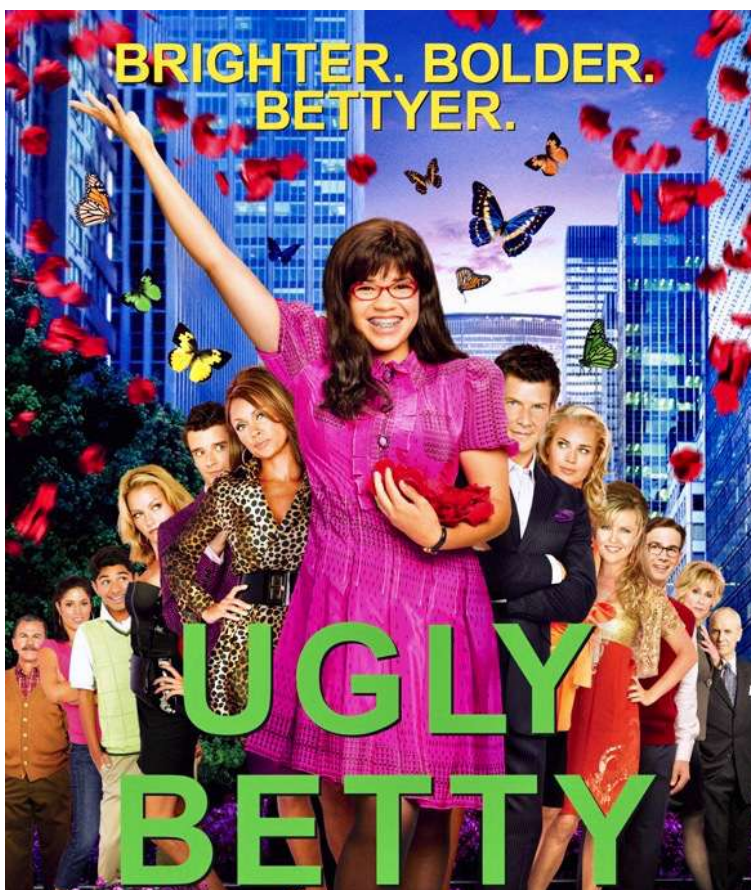
The greatest difference which participants recognized was the language used to wish Betty luck. In the drama, Betty’s boyfriend wished her luck, but there were no such expressions in the participants’ own imagined responses except for two of the participants. In certain circumstances, it is common for Americans to wish others luck, but in Japan, there is no such custom. Therefore, even if these participants recognized the meaning and usage of “Good luck” in English, they might not think to use this expression in such a serious situation because they do not have the custom of doing so. From our perspective, this is an example of sociopragmatic failure. In this context, students need to understand ways to express concern about a partner’s feelings.

Situation 2

Regarding Situation 2, participants were asked to imagine that they are working at an office and they want to make a request of their assistant to take out cabbage from the coleslaw that was prepared for lunch. Then they saw a scene of *Ugly Betty* in which her boss requested that Betty take out cabbage from his coleslaw. In this situation, most of the participants indicated they would make a direct request, which clearly states that they don’t like

cabbage. Almost all the participants indicated that they were surprised to see her boss had not directly told Betty that he hates cabbage. Instead of telling her that, he was trying to say what he likes about coleslaw by giving detailed instructions to Betty in the drama. Participants found that their own responses were more direct and threatening than the words of Betty’s boss. For example “I’ll fire you if you can’t.” This can be a pragmalinguistic failure which is

related to the participants’ English proficiency to use correct vocabulary and appropriate expressions according to the situation. In addition, some participants pointed out that in their own responses they apologized to the assistant, but the boss didn’t apologize to the assistant in the drama.



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Situation 3

Regarding Situation 3, participants were to imagine the situation in which they would be working overtime and must make a call to their sister to say that they cannot go home to celebrate their father's birthday. Then they saw a scene of *Ugly Betty* in which Betty had to do the same thing. There were two remarkable differences that participants pointed out in this situation. First, Betty said, "I'll get home as soon as I can," but only one participant used this expression. Most participants said, "I can't go home until this work is done." Because work is given priority, it is acceptable in Japan to use the excuse of working as a polite refusal. Having said that, it is evident that students need to learn how to express their intention to try to solve a problem in this context.

Second, participants apologized in this situation even though Betty didn't apologize in the drama. Apologizing at first when one cannot fulfill others wishes is common in Japanese even though the person who is apologizing is not at fault. For that reason, they tended to apologize at the start of their conversations. This is evidence of pragmatic transfer in Japanese learners of English. Betty did not use any words of apology but none of the participants commented that she was rude or her behavior was insolent. The participants seemed to be surprised by Betty because she showed them the way to apologize without expressing words of apology in an obvious way. The comments given by the participants can be related to their own sociocultural norms.

Discussion

While providing opportunities to practice pragmatic competence, we found that students quite actively discussed differences between their own responses and the words in the drama. Additionally, it seems that they enjoyed making their own roleplays and practicing them. Teachers should create opportunities to help students become more aware that pragmatic functions exist in language and encourage them

to think about how a particular speech act in the target language differs in their own language. It is our hope that the results will be useful to teachers and materials developers by providing insight into the problems that EFL students have in their realization of pragmatic awareness.

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It Only Takes...

By Timothy Ang

It only takes...

One student to frustrate, disappoint, or anger you. To make you wonder why you bothered teaching English or to question your usefulness if any at all. But then it only takes one special student to lift your spirits and find solace that everything happens for a reason and in the end, it's all worth it. Hang in there.

It only takes...

One thought to get you started on your journey to publishing and contributing to the teaching or language community. Everyone has ideas and people are always looking for unique points of views, new research, and reflections on teaching. Share your voice to other teachers so that they can become more informed educators.

It only takes...

One pushup to get you started with exercising. One minute running around a local park to break a sweat. One salad to take in vegetables/fruits. One glass of water to quench your thirst. One mile of running.

It only takes...

One minute to have a meaningful conversation with a student either during or after class. Some compliments to make the student feel wanted and noticed. To brighten up to what at that point was a bad day for a student. One minute is fleeting but you have made a memorable experience for that student.

It only takes...

One well prepared activity to get the attention of a student started with learning English. How can you be the tipping point? Perhaps spend more time finding relevant content that would pique that students interest in the pursuit of speaking the language. Be that spark that others could not ignite.

It only takes...

One week to realize that a vacation somewhere in the world can turn into something else entirely. To realize that sometimes home might be somewhere else aside from where you were born. To realize that another country would determine where you would want to spend the rest of your life.

It only takes...

One word to communicate. The Japanese language in all its complexities have words that are short, sweet, and straight to the point. Two useful examples include, *arigatou* (thank you) to use to show appreciation to a staff who is working tirelessly behind the scenes to make everything go smoothly in school. Or another word, *sumimasen* (sorry) , to diffuse a tough situation or offer an apology to a misunderstanding.

It only takes...

One semester of teaching online to make you realize how much you miss your fellow teachers, students, and even strangers on your commute to school. Our physical absence has helped us realize how important face to face interaction is and makes us appreciate what we had before, what we have now, and what we will have in the future.

About the Author: Timothy Ang is currently a university teacher in the Kansai area of Japan. His current interests include Task Based Learning, Student Motivation, Computer Assisted Learning, and Curriculum Development.

Student Online Learning Survey: Missing the Hidden Curriculum

By Michael Greisamer

Spring 2020 all Japanese universities for the first time began either partially or fully online classes. This sudden change in the way students are taught yielded a new style of learning, for them as much as the teachers, and as such an investigation into the effects of these changes have been either positive or negative. The implementation of online learning has the potential to substitute or supplement traditional language teaching far beyond the initial purpose; that of social distancing. At the end of this spring semester an anonymous voluntary survey (n = 642) was given to learners about their applicability to embrace, or otherwise, the online learning experience and what effect it has had on their learning in general. Students are asked about their experiences and what gave them the most and least apprehension after their first semester online.

Online teaching started at most universities nationwide in the spring of 2020 due to the spread of the COVID19 virus in Japan. The pandemic has disrupted the normal functions of life across the world including studying and education. A plethora of studies acknowledged the

sudden move to online learning to be forceful but necessary to continue education. (Halim, Hashim, & Yunus, 2020; Hodges, Moore, Lockee, Trust, & Bond, 2020). It pushed schools to follow the Ministry of Education's guideline and change from face-to-face (F2F) to online, with which they were not accustomed (Henriksen, Creely, & Henderson, 2020). This shift left many schools with little time to adjust to online learning and put most of the burden on the teachers to prepare and learn the online learning platforms. For all the students the prospect of online learning is also something new. This exacerbated for part-time instructors who had to learn a different platform for each school, as there is not a common platform adopted country-wide. Part of this reason is that Japan has not invested in using technology in school and has not shown much appetite for online learning. As Ishido Nanako, a professor at Keio University, posits, "People are too worried about egalitarianism. That's one of the major reasons we're still sticking to the conventional education style in which students sit passively in classrooms with pencils and

notebooks," (NHK World Japan, 2020).

Data for the study was collected through an online Google form to analyze the response to their first semester of online learning. The survey can be found at <https://bit.ly/greisonline>. The questionnaire was piloted and sent to the schools for ethics approval and permission to give it to the students. Since the questionnaire is anonymous and voluntary, most schools approved it quickly while some schools created more obstacles to administer. It was then sent it to teachers for distribution in the Kansai area of Japan. This questionnaire has 20 questions: 18 multiple-choice and two open-ended questions. The first four are demographic questions followed by 14 Likert scaled questions designed to assess specific aspects of online learning from the students' perspective. The remaining two open-ended questions were to provide qualitative data.

From the demographic results, 85% of the respondents are female and 60% are first-year students.

Two questions that gave compelling data are as follows:

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- “I think online classes are an effective and efficient method of learning.” in which 56% either strongly disagreed or disagreed.
- “I prefer online classes to face to face classes.” in which 59% either strongly disagreed or disagreed.

The results indicate that students accept the situation yet would rather be back to normal with face to face classes. This includes the “Hidden Curriculum” benefit that students are missing that involve non-cognitive skills such as relationship building, socialization skills and people skills. Especially in Japan, it is considered the last chance of freedom before joining society. These skills transmitted subconsciously or unintentionally to students are collectively referred to as the “hidden curriculum,” in contrast to the academic curriculum with the objective to developing students’ cognitive skills-literacy and numeracy (Kelly 2009).

The final two questions are open-ended designed to get qualitative data from the students. The analyzing process included examining each answer and designating categories. Many respondents wrote in Japanese and their response required translation. The questions are simple; What gave you the most (n = 414) and least stress/anxiety (n = 435) when dealing with online learning.

The largest results for the most anxiety is that 30% said that the assignments were too difficult or the load was too heavy. Many felt that the number of assignments was not equal to the amount of time given. A respondent says: “I had a lot of homework and was stressed.” and correspondingly another commented: “課題の量、難易度の高さ” (The amount and difficulty of the tasks). At the beginning of the semester when the country was on lockdown, teacher might have thought that students were confined to their homes, so they had more time to study, perhaps this is the source of the overload. Or on the other hand, students instinctively say that there is too much homework, whereas one respondent knows that it is not always the teacher to blame: “Accumulation of homework due to my laziness”.

The final question -What gave you the most joy or what did you like the best from online classes? No commute has the highest score at 23% and Pace at 20%. The category of “No commute” had many different responses including: Not going to school, not having to move, not having to go to school, not having to ride the bus or train. This demonstrates the displeasure of having to commute to school every day and the stress that it causes, which is most likely echoed in the thoughts of the teachers too. “It’s good that I

don’t have to commute to my university.” was a popular response.

The second largest group was “Pace” which refers to the pace of learning and included response such as: More time to study, able to work at my own pace, not worried about attendance, study at my own timing, can study when I feel like it, I am able to repeatedly check my work, and I could review lectures freely. Taking the pressure away seemed to help students focus better as one respondent put it: “I can stay safe, be relaxed to taking classes, and study my own pace in my home.”

Unfortunately, at least for the next semester students will be online again. If online learning is to continue, schools will have to support their students by ensuring that they have adequate learning devices and the administrative infrastructure. For example, at Nagoya University of Commerce and Business at the beginning of the semester, all students were given free laptops to join the online classes (Kyodo News, 2020). It will be the job of the schools to better coordinate communication means between students and instructors. This can be done by listening to instructors’ feedback and comments and providing clear instructions. In order to help reduce stress learners can: Make a prioritization matrix, build a routine and prepare well.

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Learners will have to prioritize their schedule. This means that they should understand what is expected of them from each class and rank their task from most important to least. This will help them visualize and comprehend their task while relieving the stress of the unknown. By starting a healthy routine early in the semester, they can get accustomed to the work that needs to be done. Preparation is a key factor in reliving the anxiety of online learning, which consists of knowing your schedule, preparing your study space, and communicating with instructors and school. Online learning has potential to help a wide range of learners and provide creative alternatives. However, for most students the want to return to Hidden Curriculum and F2F interaction.

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Up Coming Events:

October 3, 2020:

MIDTESOL

Conference: Online

**Theme: Community
at a Crossroads: The
Right to Education**

<https://web.cvent.com/event/46b1bd97-db88-4257-ba03-a708adc3f2a0/regProcessStep1?rp=00000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000000>

November, 2020:

HITESOL Workshop

**February, 2021: HITESOL
Annual Conference**

March 23-26, 2021:

**International TESOL
Convention &
Language Expo:**

Houston, TX

**Theme: Come Inspired.
Emerge Empowered**