## Contents:

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

# Why Japan Must Adopt the Endonormative Model
## By Adam Crosby

This paper will look at why the endonormative model is advantageous for learners of English in Japan, and why the exonormative native model can actually have serious negative effects on the local teaching staff, and more importantly, the students themselves.

**Keywords:** endonormative, exonormative, native, bilingual

### Exonormative Native Speaker Model vs Endonormative Model

Japan has been using the exonormative native model as the standard norm of English in compulsory schooling from elementary to junior high school, private English conversations schools, and higher education institutions including universities and colleges for many years. This model is seen as 'prestigious', and able to offer the students much more than using Japanese bilingual teachers; however, I will argue against this view as Japanese bilingual teachers (JBT) have more than enough ability, knowledge, and experience to successfully teach English, and the exonormative native model has several flaws which make it unattainable and demoralizing for the students.

### Exonormative Native Speaker Model

There is no doubt that this model does indeed have some advantages over the endonormative model. One obvious advantage is that of availability of materials and textbooks. All the major publishers have an endless array of textbooks suited to British or American English, and the language itself and its grammar is coded. This codification ensures that there are also many dictionaries, grammar books, and testing materials tailored to either British English or American English. For an academic institution this greatly reduces the need to plan or create curriculum thus reducing costs. However, the exonormative native model is not as perfect as it is perceived. There are far more disadvantages of this model than advantages.

One disadvantage of this model is in the teachers themselves. They are mostly untrained, monolingual, and culturally disattached to the people who depend on them most—the students, and the staff at the institutions they are employed by. In fact, most employers require the native teachers to be just that—native. A quick search of the employment section of www.gaijinpot.com found the following:

Requirements
- English: Native level
- Japanese: Basic
- Be a native-level speaker of English and have acquired an education delivered in English for at least 12 years.
- Have graduated from a university with at least a bachelor's degree.
- Be professional in all aspects of behavior, a team-player, flexible, cheerful, and energetic.
- Hold a valid residence/visa status that allows you to live and work in Japan and possess a valid resident

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card or Certificate of Alien Registration ("gaijin card").

• Visa sponsorship available

Description
*We are seeking applications from skilled and experienced native-level English speakers currently residing in Japan to fill elementary, junior high, and high school ALT (assistant language teacher) positions in the Kansai Region starting from April, May, June, July, and August 2014. As an ALT, you will enrich the lives of children by sharing your knowledge of English and communication skills and giving insights into other cultures. Your job is two-fold: language instructor and cultural ambassador. These two aspects are inseparable, and you, as a successful ALT, will become an expert in both. You can expect to teach classes on your own, with a Japanese teacher present to help manage the classroom.*

First of all, the requirements are disturbing, especially considering the successful applicants will be in charge of children. Most countries around the world have strict guidelines and standards for adults who are responsible for children. Also, providing the applicant is a native speaker of English and has a bachelor's degree in *any* discipline, they probably have a very good chance of getting this job. Many of these teachers are uncommitted to Japan and EFL, and stay only a year or two and then return home to their respective countries. The fact that native speakers are employed as teachers to demonstrate pronunciation and rhythm is actually demoralizing for the students as they then realize they have virtually no chance of attaining the native model, and they also realize that their JBT are viewed as inferior hence the need for a native speaker. If JBT were not viewed as inferior, there would be no need for a native speaker to be present in the classroom. As Honna and Takeshita (as cited in Kirkpatrick

2007, p. 188*)* stated Japanese students feel ashamed if they do not speak English like native speakers. Cook (2002) also noted the following: *If L2 learners feel that the chief measure of L2 success is passing for native, few are going to meet it. Both teachers and students become frustrated by setting themselves to what is, in effect, an impossible target. (p. 331).* Language acquisition should be about encouraging students to learn, not discouraging them.

### Endonormative Model
Using JBT who are trained, motivated, committed long term, and experts in English language acquisition is a far better choice than untrained and unqualified native speakers. The JBT have the experience of what is actually involved in trying to acquire English which will most certainly be an advantage to both the teacher and students in the classroom. The JBT will be able to empathize with the students , and the students will learn what the teacher has actually experienced through English language acquisition. There can be no other industry in the world that would choose a less experienced, less qualified, untrained, less knowledgeable, less committed to the country of residence and institution, and less culturally sensitive applicant than the English language teaching industry. In fact, there are numerous institutions that pay the less qualified, less trained, monolingual teacher more than the qualified, trained, bilingual teacher. However, there is some light

on the horizon. Recently, there have been some changes which may start to alter the misperception that Japanese administrators have. The JET program which provides teachers to junior high and high schools in Japan is now accepting applicants from 40 countries. In addition, the JET website now states the following:

*All participants, regardless of their title, are here for the same reason: To interact with local communities to promote internationalisation at the local level. In addition to the above, applications from non-English speaking countries must have a functional command of the English or Japanese language.*

It is extremely pleasing to see that JET is not seeing English as a language owned solely by the inner-circle nations, but as an international language to be shared by all nations for means of international communication. This view is reinforced by the following statements by Cheung and Sung.

*As Jenkins (2000) noted, "a native-like accent is not necessary for intelligibility" in ELF interactions (Cheung & Sung, 2013, p. 174)*

*McKay (2009) argued that "reliance on a native speaker model as the pedagogical target must be set aside" (Cheung & Sung, 2013, p. 174)*

### Conclusion
While there will always be a place in Japan for the trained, qualified, and culturally sensitive native English teacher, more credit must be given to the Japanese bilingual teachers. Of course, there are times when students would be at an advantage from having a native speaker as their teacher. An example of this would be students who are going to study abroad for an extended period of time in, for example, the United States. It would be advantageous to

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learn from a teacher from the United States in order to prepare them for the type of English they are likely to encounter. However, most EFL learners in Japan will be using English as a lingua franca in order to communicate with someone from one of the outer-circle nations. Taking this into account, surely English should be taught as an international means of communication by various speakers of English from the outer-circle countries, not only by the minority of native speakers from one of the inner-circle countries.

## EFL Changes Needed in Japan

- Promote English as a lingua franca to be used for international communication purposes
- Take advantage of trained and professional Japanese bilingual English teachers
- Raise the qualification requirements of native teachers
- Adopt the Endonormative Model

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# Enliven, Clarify, and Exemplify:

# An Enjoyable Classification Writing Experience

# By Julia Sagliano  and Michael Sagliano

"What type of person is he/she?" "What type of music do you like?" We classify people, places, or things every day, yet when it comes to writing an academic classification essay, ESL students often experience difficulty putting their thoughts in writing. What is the organizing principle to make the categories clear?  How can students organize the body of the essay to make the explanation interesting and coherent? These are questions the ESL instructor must address in order to facilitate the development of a concise, well-organized classification essay.  Just as crucial is that teachers have to create lessons in an engaging format that promotes student involvement and ensures understanding of this demanding essay mode.

We use a combination of active, cooperative and task learning approaches to teach the classification essay at Leeward Community College in an advanced writing course to a mix of immigrant and international students, mostly consisting of recent, local high school graduates.

Our first step is to introduce the concept of classifying in a stimulating manner through video and group activities. We base the lessons on themes students are attracted to and familiar with like popular music, recent high school experiences, cars

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and driving (or even fitness clubs, social media and cell phones). For example, we ask if students are familiar with "American Idol" and briefly explain this cultural phenomenon to those who are not. We distribute a handout, an amusing article found online, for our students to read that divides "American Idol" wannabe singers into a few main types. Each type is described as having unique attributes. We ask if they have any questions on vocabulary or expressions. Then while we play video clips of actual singing auditions from "American Idol," we have our students refer to the handout and yell out the type of singer that closely matches the individual singer. These amusing video clips of contestants whose singing talent ranges from the brilliant to the horrendous, instantly attracts student attention and stimulates their active participation in the task at hand. This reinforces their understanding of classification types with clear examples too.

We explain that in classification, we classify a group/term, such as American Idol singers. They can be divided into several kinds, types, categories based on one principle. We elicit from the class what principle could have been used to write the "American Idol" article. Students voluntarily suggest voice, personality,

background, appearance and star power. We explain that the writer of this article has a number of principles, but in classification essay writing there is only one organizing principle.

Next, we form groups of four students each and put three topics on the board –high school students, drivers, and co-workers. The topics are ones that students completely know. We have each group select only one topic, brainstorm a list of the types that make the group, and prepare a joint list. One caveat is that we tell our students that no stereotyping is permitted especially regarding a person's religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, and ethnicity. We suggest that they construct specific names for the categories. For example, with high school students, we share the ones from our past such as the brains, the jocks (athletes), the greasers (car enthusiasts), and the rest. We circulate among the groups, read each group list, comment, and ask for clarification. Volunteers read their lists of types aloud which inspires others to inquire about the nature of the types. We have found this to be quite an enjoyable, class-wide activity that not only engenders interest in classifying, but also begins to reveal and exemplify the nature of classification and its essential components.

To conclude this lesson, we assign the topic, high school students, and tell our students to use the one principle of organization, the clothing each wears, to determine the categories of students in a typical high school classroom and to distinguish them from others. Specifically students either brainstorm or create a spider diagram, but this time, they go to the whiteboard and list the types. In front of the class, the group leader explains the types and the clothing each wears. Again this turns into a lively activity as the students share their high school experiences, bantering with their inquisitive peers while effortlessly learning classification

elements in the bargain.

In subsequent lessons, we provide a brief lecture on classification, the formal breakdown of its components – the term or group to be classified, the principle of organization, the categories, etc. We also provide interesting and clearly organized samples of classification, essays again on themes that students can relate to such as the names that car manufacturers have for their various models. We introduce two main methods of support in the body paragraphs by multiple examples or common features.

The afore-mentioned article on car names displayed a host of examples that clearly defined each category of car name invention. Next, after students are given the task of classifying drivers on Oahu, a topic that they are familiar with as both drivers and passengers, we offer a sample outline that illustrates the notion of common features in writing body paragraphs in classification writing (See **Classification: Common Features**). In this outline, drivers in Hawai'i can be divided based on their driving styles, and the common features of the three types of drivers are their lane changing habits, their speed, and their distance between other cars.

Finally, we prepare students to produce their first classification assignment (See detailed instructions on the **Classification Essay Assignment**). At first, we give students a choice of topics to choose from and ask them to brainstorm and fill-in a topic outline for homework. We check this the next class to ensure that they have organized it correctly and understand the essential characteristics of a classification essay. Sometimes ESL students will confuse the principle of organization with the categories and vise versa. Catching this problem early will avoid unnecessary frustration on the part of the students when they actually compose it.  A peer review is also conducted on the

# Enliven, Clarify, and Exemplify . . . (continued)

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first draft; students find reading drafts by others to be a valuable and educational experience (See **Peer Review**).  We assign a final draft. We also have students compose another classification essay for the midterm exam in class. But by this time, students feel more relaxed and have developed more confidence and expertise in writing academic classification essays.

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### Classification: Common Features
All drivers can be divided into three groups based on driving style.
I.    Safe Drivers
    A.  lane changes
        1. signal
        2. move carefully
    B.   speed
        1. follow speed limit
    C.   normal space between cars
        1. one car length per 10mph
II.    Dangerous Drivers
    A. lane changes
        1. no signal
        2. move suddenly
    B.   speed
        1. doesn't follow speed limit
        2. too fast: 15mph over limit
        3. too slow: 10mph under limit
    C.   abnormal space between cars
        1. tailgating
III.    Extremely Dangerous Drivers
    A.  lane changes
        1. no signal
        2. moves two or more lanes at once
    B.   speed
        1. doesn't follow speed limit
        2. much too fast: 20+mph over limit
        3. much too slow: 15mph under limit
    C.  abnormal space between cars
        1. right on bumper

In short, there are three types of drivers on Oahu.

### Classification Essay Assignment:

Write a **typed, 500-word classification essay** on the topic I approved for you.

Your essay should have **5 paragraphs**: a one-paragraph introduction, three body paragraphs, and a one-paragraph conclusion.

Your introduction should begin with a hook and some connecting sentences that lead the reader to the thesis statement at the end of the introduction**.  The thesis statement should state the topic, controlling idea, and the principle of organization for your essay. You may want to include a predictor.  Use language that indicates you are writing a classification essay, such as "categories, " "types," "can be divided into," 'based on," or "according to."**

**Each body paragraph should begin with a topic sentence**.  The supporting sentences should be organized by giving **examples or features of each category.   Use the same organization (examples or features in each body paragraph).**

**The concluding paragraph** should restate the thesis, summarize and/or end with some final comments (opinions, predictions, and/or suggestions).

After brainstorming for ideas, write a **detailed topic outline** for your essay following the example format I gave you for the classification essay.  **Write your own outline on another piece of paper, using the handout as a guide.**

**Due dates:  First draft of essay attached to brainstorm and topic outline due  _____.**

# Enliven, Clarify, and Exemplify. . . (continued)

Peer Review                          Writer's name:_____

                                     Your name: _____

### Introduction

What is this essay about? _____

Does the writer use a hook to introduce the topic of the essay?  **Yes/No/Not sure**.  If so, what kind

   of hook? _____

Is the hook effective in capturing the reader's interest?  **Yes/No/Not sure**.

Does the introduction flow from general to specific?  **Yes/No/Not sure**

Is there a thesis statement with a clear topic and controlling idea at the end of the introduction?

   **Yes/No**. If so, write it here:

   _____

Is there a principle of organization in the thesis?  **Yes/No** If so, write it here:

   _____

Is there a predictor in the introduction?  **Yes/No** If so, write it here:

   _____

### Body

Does each body paragraph begin with a topic sentence introducing one type or category?  **Yes/No**

Does the writer use transitions or signal words (one, another, etc.) and a classifying word (type,

   category) in each topic sentence?  **Yes/No**

Circle how the body paragraphs are organized:

   **by common features / by examples/ unclear**

Does the writer follow the same type of organization in each body paragraph?  **Yes/No**

### Conclusion

Does the conclusion include a restatement of the thesis?  **Yes/No** If so, write it here:

   _____

Does the conclusion include a summary of the subtopics (types)?  **Yes/No** If so, write it here:

   _____

Does the conclusion end with final comments?  If so, circle what kinds:  **opinions, suggestions,**

   **predictions**

### General

What did you like best about this essay? _____

What suggestion for improvement can you give the writer? _____
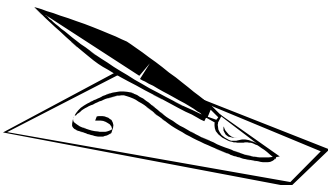
# Breaking the Silence in the Classroom and
# Experiencing the Language in Real Communication
## By Jing Z. Paul & Yan Yu

Similar to many English teachers who teach in a small town in China, Yan Yu has never been to an English-speaking country, and the only teaching resource she has is the textbook designated by the Chinese Ministry of Education. However, the lack of resources does not stop her from exploring ways to help her students.

Imagine yourself walking into a middle school English classroom that is packed with 65 students, and when the teacher isn't speaking, you find yourself surrounded by silence. This is a typical classroom scenario in No. 2 Middle School of Shashi, China, where Yan teaches. Since spoken English is not tested in the unified national college entrance exam, English teachers and students usually put minimum efforts into it in public school classrooms. "I want to break the silence!" Yan exclaimed. In her 16-year-long teaching career, she has explored many ways of promoting speaking, among which, "free talk" and "skit performance" have proven to be the most effective for her test-driven students.

The first five minutes of her class is dedicated to "free talk", where individual students speak English on topics of their own interests in front of the class. "In the beginning, students were usually very shy. Gradually, they learned to draw resources from their textbook and workbook ," Yan shared. To her, an appreciation for spoken English goes a long way, which not only triggers students' interests in the spoken language, but also motivates them to consolidate what they have learned into speaking. Moreover, regular "free talk" pushes them to actively seek meaningful information from test-centered learning materials.

Building upon students' interest in "free talk", Yan employs a three-step technique to help her students creatively develop textbook dialogues into skits: mimicking, situating and performing for the other students. Students begin with mimicking through repeating after the accompanying textbook audios. Following that, they are guided to develop a story by applying the dialogue to a scene appropriate to American culture. Finally, they add gestures, actions and emotions for performing. At the end of each lesson, Yan reserves the last ten minutes for skit performance. "I have never seen students laughing so much in a foreign language class. It is very interesting to see how the same dialogue can be interpreted so differently, which often leads to heated discussions," Yan explained with a big smile on her face.

No doubt there are lots of challenges in teaching a foreign language in a small town in China: large classes, lack of teaching resources, zero contact with native speakers, no time for extracurricular activities, etc. The biggest challenge for Yan is a lack of contact with native English speakers. With determination Yan exclaimed, "I feel that there is a wall between my students and the English language. To overcome this, we must move from classroom simulation to real-life communication!"

Coincidentally, she has recently gained contact with an old friend, who is teaching Chinese to native English speakers in the U.S. She and her friend have made arrangements to bring their students together through cyberspace communication. "I am so happy that my students and I will have an opportunity to experience the English language in real communication. I am looking forward to a mutually enriching language exchange experience, " Yan is very excited. Indeed, a marvelous journey awaits.

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# Implementing High Expectations of English Language Learners

## By Aaron David Mermelstein

Teaching is complex and so is the concept of student expectations (Stronge, Tucker, & Hindman, 2004). According to Wharton-McDonald, Pressley, and Hampston (1998), the most effective teachers maintain high expectations on all of their students. However, having high expectations does not mean having the exact same expectations for each student. Expectations should reflect the growth and/or improvement each student should be able to achieve during the school year (Brown, 2002). As teachers, it's important to realize that expectations should start with early planning, continued monitoring and support for individual students, and by providing clear and concrete feedback to students.

In order to achieve positive results, teachers need to clearly communicate their expectations to their students. To increase effectiveness, it should be done through both one-way and two-way formats. A one-way format would be telling your students directly at the beginning of the school year or posting your expectations in the classroom. However, some students do not always pay attention in class and may miss out on this vital information. Therefore, one should also use a two-way format, in which the teacher talks with, not to, the students about expectations. This format allows for student input, which can translate into students taking responsibility for their own learning.

In order to be most effective, it is important to listen to your students and offer them clear explanations and even examples. Teachers can do this by writing out lesson objectives and sharing them with students. Also, whenever possible teachers should take opportunities to reinforce their expatiations and should provide multiple forms of feedback for their learners. Feedback should be provided as soon as possible, so that students can make adjustments or adapt to new conditions.

Students need to feel important and valued. According to Peart and Campbell (1999) the most effective teachers are viewed as genuinely caring about the success of their students. If the students believe that their teacher cares about them, they will work harder to please them.

Since not all students are alike and have different academic and emotional needs, it's important for teachers to be mindful of providing equitable support for all learners. This can be done by offering encouragement to all students, supporting their individuality, eliminating any form of biases, helping learners realize that their differences can also be their strengths, and by being mindful of the power of the self-fulfilling prophecy. If students believe they can achieve, they will. If they believe they will fail, they will.

Having high expectations for students is not as simple as it seems and should not be approached the same way for all learners. Promoting high student achievement requires thoughtful and responsive planning, continual assessment, dedication, and a lot of hard work. However, teachers who adopt a student-centered teaching approach which focuses on the students' needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles (Mermelstein, 2010) are much more likely to achieve this goal. Thus, quality learning requires quality teachers, and in the end, success can be shared by everyone.

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# Interconnections: Teaching Language and Culture Through Literature Circles

## By Kevin M. Maher

### Pedagogical Reasoning behind Literature Circles

Literature circles (LCs) can strengthen students' vocabulary, improve their understanding of the target language's culture, increase critical thinking skills, and create collaboration among participants. As LCs are student-focused and student-led, they directly appeal to students' own personal and collective interests, their language needs, and remain at their own respective learning pace. Student collaboration fits well with the theory of Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The idea that collectively, students can work out meaning, and together make sense of something, that might be more difficult on their own. Additionally, the teacher as a fluent or native speaker can assist in meaning for both language and culture.

As students collaborate with peers, they establish and create their own autonomous and critical voices (Murphey & Jacobs, 2000; Murphey, 2001). This develops confidence within the group, to create a stronger opinion or voice. Krashen's (2011) Comprehension Hypothesis stated that we acquire language not as a goal, but as a byproduct of understanding a message. Kelly and Sandy (2008) stressed that what we teach must be meaningful and relevant for the students, and if we focus on this, it will develop deeper processing, more active learning, and engage the learners emotionally. LCs do all of these things. Maher (2014a) recognized how students examine authentic text and discover true examples of the target language in its natural context. They become familiar with the social norms and the usage of words in the context of the story.

This has an added implication for students in Hawai'i. As the islands have a unique culture. Short stories and literature could be taken from the local context, and discussed collaboratively in a larger classroom setting, with their teacher as a guide.

### Assigning 'Role-work' prior to a Literature Circle

"Role-work" (Maher, 2014b) is essentially homework for a role that students will play in their LC. Each student must not only do their required reading before each LC, but they must also do the "role-work" to submit to their teacher, and to the group prior to the LC session. The teacher can evaluate the student's group contribution through the role-work submitted.

Each role has a specific function for each student within the group to focus on. Students may be assigned titles such as 'Discussion Leader,' 'Vocabulary Wizard,' 'Idiom King/ Queen,' 'Real Life Connector,' 'Passage Person,' 'Visualizer,' 'Graphic Organizer,' 'Culture Connector,' 'Summarizer,' 'The IF Person,' or the 'Character Creator' (Maher, 2014b). The type of roles are almost limitless, and one suggestion for teachers, is that after you try some of the roles listed, ask your students to create new roles. 'The IF Person' was basically one of these student generated roles. This person creates several questions that asked, "If you had Situation X like Character Y, what would you have done?" The idea behind all of these roles is to create interesting discussion among the participants in the literature circles.

To setup an LC, ideally, you would want to have only five roles, with five members in each LC group. Each group will then stay together as a group for five LC sessions. In this way, each person in the respective group will experience each role at least once through the cycle (Maher, 2013). The role-work should be due on the same day as they discuss it. The overall idea is that they have properly prepared, done the reading, and prepared for the discussion beforehand.

Regarding role-work, you will want to create specific minimum requirements for each role, which might vary depending on students' abilities and interests. If you have some good artists, you might want to have the Graphic Organizers draw diagrams and pictures to organize the story. If a group of students are weaker at drawing, you might instead request that they find pictures off of the Internet, and draw lines or timelines to visually display the story.

Of all of the roles, you must always have a 'Discussion Leader.' This person must create interesting discussion questions. Make it clear to the Discussion Leader that he/she must also pay attention to the time, and be responsible for developing the discussion if his/her group finishes well before the allotted time given by the teacher. The teacher should also have a session on creative open-ended discussion questions, as opposed to yes/no or simply comprehension questions. The other four roles can be left to the teacher's discretion or (if you want to give more autonomy to the student s), up to each respective group to decide.

In general, the time needed may vary depending on the students involved. If you have an advanced class, you may set the LC time for up to 45 minutes per session. If you have a weaker set of students, perhaps only 15 minutes is sufficient. The text can also vary between an entire novel, where the group slowly works through it over an entire semester, or it can also be a simple short story for each session instead.

# Interconnections . . . (continued)

## Additional Supplemental Learning Reinforcement

In addition to the LC itself, you might want to additionally add a few other supplemental activities to reinforce their understanding of the text.

Vocabulary Lists (or Idiom Lists). These can be taken from the Vocabulary Wizards each week; or the teacher can generate these on their own prior to their scheduled reading. The recommended preference would be that the teacher scans the text beforehand for difficult words, and gives them a vocabulary test prior to reading the selected passages (Maher, 2013). This also fits ideally with Nation (2009), who recommends the recycling of vocabulary, as much as possible. In this case, they would study the words before they actually see them in the text.

Another suggestion prior to each LC, is to have 'Clarity Check Partners' (Maher, 2014a). This should be prior to the LC itself, and within partners, students will discuss the most problematic words, idioms, sentences, and paragraphs that they encountered. Often students will generate or gain new insights that they can later bring to their larger LC group. Additionally, the teacher can discover problematic sections of the text during this time, and develop a mini-lesson on that subject after the LC is finished.

Another version of this might be to have all of the similar, 'Real Life Connectors,' for example, to come together and discuss what they might talk about later, or prior to the first LC, just to clarify what exactly their role should be.

Another supplement to the LC, is a 'Comprehension and Inference Discussion Question with a Quiz' section. This is generally best after the LC, and the teacher generates the questions based on the story that is deemed most critical. Students are allowed to discuss these questions, then a follow-up quiz is given to assess whether they understand the fundamentally most-important particularities of the text (Maher, 2014a).

Lastly, 'Lit Skits' (Maher, 2013), can be assigned. Essentially, each group will be asked to act out a short scene from the assigned reading of their choice. This is an excellent supplemental activity which can cement scenes and timelines for the reading audience.

## Conclusion

Finally, studying literature collectively can be an incredible bonding social experience for the students involved. Long after their university classes are finished, students' will individually remember the books that they have studied. It will remain a powerful memory of their English studies, their social development, and as a step in the advancement of their reading skills.

Please email me, or refer to the three LC proceedings papers, if you-would like more detailed information on literature circles (Maher, 2013; Maher, 2014a; Maher, 2014b). An LC example handout that was given to students is attached as Appendix I (Maher, 2014b), in one of the papers.

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# Teaching EFL in Thailand: Harsh Realities and Some Quick Fixes
## By Karen Jasmin Iwamoto

Teaching in Thailand was an exhilarating experience. I visited different places, experienced the culture, and tried exotic food. However, after the adrenaline rush of the first few weeks wore off, I realized that there was so much I needed to learn to survive teaching in an environment where English only existed in the four corners of my classroom. I had some really challenging situations, but I learned to cope through some quick fixes of my own.

I taught at a private tutoring center in Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand. Though other teachers may have different issues depending on where they are assigned, some challenges are the same regardless where you teach. One thing in common wherever you go is the fact that tutoring centers are thought of as more "relaxed" compared to local schools. However, there are issues that only exist in after school programs. Oftentimes, how you deal with these issues greatly influence the status of your employment.

### Issue #1: Education vs. Entertainment

Students taking English classes in their local schools know that they have to pass the class to graduate. Getting a good grade elicits enough motivation to keep students focused on required tasks. Private tutoring centers do not have that power over students. Their attendance solely depends on their personal interest or their parents' mandate. They are not graded on their performance and tests are not administered to determine whether they pass the class or not. In short, there's no leverage on their attendance. Therefore, preparation for each class must be done with the goal of encouraging students to enroll for classes and keep on coming back. There were times when I felt as though I had to be an entertainer and a teacher at the same time. The truth is, if the students didn't like me or the class, they wouldn't sign up and when that hap-

pens . . . I'll definitely lose my job.

### Solution: "Work Hard, Play Harder"

I knew that I had to try a lot of different strategies to keep my students coming to class. One that worked for me is incorporating games into my lesson plan. Since my classes where an hour and a half long, I divided it into 5 parts (L-A-L-A-G), L for lesson, A for activity, and G for game. I made sure that the lesson part would only be 20 minutes or shorter. An



activity would then follow to reinforce the lesson. The activities were usually in pairs or small groups. It kept them busy and enhanced the camaraderie in class. The last part of the lesson was a game for everyone to enjoy. It took more preparation planning two mini lessons and two activities for each class, but it worked every time. Students participated because there was always something to do.

There are plenty of ESL games online and I used many of those to my advantage. Some of their favorites were hangman, and Pictionary. I just made sure that the clues or words I used during the game were the ones we practiced in class. They also enjoyed Scattegories,

memory, and bingo. I sometimes had to make my own list or personalize the cards, but the great thing is that I got to use it for different classes. I often go by the motto "when in doubt, play a game." It saved me a lot of times.

### Issue #2: Proficiency = Social Status

It's not uncommon to have advance and beginner students in one class. The reason is that classes are grouped according to age not proficiency. I believe that it has a lot to do with social demands. Parents are concerned about labels. No parent would want their child in a beginner's class because it would seem like their kid is not as smart as the others. It's not just about their child's proficiency, it affects their social status. So to avoid any confrontation with angry parents, classes are grouped according to age. It works to the tutoring centers' advantage but the teachers are the ones who have to deal with multi-level classes.

### Solution: Divide and Conquer

I had one particular class where one student could communicate with me without a problem and the other two could barely write or read in English. I was tempted to just give them two versions of the lesson, but then that would have been too confusing. Instead, I had my advance student help me as an "assistant teacher." She helped explain some points in Thai when the other students could no longer follow the lesson. Since there were only three of them in class, I did a lot of pair work so that she could help one of her classmates while I helped the other. This worked out great because I was still able to use one lesson plan for the whole class.

Also, I used a lot of worksheets. This was helpful because it kept everyone busy while I attended to each student. After each activity, they would then share their answers with each other which turned out as a great listening and speaking practice. Having a lot of worksheets also turned out as a positive thing because parents were pleased that their

# Teaching EFL in Thailand . . . (continued)

children were doing a lot of work in class, as if the amount of paper they had equaled the amount of knowledge they gained. It was a win-win situation.

### Issue #3: Are We Playing Charades?

I've handled classes where my students didn't have enough knowledge of English to even understand the instructions I gave in class. They were just lost. I didn't know any Thai and their understanding was so limited that class instruction was next to impossible.  Class time was like playing a game of charades. I acted while they guessed what I was trying to say. Imagine doing that for an hour and a half every day.  It sucks the energy out of you.

### Solution:  Be Inventive

There were plenty of times when I envied my Thai colleagues and wished I could speak fluent Thai. It would have saved me a lot of time and given my students more opportunities for practice, but wishing did not change my teaching situation. What I did instead was use sign language, drew, and wore out our dictionaries in class.

I incorporated simple signs in class for classroom instructions. I used them so frequently that the students understood what I wanted to say after a few repetitions. Signing was also a great way to teach them new vocabulary. When signs didn't work, I drew. Though I was not any good at it, it served its purpose in class. It elicited a few laughs and improved our classroom rapport.

Each student was provided with an English-Thai dictionary. That became our favorite book in class. Whenever there was a word they didn't understand, I had them race each other to find the meaning. It was a never ending game. A fun one as it turned out. It helped them understand that some words have multiple meanings and they learned its different usages.

### What Thailand Taught Me

My experiences in Thailand taught me that teaching is not just about having skills. It requires passion. Without it, no one would survive in this career. One's love for teaching makes up for the many disappointments in the classroom. It encourages me to keep on trying until I

figure out what works. There is no secret formula in classroom management or lesson planning. A lot of what happens in the classroom is trial and error. It's frustrating at times, but I keep trying because I know that I'll get better each time. Quitting is not an option.

**About the Author:** Karen Jasmin Iwamoto graduated in TESOL from Brigham Young University-Hawaiʻi in April 2013. She left for Thailand upon graduation to complete her student teaching and was later offered a teaching position at the same tutoring center. After her contract, she decided to return home to the Philippines where is now working as an ESL teacher at a Japanese IT company.

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# Facilitation Intervention:

# Classroom Conflict Resolution Via Ground Rules

# By Barbara Leigh Cooney

Teachers inherently incorporate facilitation strategies to effectively manage a group and elicit productive discussion to promote learning. In this article, I discuss the use of a facilitator's lens to plan and analyze the rescue of a dysfunctional class with a facilitation strategy. I was teaching a TESOL certification course to 12 students on three consecutive weekends in February 2012. Although exhausting, I initially found the students' motivation both invigorating and fulfilling. After the second weekend of this particular course, however, I was thoroughly demoralized due to a 'difficult' student (for confidentiality, I will

use the initial L) whose disruptions rendered our space unsafe to effectively interact, negatively affecting the learning culture of the class, and I knew that something had to be done to remedy the situation.

In *Facilitating Group Learning,* George Lakey (2010) advised allowing time for group participants to interact and create a "container," defined as a "social order that supports safety," and postulated that "a strong container has walls thick enough to hold a group doing even turbulent work, with individuals willing to be vulnerable in order to learn" (p.14). Lakey has observed that

group participants want to feel safe enough to shed pretenses and be authentic, and they require a strong container to be comfortable with their own power in order to excel. The facilitator can be pro-active in setting up the container, and as the sessions progress, participants make the container weaker or stronger by their interactions. The TESOL group  I was working with had developed a progressively weaker and more wobbly container in dire need of structural support. I resolved to be pro-active and initiate intervention to repair and strengthen our container at the outset of our final weekend of training.

# Facilitation Intervention . . . (continued)

(Continued from page 12.)

## THE FACILITATION PLAN

I intervened to strengthen our container by eliciting and implementing ground rules. In a typical facilitated meeting, this would have been done as an initial process. In this case, the strategy would be used to rescue this unhealthy learning group. The following considerations demonstrate planning through the lens of a facilitator.

**Seating:** The tables were moved into a closed circular shape, with me at the front near the board. According to Barnes (2013, p. 41), there are relative pros and cons to this arrangement:

| Advantages |
|---|
| Good for interpersonal issues |
| Encourages eye contact, personal contact |
| **Disadvantages** |
| Encourages interpersonal conflict |
| Energy confrontational |

Clearly, our circular seating was interpersonal: if the group could establish a strong container, the arrangement would be ideal. However, if relations did not improve, the seating could exacerbate negativity and encourage continued confrontation.

**Stakeholders:** Teacher-trainer (me); 12 students (4 women, 8 men; ages 24-68; Taiwanese, Mexican, Indian, local, military, etc.); corporate management of TESOL program; and considering a 'ripple effect', possibly all future students of these TESOL candidates.

**Statement(s) of Purpose:** (1) To build a strong, cohesive, supportive group container so that all participants benefit as much as possible from this training; and (2) To model an effective conflict resolution strategy for classroom management.

**Agenda:** Check in, Opening Statement, Brainstorm Ground Rules, Check for Consensus (30 min.)

- **Check in:** George Lakey (2010) proposed working on container building in the first comments at the outset of every session. He advises humor to connect with participants, and I chose his suggestion: 'How many of you wish you'd gotten more sleep last night?" (p. 16-17), which became a humorous transition when I commented about losing sleep over this group.

- **Opening Statement:** "The past weekend didn't go as smoothly as possible. I'd like to ensure that our last weekend together be beneficial and positive for everyone. In *Facilitating Group Learning,* George Lakey uses the metaphor of a group's 'container', and we are going to repair and strengthen our container. Each of you is vital for structuring a positive and supportive container for our group. Let's begin by making some decisions by consensus, meaning that we all agree as individuals and as a group."

- **Brainstorming Statement:** "Let's brainstorm some Ground Rules to guide us and keep us on task our last two days together." As an innocuous example, I wrote "turn off cell phones" and asked for other suggestions. Within moments, students actively generated ideas, and I recorded them without comment. "Can we consolidate any of the ideas? Any to be omitted?" They deleted one and clumped the remainder into categories, resulting in the following Ground Rules: **(1) Turn off phones; (2) Be active participant, pay attention; (3) Allow others to speak without interruption; (4) Keep it short, concise, relative; (5) Avoid repetition;** and **(6) Feedback focused on methodology vs. content.**

- **Checking for Consensus:** Although six Ground Rules were now in place, there was an awkward silence as we sensed a lack of completeness. I asked for any other suggestions, and a courageous student offered, **(7) Keep discussion civil and respectful.** Others nodded agreement, smiling with relief as I asked, "Can we all agree to this list?" All participants, including L, nodded agreement. To be absolutely certain we were building a robust container and had reached consensus, I established eye contact with each participant and asked, "Can each of you honestly say that these Ground Rules were reached fairly and openly and are the best solution for us at this time?" Consensus was reached, and the walls of our container stood firm. I posted the list at the front of the room.

# Facilitation Intervention . . . (continued)

(Continued from page 12.)

## RESULTS

I can happily report a successful, amiable conclusion to the TESOL certificate training. These final two days were dedicated to presenting practicum lessons. Our (formerly disruptive) L remained quiet at first, but soon became engaged and enjoyed each lesson, along with the rest of us. L's practicum was particularly well done and well received. The change in atmosphere was palpable—we had indeed built a strong and stable container. During a private moment, L apologized and gave me a small gift. Our final classroom moments were celebratory. I overheard L and another student wishing for one more weekend. When it was L's turn to receive her certificate, she tearfully held me in a tight hug while expressing love and appreciation. I was grateful for her participation: she had been the catalyst for our transformation, and we all had learned and grown from the experience.

Most class members went to a nearby restaurant for further celebration. One student quietly mentioned, "those ground rules worked!" L was bubbling over in happiness, thanking each student personally and taking photographs. Three students privately told me that they had experienced L at a promotional session prior to the class, and all had hesitated to enroll because of her disruptions at that time. They claimed they had learned much from the way I "handled her."

## STUDENT EVALUATIONS

I emailed the 12 participants asking them to evaluate our final weekend by responding to four questions on an online survey. The design was a 1-5 Likert scale, with 5 indicating 'strongly agree.' Nine out of twelve students replied, and L emailed that she could not participate because her answers would not be anonymous. The results are as follows:

## 1. Did the Ground Rules aid in getting the group focused and supportive?

Average rating was 4.33, and a typical comment was "the ground rules were good, in a way, to keep everyone from speaking out of turn. This way, no one would be interrupted. It also shows respect towards the one speaking."

## 2. Were we successful in creating a strong and supportive "container" for our group?

Average rating was 3.89. Comments: "Sometimes it was difficult to be supportive of some of the members' behaviors but we seemed to . . . move on to accomplish the goals we shared in common," and "Yes, in that it didn't objectify any single person and added more cohesion to the group."

## 3. Did the Ground Rules model a tactic you might use in managing your classes?

Average rating was 4.44, and representative comments are: "Yes, I will certainly create a ground rule . . . in order for me to run the class session smoothly without too many interruptions," and "Yes. . . I will definitely use 'ground rules' during my teaching. Especially, teaching children ground rules are [sic] a way to keep children behaving properly."

## 4. Any additional comments on our course?

"I need to apologize to the instructor not so much for being disruptive but for perhaps at times goading those who were . . . . It was just too easy to get her going. My apologies."

"As difficult as it was at times to be tolerant of some of the members, it was a good reminder that we will not be blessed with perfect classes! Thanks for your patience and role modeling."

## CONCLUSION

The success of the final weekend sessions was due to facilitative intervention, and ownership of the Ground Rules was the key to empowering participants to engage in constructive container building. Instead of me providing a proposed list, participants themselves generated the Ground Rules, and each personally acknowledged acceptance and compliance. Ownership of the Ground Rules rescued this dysfunctional group and transformed it into a healthy, supportive, vibrant whole. George Lakey (2010) asserted that "Container-building is an invitation to be real . . . . By taking small steps, they gain mutual trust and realize they are safe, at least a little bit accepted for who they are and what they think (p.19). L embraced the structure provided by the Ground Rules, and self-monitored her behavior. When she caught herself interrupting another participant, she stopped and apologized, but the other acknowledged her and encouraged her to continue. Thus, she was validated and made her point concisely. She gained mutual trust, realized she was safe, and felt accepted for who she was and how she thought. She blossomed and thrived, and (as she had asserted in her first email complaint) actually earned the "right to get as much from the course that [she] can." Having built a robust group container, so did we all.

## Resources:

Barnes, B. (2012). *PACE 668 facilitating community and organizational change course manual.* Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i at Manoa.

Lakey, G. (2010). *Facilitating group learning: Strategies for success with diverse adult learners.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

**About the Author:** Barbara Leigh Cooney is the World Languages and ESL teacher-trainer in the Institute of Teacher Education, Secondary, College of Education, University of Hawai'i at Manoa and enjoys visiting the campuses of the island's high schools in support of her teacher-candidates. In a distant past life, she was tenured faculty of Peace Studies and English at Kobe College, Japan. Her interests include the intersection of language and peace, conflict resolution, and immigrant learners.

# Concentration: A Word Form Card Game

## By Lisa Kawai

I use this activity when I teach word form and the use of prefixes and suffixes. It allows students to use various learning styles (visual, kinesthetic, audio) while they work as a small group.

In a previous lesson, I go over prefixes and suffixes and which ones make nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. We work through a few exercises on 'word families' and using the words in sentences.

Example: deep (adj)  depth (n)  deepen (v)  deeply (adj)
The average _____ of the ocean is 3,790 meters.
Nikky told me he loves me _____.
The spaceship Voyager 1 is now traveling in _____ space, or interstellar space.
Larger ships will be able to navigate the river after the main channel is _____.

Activity: 20-30 minutes to make the cards and 20 minutes to play

• Divide the students into groups of 3-4 students
• Pass out material: dictionaries, construction paper (if the paper is too thin the students will be able to see the words through the paper) , and scissors
• Have students fold the paper to make at least 24 slips of paper and have them cut these out
• Allow the students to choose their own words—these can be known words or new words they find in the dictionary
• Have the students write the words on the slips of paper (one word per slip)—note that the students need to use 2, 4, or 6 words in the 'family'

Example:
abridge, unabridged (two cards)
standard, standardize, substandard, standardization (four cards)
journal, journalism, journalist, journalese, journalistic, journalistically (six cards)

Once the students have made all of their cards, they are ready to play the game. The cards are shuffled and turned upside down. Students take turns turning two cards over. If the two cards are in the same family, the student can keep them, but only if they can make a sentence using one or both of the words. If the cards do not belong to the same family, the student turns them back over, and the next student takes a turn. Play continues until all of the cards are taken. I usually have the students start with their own cards and then play a second game with cards from a different group.



**About the Author:** Lisa Kawai teaches at Hawai'i Pacific University and Education First International Language  Center. She is the Editor of HITESOL's newsletter *The Word.*

| literate | illiterate | neutral | neutrality | solid |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| reflect | reflection | dependent | codependent | solidify |
| independent | independently | child | childhood | commerce |
| childish | childlike | library | librarian | commercial |
| nervous | nervousness | belief | unbelievable | comic |
| standard | substandard | sole | solely | comical |

# Not for ESOL Teachers

## Book Review

## By Anne Wheelock

Ariza, E. N. Whelan. (2006). *Not for ESOL teachers: What every classroom teacher needs to know about the linguistically, culturally, and ethnically diverse student* (1st ed.). Boston, USA: Pearson Education.

Understanding the cultural, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds of their students can be an unfamiliar and daunting task for K-12 teachers. Nonetheless, it is a necessary task in today's world, as classrooms become more and more culturally diverse. In *Not for ESOL Teachers*, Ariza recognizes that all teachers require strategies and methods for understanding cultural diversity and working with English language learners (ELLs). How do we make the new ELL comfortable in an alien school "culture"? How do we integrate language and content and assess this student fairly? How do we involve the student's circle of family and community in his/her education? These questions and more are ably addressed in *Not for ESOL Teachers,* a book suitable for pre- and in-service teachers alike.

Dense with information, both academic and anecdotal, *Not for ESOL Teachers* is divided into six parts: Classrooms of Today, A Sampler of Cultural Groups, The Experience of Learning Another Language, Learning English Through Academic Content, Assessment, and ELLs and the Wider Community. Each part has 1 to 5 chapters of 6 to 12 pages each. A foreword, preface, and notes to the reader highlight the value of the book, offer acknowledgements, and give an outline of the topics covered. Part 1 starts the reader inside the classroom with an overview of the current cultural climate. Part 2 examines five specific cultures under the microscope, and Part 3 gives student

and teacher perspectives on learning a new language. Strategies and methods for teaching, assessment, and integrating language and content comprise Parts 4 and 5, and the author concludes with Part 6 outside the classroom detailing the importance of reaching out to parents and the wider community. At the end of each chapter, discussion questions and activities foster further exploration and learning. A substantial set of appendices offers useful information including journal and website resources, language level classifications and descriptions, and ESOL teaching methods and strategies. The book closes with an extensive reference section and bibliography.

Although any K-12 teacher in Hawai'i would realize the benefit of this book, teachers new to the islands might find Chapter 7, entitled "Asian Americans/Indians" especially valuable. Because of their increasing population in today's classrooms, Ariza chooses to focus her Asian information primarily on students of Korean ancestry, pointing to the influences of Confucianism and Buddhism in their family and school traditions. While there is, of course, wide variation among different nationalities and even among families with the same nationality regarding belief systems and practices, it will be interesting for teachers to read about the origins of customs that many Asian-American students hold dear. For example, the reader takes away an understanding of how Korean students' behavior may be driven by a sense of harmony with family and community, hard work, a strong emphasis on education, and respect for elders and authority.

The author draws on the experiences of an Indian colleague to offer insights into understanding (South Asian) Indian ELLs, and possible simi-

larities with other Asian American students are noted. As an example, both groups face pressure from parents, who value education highly, and teachers, with high expectations stemming from the Asian American and Indian "whiz kid" stereotype.
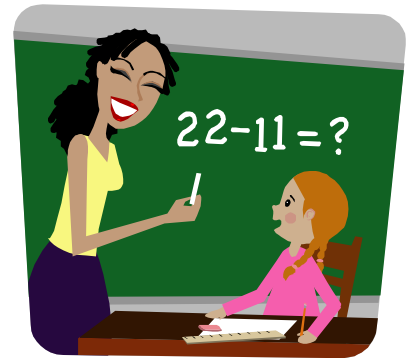
Two topics that might be easy to overlook as presenting problems for ELLs in the mainstream classroom are math and assessment, covered separately in Chapters 16 and 17. Teachers might feel that math should be no more difficult for ELLs than for native speakers as math concepts are thought to translate across languages. True, many ELLs do well at math but problems invariably emerge based on math's unique vocabulary and the fact that calculation formatting customs vary across cultures. Imagine the ELL trying to make sense out of four words that, in essence, mean "subtraction" (subtraction, difference, take away, minus) and scratching their heads over pt., lb. and ft. (pint, pound, feet – aren't feet at the end of our legs?). In Chapter 16, "Teaching Math to English Learners – Myths & Methods," Ariza points out that both math and language concepts need to be incorporated into math lesson plans, offering several approaches to this end, including literary strategies (e.g., simplification of texts), cultural awareness strate-

# *Not for ESOL Teachers . . .* (continued)

gies (e.g., parental involvement), and teaching strategies (concept charts, modeling).

As with math instruction, assessment methods for an ELL may require rethinking. In Chapter 17, "Traditional Assessment: Why it is Inappropriate," the author points to the need for valid, reliable and authentic types of assessment, such as KWL charts, drawing, and learning logs. Assessments may need to be modified by, for example, offering extended testing time. Important "housekeeping" tasks might include teaching the new student U.S. school "culture" (study skills, mechanics of testing, the meaning of plagiarism), and the prevailing norms regarding giving or receiving assistance. Echoing a suggestion that she made first in Chapter 16 on math, the author suggests giving two grades in a subject area: one for content and one for English mastery.

*Not for ESOL Teachers*' greatest strength lies in its well-thought out progression, beginning with the challenges of cultural diversity inside today's U.S. classrooms, moving on to acquiring English through academic content, delving then into assessment, and finally exiting the classroom to embrace the wider community. The author is to be commended for including a full chapter on math to remind the reader that math is not necessarily the "universal language" and that acquisition of math skills needs to be assessed separately from acquisition of English language skills. This chapter segued well into the chapter on assessment. The inclusion of personal anecdotes from

ESL students and teachers alike gives the reader moments of human interest in an otherwise dense text-like book. The second edition is available both in hard copy and as an e-book and seems reasonably priced. However, the first edition also offers valuable information for teachers just becoming aware of the needs of ELLs.

One might call it a weakness that the author spent little time discussing adapting curricula, such as social studies and science, for ELLs. But this book, as the full name implies, seems intended to be more focused on aiding the mainstream teacher in understanding cultural diversity and integrating ELL students into the classroom, rather than adapting a curriculum to fit different levels of ELLs. Multiple typographical errors in the first edition were somewhat irritating, and ironic in a book promoting the acquisition of English. Readers familiar with Walter's *Teaching English Language Learners* will notice the lack of charts, diagrams and graphs that would have added beneficial visual explanations to Ariza's text. Three entries in the Appendix section created confusion in this reader. If, indeed, the book is targeted both at pre- and in-service teachers as it seems it could be, Appendix F: "A Class Assignment," assumed too much knowledge for a pre-service teacher. Additionally, Appendix A: "ESOL Methods and Strategies," and Appendix I: "SIOP Lesson Planning Guide," both require more explanation/detail/description if also intended for pre-service teachers.

The well-organized *Not For ESOL Teachers* is geared primarily for in-service classroom teachers facing the challenges of culturally diverse students. Nevertheless, pre-service teachers will find it useful as preparation for entry into the U.S. classroom. The author guides the reader through integrating ELLs into the class, the basics of language acquisition, valid means of assessment and, recognizing that "it takes a village to raise a

child," methods for reaching out into the wider community. Sprinkled liberally with anecdotes and personal recounts that effectively humanize the information, *Not For ESOL Teachers* would be a useful tool for any classroom teacher both in Hawai'i and the broader U.S.

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Walter, C. (2004). *Teaching English language learners.* New York, U.S.A.: Pearson Education.

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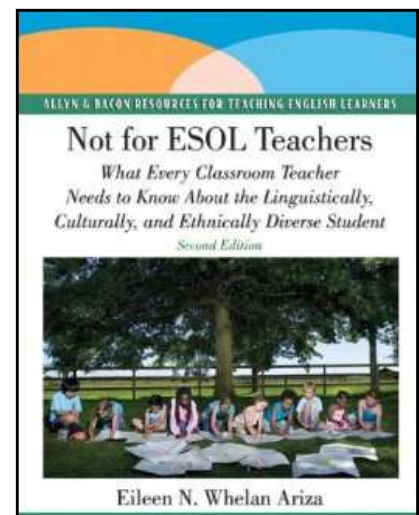
# Mental Imagery in L2 Reading: From Theory to Practice
## By MinHye Kim

When you encounter the word 'pizza', what comes to mind? Some may come up with verbal representations—an oven baked, flat, round bread typically topped with tomato sauce, cheese and various toppings. And for others, 'pizza' may evoke non-verbal representations, for instance a visual image of pizza, the smell of pizza, or the emotions related to the event of having pizza. As in this example, constructing images in response to text or words refers to *mental imagery*. Many scholars have identified mental imagery as a reading strategy (Gambrell & Bales, 1986; Pressley *et al.* 1992) used as a tool to enhance learners' reading comprehension skills (Gambrell & Bales, 1986; Gambrell & Jawitz, 1993; Sadoski, 1983). Scholars have examined its effects on remembering and making predictions and inferences in L1 text. However, a handful of studies have further examined the relationship between mental imagery and text processing in L2 reading. In this article, I would like to address theoretical justification for utilizing mental imagery in L2 reading classes and in the end summarize and introduce possible mental imagery activities that can be used as a tool to facilitate L2 reading.

## A picture is worth a thousand words: Mental imagery

When referring to the relationship between images and verbal processes, the most commonly cited theory is Paivio's Dual Coding theory (DCT). Paivio claimed that the two representational systems, the verbal (i.e., pizza) and the non-verbal (i.e., the visual/olfactory/emotional representation of pizza), are interconnected. This allows us to mentally visualize the image of words that we read or hear and to verbalize pictures we see. Krasny and Sadoski (2008) and Steffensen, Goetz, and Cheng (1999) have extended DCT to L2 reading research. They discovered that mental imagery was a fundamental aspect of foreign language reading. Unlike our expectation that portraying images might be cognitively demanding for foreign language readers, the studies

revealed that the resources needed for attending to the decoding of foreign language was not demanding enough to minimize the formation of nonverbal representations. Moreover, Steffensen *et al.* (1999) and Ponce (1994) pointed out that despite the absence of total understanding of the text, learners of a foreign language still reported performing mental imagery during reading. If nonverbal representation is an integral part of reading, as these studies and the Dual Coding proposed, why not integrate mental imagery strategies in class and further instruct the students to effectively construct visual images to aid their comprehension to the text?

## A sketch is worth a thousand words: Drawing

Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson (2003) shared great classroom activities embracing the concept of mental imagery. In the next section, classroom activities will be introduced for instructors who are willing to implement mental imagery in L2 reading classes.

1). Television in mind:
'Television in mind' (pg. 760) strategy is used to raise awareness of imaging process of the reader. Using television as a metaphor, instructors explain to the students that mismatching the text with evoked mental images is as if the television channel were switched from a dancing channel to a golf channel. This strategy emphasizes that the process of reading is not just a series of decoding words, but it is like a television screen, which smoothly changes from one scene to another containing meaningful connections. Additionally, it functions as a way to self-monitor readers' comprehension level to the text. Once students realize images are fuzzy and the channel has switched, they can apply fix-up strategies such as modifying reading rate, rereading, refocusing attention, asking for clarification. Indeed, these fix-up strategies should be taught before applying this on their own.

2) Drawing in the classroom:
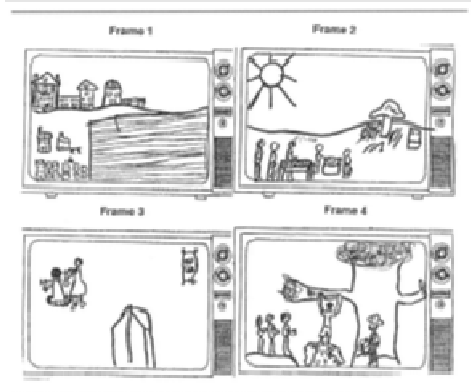Reader-generated image, in other words



Figure 1
Student drawings of *Night John* on four consecutive days (pg. 765)

a drawing, can be utilized as one of the mental imagery activities. Figure 1 shows how 'Television in mind' can be visualized through student's drawing. Each frame demonstrates the level of comprehension to the reading in class. In other words, instructors can identify if the drawing is based on the text or student's general knowledge of the topic that is not elaborated on in the reading. Also, as Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson (2003) addressed, this can be a good source of information for students to recall what the previous assigned reading was about. They claim that drawings can function as a tool to facilitate students in making predictions.
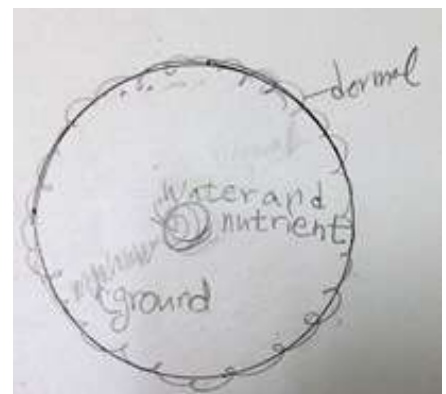


Figure 2
Student drawings on a cross section of a stem, specifically directed to draw three tissues consisting a plant stem.

# Mental Imagery in L2 Reading. . . (continued)

Figure 2 is a drawing from one of my students in TOEFL reading class. The reading was a four sentences long excerpt from a passage on plant stems. Several interpretations can be made through this drawing. First, the learner evidently had trouble on sentence level translation. More precisely, I assume he may not fully understand the concept of relative clauses, as the drawing reveals that the relative clause modified the wrong noun. Additionally, through the traces of erased pencil marks, we can assume that the learner tried out different ways to translate the text, which implies that he *noticed* the comprehension break down point. What is more interesting was the comment from the student. He said before attempting the drawing that he had no idea he was not able to translate the sentences properly. Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson (2003) stated that struggling readers often think they had read when their eyes just passed over the words, which results in fuzziness of constructing images.

Before concluding this article, I would like to raise awareness to both pros and cons of implementing mental imagery exercises in L2 reading classes.

- Strengths:

Not only can mental imagery exercise expose students' semantic or syntactic gaps, but it can also be a qualitative assessment tool for teachers. Additionally, it offers a discussion stage for students by comparing their drawings to others. Lastly, readers can better remember the text that they elicited both in verbal and non-verbal representation because the information are encoded in both system, allowing recall from both representation systems (Steffensen *et al.,* 1999).

- Weaknesses:

There are also many potentially negative aspects that need to be addressed. First, choosing the proper material is one. Since there are students who are reluctant to draw, the drawing portion should be limited and the text has to be easy to draw. Based on my experience, explanative text depicting cause-and-effect action, text describing tangible objects, or narrative fictions with unique background or characters are a good start. Additionally, when trying the exercise for the first time, you should not assume that all the students can effortlessly draw images in mind or on paper. Clear instructions and several practices should be given.

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**About the Author:** MinHye received her M.A. in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL) at Boston University. She has taught English and Korean to learners of wide range of proficiency levels and many different nationalities. She is interested in second/foreign language acquisition, L2 reading and the role of noticing in second/foreign language acquisition. In the future, She hopes to pursue her doctoral degree in second language acquisition.

## Who's Who at Hawai'i TESOL

**Elected Positions**

| | |
|---|---|
| President | (pending elections) |
| Vice President | Andrea Childs |
| Membership Secretary | (pending elections) |
| Treasure | (pending elections) |
| Program Committee | Peter Castillo |
| Socio-Political Action Chair | Shawn Ford |
| The Word Newsletter Editor | Lisa Kawai |
| Members at Large | Stephen Peridore |
| | Mark Wolfersberger |
| Big Island Liaisons | Carrie Mospens |
| | Julie Mowrer |

**Board Appointer Positions**

| | |
|---|---|
| Conference Chair | (pending appointment) |
| HITESOL / TESOL Ukraine Liaison | Jean Kirschenmann |
| Social Media Chair | Peter Castillo |
| Webmaster | Perry Christensen |

If you are interested in becoming an executive committee member, please go to the HITESOL  website to see what opportunities are available and contact Andrea Childes at <dchilds@gvenglish.com>. The committee is always happy to hear form interested people and welcome new members aboard. There should be a number of position open in the fall.

## What's What at Hawai'i TESOL

**The First Online Fall Social**

The 2014 Online Social has now come to a close.  It was a great event. Mahalos go to those who participated on Hawaii TESOL FaceBook and on our Google Docs. The event culminated with a live video chat on Zoom. First there was 1 . . .

Not only did they share ideas, but food (virtually). Go to HITESOL's web site and click on virtual food to see what they had that evening.