JALT
THE JAPAN ASSOCIATION FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING
全 国 語 学 教 育 学 会

Between the Keys

A Publication of the JALT Materials Writers SIG

Co-ordinator's Column

Cameron Romney

The spring semester is coming to a close and it seems summer is finally upon us. This year looks to be a hot one, especially here in Kansai as we will be feeling the effects of setsuden.

We've been working hard on the program for the national conference and it should be very interesting for our members. First, we are very excited about our featured speaker, John Wiltshire. He will be talking about seven keys for materials writing and I personally am really looking forward to hearing what John has to say. We are also looking forward to the discussion of our four panelists who will be talking about the unique challenges of writing for the Japanese market at our forum. My favorite part of the conference is always attending presentations by members sharing their experiences with developing classroom materials. This year's conference will be packed with information for materials writers and I hope that everyone can attend.

Finally, the strength of our membership is in our members participating in the SIG. I would encourage all of you to make time to attend our Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the conference. We are always interested in hearing from our members about their needs and wants from the SIG. I hope to see all of you in Hamamatsu in October.

MW-SIG Web Site   http://www.materialswritersorg

The site contains articles on topics ranging from copyright to desktop publishing techniques, an extensive list of publishers including contact information, tutorials and software recommendations, and information on submission requirements for *Between the Keys*.

MW-SIG Mailing List   mw-sig@materialswriters.org

From the Editor

Jim Smiley

In this issue of Between the Keys, we present a varied bag of delights for your amusement. But first, I must extend my thanks to you, MW member, for making this publication possible. This rag takes its shape depending on the member base over the years. We try to satisfy that membership, but ultimately and ideally, satisfaction should be a self-generated thing. And this time, I sent out a call for content and was highly pleased by the sudden response from our members. Let's keep this up while remembering that Between the Keys is your magazine for you. The editor and a few regular contributing editors can only provide the backbone. You do the rest.

Sarah Mulvey joins Brian Cullen on the Writers Point column to continue the wonderful series of interviews with materials writers with a very thought-provoking discussion with David Barker on the Mastery of a Specific Range. Whereas you will find many places where you agree with David, you will also no doubt find yourself in points of contention. It would be very good for the community if you—dear reader—were to jot down your opinions and send them to the Editor. Far too often, interesting discussions simply fizzle away because readers don't realise that they can continue the conversation here in BtKs.

In this vein, I was delighted when there was a lot of email feedback on my own little piece in the last issue about the analysis of a page for typeface and pedagogic implications. Marc Helgesen (from whose textbook page I made my analysis) has collated a number of comments on the article into a response article. It's good to see feedback on anything published in BtKs. Thanks, Marc.

Eagle-eyed readers will have noticed that our website now has a new web-only content section in which MW members' textbooks are spotlighted. There's no expectation that authors will then send in a longer text to BtKs, but in this issue, both of our authors highlighted so far have contributed far more indepth articles. Simon Capper shows how he uses the web service 'Quizlet' with his book, Bedside Manner. Gregg McNabb details somewhat humourously his experiences in self-publishing his 'Fifteen Little Stories'.

Richard Miles provides us with a very useful My Share article on Using News Stories in the Classroom. The format used for this My Share is different from the ones in the past. Another JALT SIG: Pragmatics <http://www.pragsig.org/> is preparing a new volume of their Pragmatic Resources Series. Being a contributing author, I saw their template and immediately recognised it as a wonderful tool for demonstrating a My Share. The JALT Language Teacher uses a much more condensed template which does not allow authors the chance to really get to grips with the background to the activity. Our new template is derived pretty much exactly from the

Pragmatic's one. Thanks. Our template can be found on our website at: http://www.materialswriters.org/index.php/publications. Richard's article covers a lot of the rationale and purpose of using news stories as well as pinpoints a few cautious caveats.

I continue the series of interviews with smaller publishers who have an interest in Japan with a look at Perceptia Press in discussion with Paul Lewis. Perceptia are now based in England but were initially started in Nagoya. Their connection to Japan is surprisingly pervasive and five of the people in this column alone have had books with them. I also begin the series of theoretical essays on materials development. This first one sees the ground laid out in educational value systems, beliefs on which the entirety of materials creation is based.

For those of us handy with a camera or who like to use images in our ELT materials, please allow me to introduce you to ELT Pics. This is an amazing service made for and by educators that has over 10,000 images available. And you can contribute, too. Read on to see how.

ELT Pics is very careful about its use of the creative commons licensing method. Penalties for illegal use of data extracted from the web are now severe in Japan. Back in 2009, I wrote a little piece on using the Creative Commons in which I stated ". Closer to home in the same month, it has now become illegal in Japan to download copyrighted material. It is unclear what this means for residents in Japan as there is no punishment associated if caught." (BtKs 17[1] p15) This situation has changed and violators now face hefty punishment: 2 years prison time or a /2 million yen fine (both maximum). See <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20120711f1.html>a Japan Times article for further information.

Submission Guidelines
NEXT DEADLINE: November 10

Between the Keys (BtK) welcomes submissions in English on all topics related to the development of pedagogic materials. Between the Keys is distributed online both in HTML and PDF formats. We gladly review articles for publication from anyone, however priority for publication will be given to current members of the JALT MW-SIG. We invite any interested person to submit articles of the following types:

• main research articles for vetting team inclusion (between 2000-4000 words)*

• research articles for inclusion at the editor's discretion (1500-3000 words). Longer articles may be divided into sections and published in subsequent issues.
• perspective/opinion pieces (up to 1000 words)
• book reviews (up to 1000 words)
• annotated bibliographies
• short summaries/reviews of journal articles
• responses to BtK articles descriptions/reviews of websites related to pedagogic materials

development
- letters to the editor
- My Share-type articles showing materials in use
- interviews with materials-related writers, publishers, academics
- reviews of materials-related technology for upcoming issues.

***BtK** is not a refereed publication on the whole. However, one article per issue will be. This is to improve the quality of materials development research and to further promote individual author's careers. Main article submissions must follow our Submission Guidelines.

Publication Schedule & Deadlines
Between the Keys is published three times a year, in:

- March (volume one),
- August (volume two)
- and December (volume three).

Submissions for consideration for any issue should be received by the editor by the 15th of the month prior to publication at the latest, i.e. February 15, July 15 and November 15.

Most articles will be published at the discretion of the editor except for refereed main articles, which will be reviewed by the MW-SIG vetting committee. If you wish your article to be our Main Article, please indicate so in your cover letter.

You can consult the BtK archive to compare your article for general style, length and appropriacy.

Articles are available to members only for the two years after publication and open access afterwards. The copyright statement is: "All articles contained in Between the Keys © 2012 by their respective authors. This newsletter © 2012 by Materials Writers SIG."

This means that individual authors are free to disseminate their own works on, for example, their websites and in open access repositories, but that must be limited to their own article only and not the whole publication.

Furthermore, copyright for the formatting and layout belong to the Materials Writers SIG, and so any content that is published outside must not be a copy of the BtK article but only the text.

Submissions Process
- Send an email to publications @ materialswriters.org (take spaces out) with your article attached
- Send an email to publications @ materialswriters.org stating your intention to submit before the next deadline. This is very useful in planning the next issue.
- If the document includes graphics, drawings, etc., they should be save as separate files and sent as e-mail attachments.

If you are unsure of the format to use, please ask the Layout Editor: layout @ materialswriters.org
Editor Contact Information (for Nov 2011-Oct 2012) publications @ materialswriters.org (take out spaces)

Questions?
Anyone with questions can reach the editor at the email address above.

Self Publishing: My Story

Gregg McNabb
Shizuoka Institute of Science and Technology

Recently I published a book entitled "Fifteen Little Stories for English Language Learners" using the Espresso Book Machine (EBM), which claims to use the most up to date technology. I will describe my experiences with it and recount back stories leading to its selection.

Prior to the the national JALT Conference in 2011, I was already quite interested in on-demand self-publishing for several reasons but did not know which company to use because there are so many to choose from. There has been a virtual explosion of print-on-demand and on-demand self-publishing companies in the past two years and the terrain is constantly shifting. So much so, in fact, that if one does an online search for "on-demand self-publishing" or "print-on-demand," it is difficult to know where to begin. As confirmation of this, I have just discovered "The Book Patch", which may be yet another good alternative. Thus with all of the choices available, I looked forward to attending any presentations that could provide me with insights. Ultimately, I went to a presentation given by Michio Tajima et. al who outlined their experiences with on-demand self-publishing at Lulu.com, an American publisher and distributor sharing similarities with Amazon.com. According to them, publishing with Lulu was easy and quick. My curiosity had been piqued.

I spent considerable time exploring Lulu's website and asked many questions in their many useful forums. Whereas I did not use Lulu this time, I did use one of their book templates and gleaned a lot of valuable information. Anyone who is seriously interested in self-publishing will be well rewarded by spending a week or more in their forums. The major issue I have with Lulu is that in order to make a decent amount of money on a smaller EFL project, one needs to offer the book for sale there exclusively. Lulu is not well known like Amazon.com, however, so the prospect of earning much more than the break even amount on a small project seems unlikely. There are other, lesser issues such as how to get a unique ISBN, but, overall, although it is not ideal, if one is interested in using Lulu as a single source for self-published textbooks sold over two to three years, it still may be suitable.

Next I examined CreateSpace, which is an offshoot of Amazon. com. It has much of the same helpful information provided at Lulu and other websites. The pricing and terms seem competitive. A serious problem with CreateSpace, however, is that there are hundreds of posts on the Internet that seem to suggest that its practices are not always above board. This seems credible given Amazon.com's similar track record.

WingSpan Press was the penultimate publisher I investigated. I was thoroughly satisfied with the thoroughness of their answers to all

of my queries. They were succinct, prompt and polite. Their pricing is competitive, and they seem very ethical. I was treated like an important customer. Knowing what I know now, I think they will be my next choice if the EBM system is not refined soon. Yet I did not choose them because the EBM package seemed cheaper, and its claim of instant worldwide availability of any of the books in their database through their network seemed to be just what I needed. When I performed various searches using "problems" and "troubles" (e.g., "WingSpan problems" or "troubles with WingSpan") as key words to try to determine whether others had had bad experiences, invariably I was directed to pages where people commented that they hadn't had any.

I found the Espresso Book Machine by On Demand Books while continuing online research and was captivated by the possibilities seemingly offered by its technology. I watched several YouTube videos of the process in action. According to their website:

"The patented Espresso Book Machine(R) (EBM) makes a paperback book in minutes, at point of need. Through its EspressNet(R) digital catalog of content, books can be ordered online or onsite at bookstores, libraries, and non-bookstore retailers. Over seven million in-copyright and public-domain titles are available on the network. Now you can also make your book available on any other Espresso Book Machine worldwide. The EBM's EspressNet makes it possible for your book to be accessible to anyone interested in your work but who happens to live in another state or even another country. Our EspressNet program is included as

part of our Standard Self-Publishing. Through our partnership with Google, titles can be discovered through the Google Books website and ordered online via a direct link to the website of the EBM retailer or library."

As cool (to me at least) as the technology was, the last two paragraphs were what hooked me. But was there an EBM in Japan? Fortunately, yes. Sanseido Books in Tokyo (三省堂書店) had two so I went to see them and made enquiries. I explained that I wanted to publish a book of stories for language learners. I was told that the cost would be ¥10 per page (¥1,120) plus other fees for set up and electronic storage. It seemed reasonable, if a bit more expensive compared to the quotes overseas from Lulu.com and WingSpan Press. Nevertheless, factoring in reduced shipping costs and next-day delivery, it still seemed worthwhile until I asked about the procedures involved in getting an ISBN.

"We don't do that," he replied.

"I see. Well, if I get my own would that be all right?"

"No, we don't do that."

"So then you don't actually publish books?"

"You can do printing," gesturing to the albums, vanity publications and other projects nearby.

"But on the EBM website it says an ISBN can be acquired as well as offering typical publishing services. It is promoted as high tech self publishing. A book entered into the system can be printed on demand throughout the world."

Becoming irritated, "Sorry, but the procedures involved in getting an ISBN and publishing are very difficult in Japan. We can only do printing. It's

10 yen per page." Then he handed me an outline of the services they provide.

"Well, if I were to publish a book using an EBM in another country, could you print the book here?"

"Yes."

With that I left knowing that I would use an EBM elsewhere and later, with a few mouse clicks, have a book printed here. I began to compare the services and prices offered by various EBM owners including the US-based Third Place Books in Seattle and Village Books in Bellingham. I settled on Village Books because they had excellent prices, good packages and showed genuine friendliness. Besides, Third Place Books just doesn't sound like a winning name. Although I introduced myself as a Canadian residing in Japan, it took a number of exchanges before I learned that Canadians apparently cannot get a U.S. ISBN and that one needs to have a physical address there. If this is in fact accurate, it would mean that only Americans can take advantage of Lulu.com and WingSpan Press, even though the staff at WingSpan later assured me that they could, indeed, publish my book of stories. How did Tajima et. al publish their books, I wonder? No matter what the actual laws may be, Village Books will not provide an ISBN to anyone who does not have an address in the United States.

I also found out that even though the EBM website expressly states that within a specified range, odd book dimensions are possible due to its infinitely variable trimming capabilities, it does not necessarily mean that an EBM owner will accommodate a customer's wishes. Many wouldn't, preferring instead to use a small range of standard sizes. In short, my "Crown Quarto" size (7.44 X 9.68 inches) was also rejected. If you intend to use the EBM, it is best to choose a standard size such as 8.5 X 11 or trade paperback.

As a Canadian, I celebrated my roots: Oscar's Books in Vancouver, the University of Victoria Bookstore and the University of Alberta Bookstore in Edmonton. The University of Alberta Bookstore seemed the best choice. Could they get me a unique ISBN? Yes. Could they publish a Crown Quarto size? Yes. Could they provide some minor editing, formatting or even fairly extensive graphic design? Yes. Were several types of paper available? Yes. Were communications prompt and to the point? Yes. Eventually I contracted with them and had them perform some minor cover formatting to ensure no errors could be made with the spine measurement resulting from paper variations. After I completed a form spelling out copyright legalities, waited for an ISBN number to be placed on the back cover and on an inside page, and approved the formatted manuscript, the perfect bind book was printed. I asked them how to go about having this book printed by Sanseido in Tokyo using EBM's EspressNet(R)system. To my horror I learned that they could not do that! They were not on the EspressNet(R)system and participation was optional. After contacting On Demand Books in New York and politely accusing them of false advertising, they admitted there were some difficulties to date. Indeed! Fortunately, I had intended to order enough copies so that even with added, unexpected shipping costs, the book would still be affordable for my students.

Beyond this major trouble, there were two more unexpected

disappointments with the finished product. The first is that the image on the front cover is smaller than expected. This is my own misjudgement, but as the file is still in their system, it will be easy to make adjustments. The other is that the clear images in the pdf manuscript were printed in a much lower resolution and the dots are clearly visible. The cartoon illustrations are fine, however. I am uncertain at this point wherein the responsibility for this lies, but my own Canon office printer can print sharper images. I had hoped for a better finished product.

From start to finish, although the entire publishing process took longer than anticipated (three months) and there were unnecessary frustrations and complications, I was mostly able to exercise the control I had wanted. And as I still own all rights, it is possible to approach other publishers with "a proposal" in hand or make modifications. Armed with the correct information, using the EBM seems well-suited for domestic American and some North American publishing projects. The main advantages why Japan-based authors may wish to consider using the EBM are the ease of acquiring an ISBN and the speed at which a project can be completed. For a major textbook project, for now at least, it would seem than an established publisher still cannot be replaced by any of the many online on-demand firms.

Publisher Profile: Perceptia Press
Jim Smiley
Tohoku Bunka Gakuen University, Sendai

In this column of Between the Keys, Jim Smiley presents a series of interviews with smaller publishers who have a keen interest in Japan. This interview is with Paul Lewis of Perceptia Press.

Tell me about your company.
Perceptia Press is a limited liability company incorporated in Japan, having been around for about eight years now. Our main product is textbooks aimed at the Japanese secondary and tertiary sectors plus private language schools, and we are making preparations to expand operations into the greater Asian region and possibly Europe. The catalogue currently consists of over thirty titles, with more being added every year. We are very proud of the range and individuality of all our products, as well as having some truly talented authors on board.

Tell me a bit about the history of your company.
We started almost by accident! Like many teachers, I had developed my own materials (in this case, a set of handouts for teaching computer fluency skills in English), and it got to the point where it made more sense to turn them into a book than to waste so many hours at the photocopier.

At that time, I was team-teaching with (co-founder) Brian Cullen,

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and we realised that combining our complementary skills could make something that promised to be creative and fun. I'd been an active editor working for *The Language Teacher* and the CALL SIG, as well as a freelance proofreader. Brian had a proven history in materials development and editing, plus a great skill for visualising how activities and books would work in practice. I'd also previously worked in publishing, and had a good working knowledge of DTP, printing, paper, and graphics, and Brian—being a musician of some renown—had the equipment and knowhow for recording, editing, and mastering audio. Anyway, we put all these skills together and were very pleased with the result—our first book on CALL.

After three CALL books, I added my own *Octopus Activities* to the line-up, and Brian (with Sarah Mulvey) came up with *Scraps*, a book which has since become our bestseller, and one which has created waves in teaching circles around the world. From there, the catalogue grew quickly and we finally became JALT Associate Members, having our own booth at the national conference, where we were able to start taking our products further afield.

Although we were initially doing all the sales and shipping ourselves, it became to large to manage, and we handed over the physical aspect of warehousing and distribution to englishbooks.jp, who do a fine job! We have already enjoyed a substantial increase in sales thanks to their active marketing, and the time freed up allows us to concentrate on product and company development.

In terms of a company ethos, we refuse to compromise in any way with quality, especially with paper stock and binding. The first few print runs of any book are small which allows us to fix any problems and improve the product continuously. Being a fairly small publisher, we can tailor our material exactly for the target market, without having to build in cross market functionality. We devote a lot of effort towards the covers that are now becoming rather well known, and of which we are immensely proud–the photo for the cover of Scraps took two days to get just right!

More specifically, tell me about your company's relationship with Japan and authors resident in Japan.
All of our authors to date live in Japan or have a strong connection with this country. Many are well-known locally and some internationally: Bob Long (*Stepping Out*, *Connections*, *Reaching Out*) has had a long involvement in JALT, as have John Spiri (*The World at Work*), Tim Knight (*Media English*), Simon Capper (*Bedside Manner*), and of course Jim Smiley (*English Care*). Steve Redford produced a book based around a romance between a couple from Okinawa and Hokkaido called *Shizuoka Dreaming* and we were proud to publish Tim Murphey's semi-autobiographical novel critiquing the Japanese university entrance exam system, *The Tail That Wags* in both English and Japanese. The Perceptia authors are very mutually supportive—it's a true family feeling.

Our readership may be interested in becoming an author with your company. Tell me about the process in realising this.
We receive manuscripts on a regular basis, and we are always happy to listen

to new ideas and give feedback even if we are not able to publish the book. The first stage for a budding author is to visit our website at perceptiapress.comand complete the submission form with as many details as possible. The form is designed to help authors see the process from the viewpoint of a publisher, and that can help with understanding and communication. In general, we look for a good clear concept within a book, with enough targetting to get the job done but enough flexibility that other teachers can also use the book and apply it to slightly different courses—if your book has a catchy title that matches the main idea, that's half the battle won!

It's good to consider how other teachers may use the book. Is it intended for a single semester or a full year? The number of units is very important in selling a book, so consider that carefully. Many teachers approach choosing a textbook by looking for something easy to use over, say, a fifteen week semester. If the book has ten units, it means the teacher needs to split them or look for supplementary material to cover the extra classes. Can the book be used with different class sizes and levels? Getting the balance between coherence, sequencing, direction, and flexibility is the key.

We also look long and hard at the activities that form the bulk of most textbooks. Are these well thought-out and would they actually work in practice? Do they practice or test what they are intended to, and is the rubric of an appropriate level?

Once the manuscript has been approved, we handle all the design and layout in-house, and aim to get a pilot edition out within six months to a year.

Projects in development at the moment include *English for Nutritionists* and *Debate*; we are also currently looking out for books on the following topics if there are any frustrated authors reading this:

- Health issues (especially English for Dentists)
- Business English
- Academic Writing
- Anything interesting or unusual!

Can you shamelessly promote the very best of your company?

As our motto says: Open the door to Perceptia! Come and join the party by becoming a user of one of our current books or the author of the next one. If anyone wants to boost their CV, we always need proofreaders, reviewers, and editors. If you haven't seen our flagship books, especially Scraps and Octopus Activities, contact englishbooks.jp for a sample copy and give it a go with your classes. You may be pleasantly surprised!

Making a **Difference**

JALT2012 at Act City Hamamatsu · Oct 12–15 2012

Educational materials and activities of the Asian Youth Forum

Greg Goodmacher
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The Asian Youth Forum (AYF) is a unique multicultural educational milieu in which students and teachers from many reaches of Asia gather for approximately one week of close interpersonal, intercultural, and international exchange. As stated on the website for the 2012 AYF forum, the "aim of the AYF is to bring together college-aged students through the medium of English-as-an-Asian language to discuss linguistic, cultural, educational, and global issues that affect their world today." To meet this aim, special teaching materials and activities that help students to communicate about global issues need to be utilized. Teachers who served as AYF advisors prepared some of the materials in advance, but, to assist participants to develop student leadership skills and autonomy, students who had participated in earlier forums were involved in creating many of the educational materials. This paper will discuss the realia, other educational materials, and various activities that were used for the 2011 Asian Youth Forum, which was held in Taiwan. The activities and materials to be described fit into categories: ice breakers or bonding, presentation practice, leadership skills development, and cultural skills development.

Ice Breakers or Bonding

The theme of the 2011 AYF was "Embracing One Humanity". Accordingly, the AYF welcome party was planned to facilitate the breaking down of social barriers between the participants and to encourage laughter and conversation between students who start off as strangers. The song "If You're Happy and You Know It" was chosen as an ice breaker by the 2011 AYF President Kim Fernano Uy and his team of AYF student leaders. First, Kim sang and modeled the body movements, clapping hands and stamping feet, which traditionally accompany singing this song. After we had all sung the song with those movements, he requested that students from the twelve participating countries write the lyrics to that song in their languages on the blackboard and create unique body movements that were based on their cultures.

The Japanese contingent had everyone bowing while singing "shiowase nara te wo tatakou… ." A Russian woman led the group in singing the Russian version of the song while moving like a duck at one point, an action which she explained represented a character in a Russian folktale. This ice breaking activity was based on a children's song and was adapted according by students to reflect their cultural backgrounds. It led to the elimination of social barriers, to the learning of new languages, and to the study of other Asian cultures.

Another ice breaker or bonding activity utilized the handbook all participants received upon registering at the conference center. In addition

to listing the schedule, introduction, various rules, etc., the handbook included pages with photographs of all participating students and teachers. The photographs became the focus of an ice breaking activity which helped everyone to learn the names of classmates and some personal information. Each student was told to request other students to sign their names under their photographs. In addition, everyone had to ask one question to the other student. Students with the most signatures within the assigned time period of two minutes were the "winners". This activity changed what was a relatively quiet classroom of tired students into a room buzzing with interlocutors.

Another section of the handbook used for promoting communication and friendship was a three-page language chart, created by Kip Cates. Each of the twelve native languages of the AYF teachers and students had its own column. Common English expressions were listed on the far left of the chart. Students were assigned to write words or phrases from each language that matched the meanings of the English words or phrases. The time allotted to complete this process was the length of the Asian Youth Forum, and the suggested best way to fill in the columns was through communication with the speakers of the other languages. Students, naturally, had fun teaching common phrases and correcting pronunciation when between workshops and other activities.

Leadership Skills Development

Since developing leadership skills is an integral aspect of the AYF experience,

students of the hosting nation lead the other students on a local tour and take them to a regional restaurant. This activity forces the student "guides" to study the necessary English language vocabulary in advance so that they can explain about and answer questions on culturally important locations, transportation, and foods to the other participants. In addition, the host students must discuss among themselves and decide the schedule, the route, the places to visit, the budget, and many other details.

Each AYF has a team of students from all over Asia who helped to prepare the handout and discuss many important issues. They have to do this over the one year between each AYF. Preparing an AYF is a tremendous responsibility. The details to be decided by the student leaders include deciding which of the hundreds of applicants to accept as participants, housing for the participants, what to write on the website, fund raising, and so on. At the end of each AYF, participants nominate others for officer positions: president, vice president, conference assistance, host country team coordinator, head of publications, head of documentation, head of education and research, head of alumni relations, head of logistics and finance, and student leader. All of these participants spend hundreds of hours in preparation prior to each forum.

A key philosophy of the AYF is to foster leadership experiences among the new participants at each forum. Accordingly, all students take responsibility for all events and activities. They are put into many situations where they must discuss, compromise with, and lead each other. Two such situations are described in

the following section.

Presentation Practice

Participants are told months before the start of each Asian Youth Forum to prepare presentations on their country and culture. Students are suggested to bring realia from their homes to use as part of the presentations and to exchange with each other during the AYF. The students of each country, among themselves, decide what the presentation format will be, which student will introduce which aspects of their country, and what to bring to represent their countries. Photographs, money, dolls, fans, artworks, clothing, CDs, games, and musical instruments are some of the realia used during their presentations. Because the Japanese students came from seven universities across Japan, they discussed and planned their presentation by email before the forum. The leadership training processes of negotiation and division of duties were a part of the AYF experience.

The 2011 AYF participants also gave two presentations at the English Teachers Association of Taiwan (ETA-ROC). As the AYF handbook explains, "Each AYF is held as part of a regional conference hosted by the 'Pan-Asian Consortium' (PAC) of language teaching Associations." The titles of the presentations led by AYF students were "Language Learning in Asia: The Students' View" and "Asian Youth in a Globalized Age: Trends and Challenges." Before each presentation, the students are informed of the presentation topics, and after that, they decide the content and format of each. They must also decide which students will be presenters. The non-presenters support the presenters with ideas, language support, rehearsal, and various suggestions. The students take this responsibility seriously. The formats of the presentations varied between formal academic presentations and a skit related to income inequality and educational access.

The AYF learning experience does not end on the final day as participants make their sad farewells because the students have developed into something which they call the "AYF family." A Facebook page is maintained by the students who exchange messages in English. Many of the messages are ones about other educational events such as a conference on youth volunteerism, or announcements that a student will travel in another country and hopes to hook up with other AYF alumni. Just recently, for example, a student in Korea asked Indonesian students for advice on how Korean students can assist Muslims visiting Korea during Ramadan. A new website is created each year for the next AYF. Students are in charge of managing this site, too. In addition, many students create teaching materials about the AYF and give presentations or reports back in their home countries.

Cultural Skills Development

When facilitating interactions among groups of students from diverse countries and cultures, materials and activities for developing intercultural communication skills are essential. In the case of the 2011 AYF, students were divided into three groups for a unique adaptation of BaFa'BaFa', an activity that is known by many intercultural communication experts and which is usually done with just

two groups of participants who role-play being members of an imaginary culture. Such role playing is effective because "entering into and interacting with another culture helps student to both practice their English skills and develop their awareness of how people in other cultures interact" (Kajiura & Goodmacher, 1999).

At the start of each activity, students went into a separate room to create a "new" culture and to decide significant aspects of that culture: body language, gender roles, class status, leadership roles, perspectives on commerce, religion, and interaction with foreigners, etc. Among themselves, students discussed and decided these points in relation to the culture they create. When necessary in the interest of saving time, a teacher would make suggestions. Kip Cates, the founder of the AYF, brought along a collection of assorted funny hats, colored tape, umbrellas, etc., that students could choose to use if they wanted. One culture used strips of red tape on the face to signify personal wealth. Guards who protected the ruler of one "country," whose culture valued strength, decided to wear scarfs on the head to signify their roles as warriors.

Students had approximately thirty minutes to decide the unique aspects of their cultures and to practice their behaviors. Then, ambassadors from each of the three cultures visited the other cultures for five minutes of research. The ambassadors returned to their home cultures and reported what they had learned to the others. In a large group, they tried to figure out the rules and characteristics of the other cultures. After that, students interacted with the other foreign cultures again and repeated the process until most students had become ambassadors. Finally, the entire student population returned to the main room for a debriefing, which Kip Cates facilitated. The debriefing allowed students to comment on the impressions, differences, surprises, shocks, emotions, conflicts, and prejudices that they felt. The experience was for many students both visceral and intellectual, to the extent that the debriefing captured the rapt attention of ninety students. Each group wanted to hear how their culture was interpreted or misinterpreted by the others. The responses were sometimes shocking, sometimes amusing, but always educational.

All of the student advisors were asked to prepare some activities related to "Embracing One Humanity," the theme of the AYF 2011. Todd Thorpe from Kinki University introduced a card game which develops body language awareness, a tolerance of ambiguity, and other skills necessary for intercultural communication. This game, called Barnga, was designed by Raja Thiagarajan, a skilled creator of educational materials. At the start of the game, students are asked to form small groups at separate tables. Each group is given instructions for a simple card game, and after the players have learned how to play the game, no verbal communication is allowed. The winner of the first game, which is played after everyone has learned the instructions, moves to the table on the left while the loser of the game moves to the table on the right to play the second game with another group. However, the rules are slightly different in each group, and participants must communicate only by body language. Speaking is not

allowed at all. This card game experience promotes body language awareness and a tolerance of ambiguity.

I adapted two exercises from *Stimulating Conversation* (Goodmacher, 2008), for use at the AYF. The first activity is designed to make students realize how deeply material culture and non-material culture from other parts of the world deeply influence their own cultures and their own lives. Students must reflect on their daily life in their home countries and consider all of the material and non-material products that influence them. I told students to take a piece of paper and copy a blank table that I quickly drew upon the board. Then I filled in that blank table so that it looked like Table 1.

After filling in the table, I elicited students to ask me questions regarding my reasons for writing each item in the columns. I had to explain how my life is affected by numerous countries and cultures around the world. In some instances, such as where I wrote "U.S. and Vietnam," it was necessary to explain that Nike was originally an American country, but that I have read that the company moved many factories to Vietnam. After students understand what to do with the table, they fill their own tables in and then discuss their tables with another student.

For the second activity, I told students to draw a small circle in the center of a blank paper and to write "My Culture" within that circle. After that, they had to draw a ring of other circles around the inner circle, and in each circle write the name of the other Asian countries that students were representing at the AYF. The next step was for students to interview other students regarding how the other countries had influenced their home countries. They also had to ask their partners to explain whether the influences were positive, negative, or neutral. As they listened, they were to draw arrows between the countries and write simple notes about the content, so that they remember the information when they reported it later. However, we never had the time for the reporting section of the activity because the students would not stop talking. They were fascinated to learn from others how the others perceived the cultural influences of their countries.

Material Culture	Non-material Culture / Behaviors and Beliefs	Countries or cultures which are the probable origins
Nike tennis shoes		U.S. and Vietnam
Buddhist statue	Belief in the validity of the "Middle Way," a Buddhist concept	The statue = Laos
The idea = India		
Car		The U.S. and Japan
Batik shirts and home decorations		Indonesia
	Some Yiddish phrases I occasionally use	New York Jewish Culture, Eastern Europe
Pottery		South Korea
Canned pineapple		Thailand
	Appreciation of haiku	Japan
	Taking shoes off before entering homes	Thailand, Korea, and Japan (3 countries I have lived in)

Reflection, Conclusion, and Appeal

The Asian Youth Forum tremendously affects the worldviews of participants, both students and advisors. As a long-time teacher of EFL in Japan, I sometimes feel burnt out, but the AYF revitalized my desire to teach and to design content-based teaching materials. In addition, as a result of experiencing the positive results of facilitating interactions among peoples of different cultures, I have decided to create more opportunities for exchanges and lessons involving the Japanese college students and the foreign college students at my college. Each student, having a unique background and identity, can become teaching material to be utilized and enjoyed by other students.

Students changed at the AYF. On the first day, one student could barely finish his self-introduction. His voice was almost too quiet to hear as he told the audience that he was Japanese and shy, but eight days later when saying goodbye to everyone, his voice boomed across the large room as he exclaimed his love for his hotel roommates. A deeper sense of self-knowledge is one of the benefits that another of my students gained. Her English skills are above average when compared to other students in our college, but she realized that compared to many other Asian students, she still has a long way to go, and this stimulated her to increase her studies. The responsibility of preparing presentations, leading activities, and making teaching materials, etc. turned passive students into active students. These students return to their home countries with a passion to increase both share their new knowledge and to gain more knowledge.

The preparations and expenses involved in organizing each AYF are astounding. Hundreds of people in many different countries are involved. Each person gives up numerous hours of their private unpaid time because they believe in the educational possibilities that arise when large numbers of passionate youth gather to share their worldviews. It is also an expensive undertaking in terms of money. Poor students often require financial assistance, but the fees do not cover the entire costs. Additional funding for the AYF comes from contributions from generous teaching organizations, advisers, and other individuals. Kip Cates who founded AYF, spends much of his own pockets to pay for many expenses. If anyone wishes to make a donation or has questions, please contact me at ggoodmacher@ hotmail.com. To learn more about the next Asian Youth Forum, please look athttp://www.asianyouthforum.org/.

Last year, the MW group made a generous donation of 15,000 yen to the AYF. The students and advisers would like to thank every member of the MW group. Thank you very much!

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Writer's Point

Brian Cullen & Sarah Mulvey

Welcome to Writer's Point. This column explores different types of material writing projects and feature materials writers from around the world.

David Barker is a teacher and materials writer from Wales who has lived in Japan for many years. Like many other teachers, he initially started developing materials only for his own students because he found that the books available were not really suitable for the particular students that he was teaching. As we all know, many of the textbooks, especially from large international publishers, are aimed at a very wide market in order to maximize sales and do not always meet the particular needs of the Japanese students that we meet in our classrooms. Much of David's time is taken up writing materials to fill these needs–work that is never really finished, because once a textbook is printed and in use, "you are already learning from how your students interact and respond to the book and you begin thinking about how you can make it better in a new edition, seeing what can be added, adjusted, or changed to make it better."

For example, David tries to meet his students' needs by feeding back work from previous years to his new students. "What I like to do is to give them lots of examples of what I call 'reformulated peer writing', writing that has already been checked by a teacher, but was written by people like them, so there is a likelihood that they will pick up lots of relevant structures and vocabulary that they can use, especially in a mono-lingual and mono-cultural country like Japan."

Mastery of a Specified Range (MSR)

David bases his learning materials around a principle that he calls MSR–Mastery of a Specified Range. He says that too often "textbooks and teachers set students up to fail by getting them to speak or write stuff that they don't really have the language to do successfully. Many commercial textbooks have an "unnecessary focus on variety with the justification of keeping the students engaged and motivated," yet this jumping from topic to topic and from activity to activity can actually have the opposite effect. At the end of a three- or four-month course, students too often find that they can't actually do anything that they couldn't do at the beginning. David suggests instead that it is more motivating for students to focus on one very narrow area and to be able to achieve that goal, even if they don't necessarily achieve much else. He believes that one of the keys to success in language learning is the belief that if you make the required effort, you will get the right result and that by using MSR, students can then come away from the course saying to themselves, "oh that's how it works. All I have to do is do more of that."

Instead of having unnecessary variety, David suggests that learning materials need to be much more

focused on a specified testable range. Rather than ending up at the end of the semester wondering how to test the students on what was taught, he deliberately sets out to produce materials with the test in mind: "what is it that I want the students to be able to do at the end of a learning unit or at the end of a course, and how am I going to test that?" When this is specified clearly, he finds that the students are motivated by knowing exactly what it is that they need to learn and to be able to do.

"I try to define the language content very precisely and can then tell students exactly the range of language points that they will face in the test. They will not face anything outside of that range. Provided the student has done the work, it is not conceivable that they will fail."

> "...in the last 50 years, people have got very carried away with fads and fashions."

To give one simple example, a vital part of classroom language and communication is to be able to respond with "I'm sorry, I don't understand" when the student doesn't understand. David tells his students ahead of time that the test at the end will ask them one question that they definitely will not understand–deliberately in order to demonstrate that they are able to respond appropriately with 'Sorry, I don't understand.' For a writing test, David specifies exactly what they will need to write. For a speaking test, he specifies exactly what questions

they will be asked. In all cases, it is a very finite list. David reminds us of the massive amounts of time that are needed for language learning and notes that:

In most university courses, we are talking about a tiny number of hours, and the more you try to do, the less you will be able to achieve. If you can narrow it down to something very narrow and specific with very little variety, even something that may look monotonous, I have found that students see that as achievable and it gets them focused and motivated.

Back to Basics

David also talked about the need for materials writers and language teachers to get back to basics, and points out that if we look at how languages have been learned for a thousand years or two thousand years, there has always been a similar focus on written texts and activities like translation and repetition. A lot of those things have always been at the core of language learning and he believes that in the last 50 years, people have got very carried away with fads and fashions.

A lot of stuff came out that was good, but unfortunately it ended with what Michael Swan called "throwing the baby out with the bathwater.' Back in the 1990's when I started teaching, the books available then were as good or better than anything that is on the market today. And I think that we removed too much. There isn't a shred of evidence that anyone learns languages more efficiently today than they did in the 1700's. We need to be careful not to take away the things that were obviously of use.

One of his tests to consider whether

a textbook is good or not is to think about a student who puts a textbook down, and then comes back to it five years later when he wants to study English again. How much use would that textbook be to them? David suggests there has been too much movement away from 'teaching' towards the idea of 'facilitating' in which textbooks often just became a recipe for getting through a class:

"Do this with your friends, then do this with your friends, but there is no information in it. There's nothing of any value and I believe that textbook writers have gone too much towards judging books by the pretty pictures and the large number of activities, rather than what the book is actually teaching."

Fundamentally, he suggests that there is no mystery about what textbooks need to include and people already knew it fifty or sixty years ago.

There is a danger in moving so far away from that. We need to stop and re-evaluate things, asking what was considered useful then, was there a good reason for it being thrown away, and if not– bringing it back again. All of the stuff that's been done over the last 50 years would be great if it were adding to what has gone before, but in any field of academia you don't get famous by saying "everything that went before was really good, but I think we could add X. No, you get famous by saying "everything that went before was incorrect, and this is the correct way." We leap from fad to fad.

So often, as teachers and materials writers, we try to keep our students engaged through 'fun' and 'interesting' techniques, but David tells an enlightening story of one of his students who loved his plain, old-fashioned textbook because it was so easy to learn from and revise and said, "When I want to have fun, I play X-Box." Students will often evaluate books, not by how much fun they are but rather how effective they are in achieving their goals.

Interestingly, David concludes by noting that many language teachers have learned foreign language themselves through more traditional methods such as good grammar books and language drills, yet they seem to forget their own experience when they are teaching. Perhaps his strong message can be summed up in his words: "we should look more closely at what actually works, rather than what we think should work."

"There isn't a shred of evidence that anyone learns languages more efficiently today than they did in the 1700's."

Quizlet – and how it helped my Bedside Manner

Simon Capper
Japanese Red Cross Hiroshima College of Nursing

Addressing the problem of vocabulary overload

Helping our learners to cope with vocabulary loads can be problematic at the best of times, even more so for learners of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Already facing a relative paucity of pedagogically effective materials, ESP learners also have to juggle English studies with full time jobs or full time studies in other disciplines. All too often, their ability to deal with the daunting load of technical or sub-technical vocabulary can be a critical make-or-break factor in their progress.

With this in mind, I began looking for study methods that would help to ease this burden, while also adding value to the nursing English textbook that I'd recently authored. Traditionally, learners have helped themselves with vocabulary cards and flashcards, but like many useful and effective learning strategies, my students seemed to have abandoned the cards as too redolent of high school, or simply too 'analog'.

Finding a software solution

Feeling sure that there must be plenty of digital alternatives, and having successfully crowd-sourced the title for my book, *Bedside Manner** (thanks Carol & Martin, I still owe you a bottle of wine!), I put out a call for recommendations for digital flashcard sites. Of the three that were recommended to me, (Memrise, Anki and Quizlet), Quizlet seemed by far the easiest to access and use, a real boon for busy, low-tech materials writers who want to add value to their products. And of course, it was free.

Within a few hours of creating a Quizlet account, I'd created a complete series of bilingual (English / Japanese) flashcard sets, quizzes and games based on the vocabulary lists of each of *Bedside Manner*'s 14 units. My students now have access to a much wider variety of nursing English vocabulary activities.

What does Quizlet offer?

In addition to flashcards, Quizlet offers a selection of interactive features that learners can engage with. 'Speller', which, (not surprisingly), checks spelling ability; 'Learn', which introduces words from the list (see Fig. 1); or 'Test', a 20-point printable mini-test which includes multiple-choice matching and translation questions (Fig. 2).
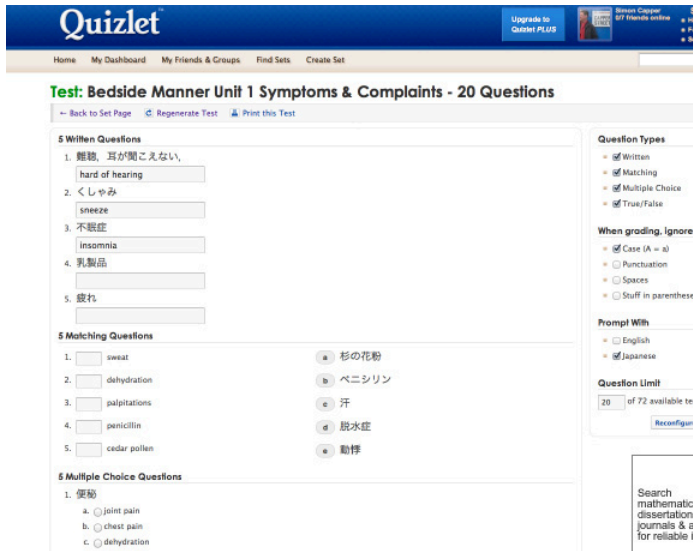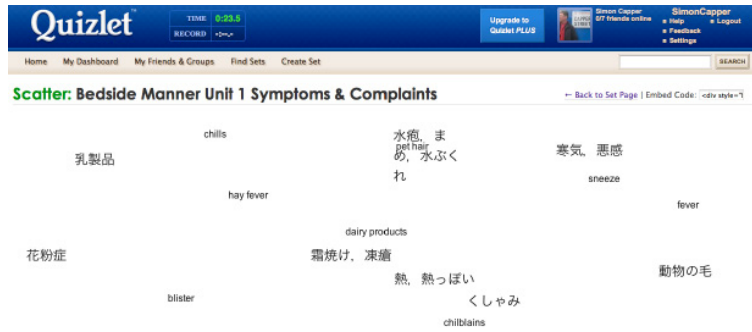
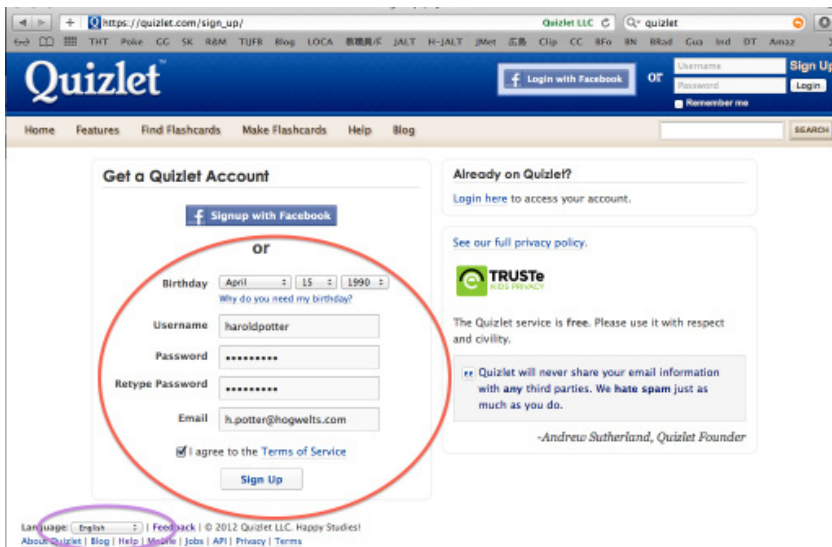Fig. 1: Learn

Fig. 2: Test

Fig. 3: Scatter

Fig. 4: Get a Quizlet Account

There are also two games: the popular 'Scatter', a 'drag and drop' vocabulary matching activity (Fig. 3), and Space Race (where you can 'kill' the scrolling words by typing their definition or translation). Space Race is perhaps the site's weakest link, as words scroll too quickly even for many native speakers, however, as in all Quizlet activities, remedial follow up activities are available.

Flexibility in Quizlet

Quizlet can be used in Japanese, English or any of 8 other languages. Audio translation for the item and its definition is provided automatically, a godsend if your audio budget doesn't stretch to bilingual vocabulary lists. The site also offers an enormous variety of free, ready-made quizzes, in subjects as varied as Law, Science, Business and Medical; languages ranging from Arabic to Serbian; various options for those wanting to learn kanji, and grammatical options for students who have trouble with adverbs, adjectives, nouns and verbs.

Although Quizlet doesn't have its own smartphone app, there are many commercial apps available through which you can download Quizlet quizzes. Be aware though, that many of the free apps (such as Quizard Lite) will only allow you to download a limited number of vocabulary items. Not a problem if your quizzes are limited to 20 questions, but a considerable limitation if your Quizlet vocabulary sets are longer.

How to join Quizlet

Becoming a Quizlet member is very straightforward. Students can log on using their Facebook profile, or can create their own Quizlet account by following these 5 steps.

1. Go to http://quizlet.com/and click 'Sign Up'
2. Create a Quizlet account by inputting your user name, date of birth, password and e-mail address. Click on 'Sign up'. Students who struggle in English can change the site language on this page. (See Fig. 4).
3. The next screen will offer you the chance to pay for the deluxe version ($15 per year). Students will almost certainly wish to click on the free option at the bottom of the page: "Continue to Free Quizlet"
4. An e-mail will be sent to your e-mail account. Access this e-mail and click on the link in the e-mail. This activates your Quizlet account.
5. Your account is now active, and you are now ready to create your own Quizlets.

Creating a set of flashcards

To make a new set of flashcards, simply prepare a list of target vocabulary and their equivalent L1 translations (or definitions). Separate each vocabulary item and L1 equivalents using 'tab', and sepaDate each new item on the list using 'return'.

Go to your Quizlet page and click 'Create Set'. Choose a quiz title and add any other necessary information. At this point you can also select from a variety of language options and (if you've paid for the premium version) add a graphic. Click 'Import Data' (Fig. 5). Then copy and paste your vocabulary list into the window (Fig. 6), and click 'Import'.

Choose a language, scroll down and click 'Create Set' (Fig. 7).

Your set will appear in your Dashboard, and you're ready to go (Fig. 8).
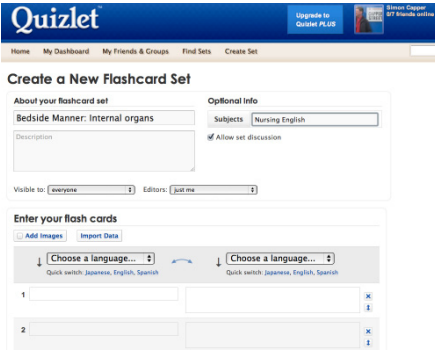
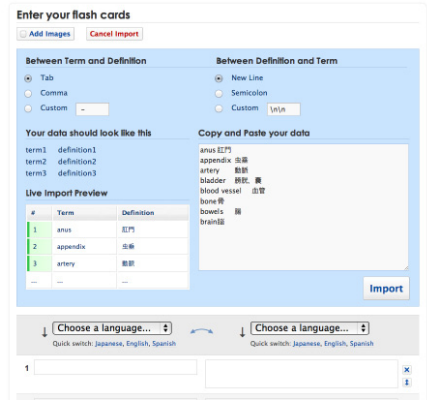Fig. 5: Create a New Flashcard Set

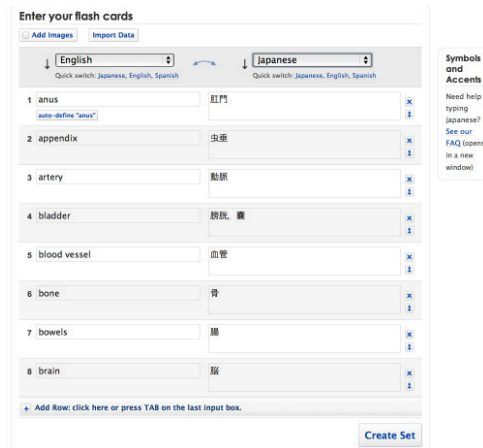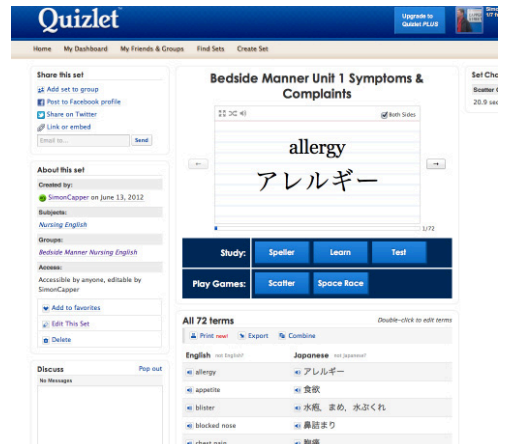Fig. 6: Copy, paste, and click 'Import'.

Fig. 7: Create Set

Fig. 8. A flashcard set on the Dashboard

Having made your flashcards, you can now introduce them to your students. You can also invite friends directly from the Quizlet site by using the 'My Friends & Groups' link in the drop-down menu. I'd like to invite you to mine.

Welcome to my Flashcards: Bedside Manner Quizlets

Bedside Manner is an introductory nursing English textbook featuring the 'entry-level' language that nurses and patients commonly use. The book's tasks and activities encourage vocabulary recycling, repetition and review, but the volume of new words can still be an obstacle for lower level learners. If you know someone who teaches nurses, and whether they're using *Bedside Manner* or not, please encourage them (and their students) to take a look at the *Bedside Manner* Quizlet group.

Once you have a Quizlet account, finding the nursing English flashcards couldn't be easier:

1. Click on 'My Friends and Groups 'Search 'Groups' for '*Bedside Manner*'.

2. There are two *Bedside Manner*

groups. Please join the first one!

3. Click on the 'Join Group' button on the right of the page.

Even if you don't teach nurses, I have no doubt that the Quizlet site will be a very useful resource for you and your students.

Finally, my thanks to Dan James of Suzugamine Women's College, Hiroshima, for responding to my original crowd-sourcing plea and recommending this invaluable site. Dan, I think I owe you a bottle of wine too!

* The title **'Bedside Manner – An Introductory English Course for Nursing**' was chosen ahead of suggestions that included 'Carry On Nurse!', 'Healing Words', 'Caring for English – English for Caring', 'Give it a Shot – Nursing English to Fluency', 'Prescription English', 'This Won't Hurt a Bit'. A victory for crowd-sourcing!

Bio: Simon Capper, of the Japanese Red Cross Hiroshima College of Nursing, has been living and teaching in Hiroshima for over 20 years. He has authored 6 titles, including **This is Japan** (Macmillan) and **Bedside Manner: An Introductory English Course for Nursing** (Perceptia Press, available from *englishbooks.jp*).

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Treasurer: Scott Petersen

Programmes: Jim Smiley

Acting Publicity: Jim Smiley

Unelected Appointed Officers

BTK Layout & Proofing: Brian Cullen

#ELTpics
Victoria Boobyer

What is #eltpics?

There has been an increasing amount of positive noise surrounding the #eltpics project over the last year. Jeremy Harmer made it the subject of his 2012 Glasgow IATEFL Pecha Kucha and many IATEFL workshops and presentations all around the world from ELT luminaries such as Lindsay Clandfield, Gavin Dudeney and Ceri Jones and have sung its praises. #eltpics is, essentially, a collection of nearly 10,000 photographs taken by people who work in the field of teaching – primarily ELT. These photos are, in turn, available free from copyright for non-commercial use by teachers.

The collaborative project began life in October 2010 after myself (at that time a teacher in Vietnam), Carol Goodey (an adult ESOL & Literacies worker in Scotland) and Vicky Loras (a teacher in Switzerland) became friends on twitter. We were aware of the cavernous differences in the everyday life around us and thought it would be interesting to share photos taken during a particular week. Over an evening of chatting this morphed into #eltpics.

How does it work?

The idea has remained pretty much the same since then. Every two weeks teachers and folks in ELT are invited to take and share photos on a given theme. This theme is publicised on twitter by the now curators: @fionamau, @sandymillin, @cgoodey and myself, @elt_pics, using the hashtag #eltpics. This means that if you have a twitter account and follow the hashtag #eltpics, you will be kept up to date. People then tweet the URL of a photograph they have taken on that given subject (or any of the subjects set previously) like this:

Ian James @ij64   6 Jul
Instagram of the Day : Garden centre Buddhist gnomes near Montserrat flic.kr/p/cpSaXW #instagramoftheday | #eltpics Stats + Sculpts
🖼 View photo

Jeremy Harmer @Harmerj   6 Jul
Popocatepetl & ixtacihuatl as you have never seen them (in New York)! #eltpics - a taco van... pic.twitter.com/wHu6ooHg
🖼 View photo

Fiona Mauchline @fionamau   6 Jul
Why not join #eltpics ? Tweet us yr pics w/ the hashtag & we'll upload. Current topic: Life-changing events bit.ly/cUMk6K #AsiaELT
Expand

Here you can see that Ian James has uploaded a photo to flickr and shared that image with us while Jeremy Harmer has directly shared a photo from his phone to twitter. Anyone is more that welcome join in at any time and send a tweet with the URL of a photograph and the #eltpics hashtag. The curators follow the hashtag stream and then upload these photos to our #eltpics photo-sharing flickr site:
http://www.flickr.com/photos/eltpics

The #eltpics flickr site and Creative Commons License

On this site you can see that there are now nearly 10,000 images in 71 sets ranging from 'Animals' to 'Weird, wacky English'. One of the ideas behind the project is to provide teachers with images that are not covered by ordinary Copyright restrictions, which can be very limiting for teachers. Each of the #eltpics images is protected by a Creative Commons license. The license associated with #eltpics is Attribution Non-Commercial Use. http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/ In practical terms, this is quite straightforward in most areas. Teachers are free to use the images in class and when making worksheets for students (as long as these are not then sold.) Teachers and students are also welcome to use the images (and adaptations of them) in blogs for professional development or for student blogs etc.. One area which has caused some concern, however, has been the use of #eltpics in blogs/ webpages which use advertising. If the revenue from the advertising goes to the blogger/ author then that blog page and its content are commercial and, as such, the use of an #eltpics image is not allowed under the CC license. However, one thing to remember is that you can always get in touch with the photographer directly and they can waive any of the conditions.

Attribution

Under the attribution aspect of the Creative Commons license, any use of an image from #eltpics has to be annotated with a suitable attribution. This can be put after the image, at the end of a page, blog, slideshow etc.. As people have asked about how to attribute #eltpics in blogs on worksheets etc., we thought it might be useful to set out an attribution guideline following the Creative Commons license recommendations. So...

From August 2012 the following guidelines apply to attributing #eltpics.

- If you use an image by, say, @ij64, the attribution should read something like this: "Photo taken from http://flickr.com/eltpics by @ij64, used under a CC Attribution Non-Commercial license, http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/"
- If you're using derivative work:"Image made using a photo taken from http://flickr.com/eltpics by @ij64, used under a CC Attribution Non-Commercial license, http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/"
- If you're using more than one #eltpics image the twitter names can be listed: *"Image made using photos taken from http://flickr.com/eltpics by @ij64, @sandymillin, @fionamau used under a CC Attribution Non-Commercial license, http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/"*

- If you use #eltpics a lot, then it may be worth keeping a copy of these attributions to hand so they can easily be copied and pasted (with relevant twitter username J)

How to download the images from flickr

This seems a bit of a roundabout way to download images the first time you do it but it soon becomes instinctive. You can search the alphabetically arranged sets from http://www.flickr.com/photos/eltpics/sets. Having found the blog, http://takeaphotoand.wordpress.com/ which has been authored and edited by Fiona Mauchline since October, 2011. The idea behind the blog is to provide examples of how #eltpics images have been and can be used in classroom situations. As well as writing posts herself, Fiona has brought in a number of superb guest bloggers from authors and materials writers to teachers and trainers. I would recommend that teachers subscribe to this blog and receive a notification by email whenever there's a new posting.
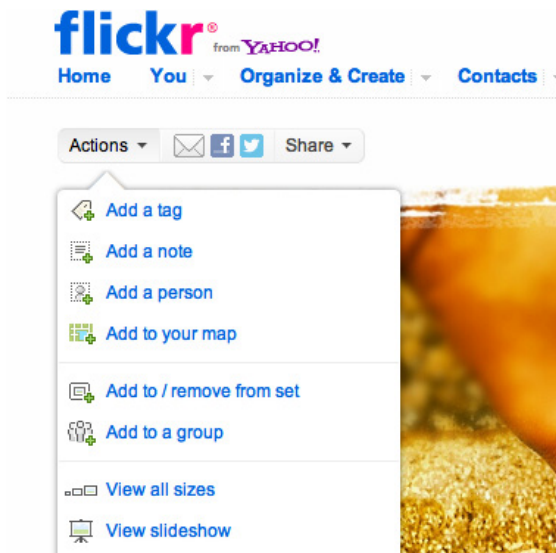
images that you want to use, you can download them by selecting the photo and opening the actions menu on the top left of the screen. A dropdown menu will appear and you then click the '"View all Sizes" link.

You will then be given a choice of sizes you can download. Choose the size you want and click the link in the "Download" section.

What can I do with the images in class?

One of the great innovations to come about as a result of #eltpics is its sister

A further blog, http://burningquestionnaire.wordpress.com/ interviews contributors to #eltpics and its sister blog, *Take a photo and…*

In essence, the #eltpics photo resource and its sister blogs are a shining testament to the sharing community spirit of the ELT world and the dedication of the contributors and curators alike. The curators can all be contacted for further information about joining in and using #eltpics via twitter.

Victoria Boobyer @elt_pics, Fiona Mauchline @fionamau, Sandy Millin @sandymillin, Carol Goodey @cgoodey

Ode to Myriad Pro

Marc Helgesen with Mike Rost, Lisa Ekström and Inka Mathew

You know what they say, "It takes a village to create a textbook." OK, nobody really says that. But it does take a whole team of people. Authors usually get the accolades (or what response the book gets), but there is a whole team of people who are essential.

Everyone knows there are editors, but their role is often misunderstood. I recall a development editor I used to write for telling me she was at a party, and she told someone she was a textbook editor. The person's reaction: "Gee, you must be good at spelling." A good editor does so much more than that. The editor is like a ship's captain, giving aim and direction.

And then there are the designers. These people are artists. And magicians. They can make your eyes move exactly where they want.

> *"And then there are the designers. These people are artists. And magicians. They can make your eyes move exactly where they want."*

In the April issue of "Between the Keys", Jim Smiley wrote a piece called *The Anatomy of a Page in a Single Typeface* in which he said "I looked at 17 different uses of a particular typeface on a page of *English Firsthand*". I found it interesting – as one of the authors of the book, that seems natural. But also, as someone interested in textbooks and publishing, I am always glad when someone looks deeply in to how books work. I passed the article on to my editor, Mike Rost, asking him to pass it on our designers, Lisa Ekström and Inka Mathew (it was a weekend and I didn't have their emails on my home computer).

Jim had, by the way, speculated that the font was "Myriad Pro".

What follows are extracts from the mails that went back and forth over the next few days.

Mike Rost (editor):
Yes, the font is Myriad Pro (Keiko* verified this for me).

* Keiko is Keiko Kimura, our project coordinator. She is also a trained designer and very much part of the design team. Actually, Keiko is one of the magic people who makes the whole process actually get accomplished.

Mike, to the designers:
Marc Helgesen passed on this short review of English Firsthand – from a teacher in Japan who appreciates the graphic design of the series, particularly the font usage. It reads like "Ode to Myriad Pro" – this guy really appreciates your selection and use of the font in all of its variations. It's nice to know that some users of the series appreciate the "unity principle" of the design, not only in font usage, but color, spacing, positioning, etc.

The Firsthand series continues to be popular — in no small part because of the

fabulous design!

From Lisa Ekström, designer:
The author's guess on the Myriad Pro typeface was right on the money. "Ode to Myriad Pro" indeed! And it was so gratifying to read how well this man appreciated what we had all thought about & discussed & worked hard to accomplish. I liked his observation "Students will quickly hone in on this, perhaps subconsciously." It's funny to work so hard to create something you hope will be essentially invisible, but then to hear that someone recognizes it is mighty nice. Of course the ongoing popularity of EF is marvelous recognition as well!

And I have to admit that his aside about "font" and "typeface" gave me a sympathetic smile.

From Inka Mathew:
It's great to hear any appreciation of your

work of course.
Especially if it benefits a lot of people. Glad to hear it benefits a lot of students.

From Marc:
And in addition to the development editor, project coordinator and designers, there are other editors, recording people, illustrators and photographers, web site people, the sales reps (who are a major source of feedback as well as the folks who get a book in front of teachers) and more.

It really does take a village – or a team at least – even when that village stretches from Sendai to San Francisco to Sugar Land, Texas to Hong Kong.

Thanks, Jim, for taking the time to notice the design and to write the article. Don't know if you are myriad but you are a pro.

the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

A sample of Myriad Pro

Education Value Systems

Jim Smiley
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Introduction

Let us begin with some simple questions; why do teachers feel a disparity between their chosen—or given—textbook and their needs? Cannot a teacher easily use a textbook off the shelf directly without modification? Reversing these questions, we might ask; why cannot a materials writer create a work that is readily used by everyone? Some answers to these questions are absurdly obvious: the level of the textbook does not match the student set—they might have covered similar language previously, or the textbook language is too far in advance of the students' level. Another response is that the skill set aimed at in the language course set up is not the focus of the textbook. Teachers therefore choose an appropriate textbook, but even so, getting an exact match between the various factors in their teaching environment may prove impossible. So teachers write class handouts: to allow more practice for textbook vocabulary; to fill a gap in the assumed grammar level of the textbook and the actual students' knowledge; to develop a skill set that the textbook does not; to react to individual student groups' interests and still maintain a direct connection with the textbook; and many, many more reasons.

Less obvious answers to our questions centre on the experience that leads to individual teacher personalities, teaching styles and teachers' cultural backgrounds. Also, the term 'experience' in language teaching may refer to either the experience of learning new teaching techniques, or to the experience in having taken mismatched materials and found ways of adapting them to one's style. The former mindset helps foster mature teachers, and the latter, arguably, is a limited non-developmental procedure. However, both teacher types exist, perhaps to some degree in the same person, and a teaching style may preclude the use of certain material types.

Recently within western discussions of ELT materials, it has become a self-evident truth that using older methods of language presentation, for example grammar-translation methodologies, is taboo. Such materials will be rejected in two ways: firstly by self-selection by publishers who promote modern methods to teachers who then may never see older methods; and by teachers who, only having ever seen modern methods, balk if they see older ones. A similar point may be drawn in textbooks written, say, by Japanese authors for a Japanese market when seen by a western teacher looking for a communicative approach informed textbook. The historical and present culture gaps produce different sets of pedagogic materials and users.

The intended reader of this article is the classroom materials writer who wishes to understand in more depth the relationship between a number of factors that inform the creation of their own materials and those materials

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created by others. This first article in the series on Materials Development outlines briefly a number of educational value systems (EVS).

It is axiomatic that language teaching in a foreign language context is by definition an action that involves different cultures. Failing to understand the EVS of that culture and attempting to work within it is likely to result in frustration, or at least in less efficient teaching. Materials writers (MW) in a foreign environment need to be cognisant of the overarching EVS in their region, for without that necessary knowledge, efforts towards change and actions towards improvement become guesswork.

Educational Value Systems

Stern (1994) describes five basic value types that inform a curriculum:

1. Cognitive processes
The principal function is not to transmit knowledge, but 'to train children in skills of enquiry, to develop their cognitive functioning'.

2. Self-actualisation
The 'curriculum should be meaningful at the given stage of the child's growth rather than provide him with experiences which are useful to him only when he is an adult'. Stern notes that 'at no stage in education should pupils be encouraged to believe that their native language is the only valid language'.

3. Social reconstruction/ relevance
Children are taught based on the needs of the society.

4. Academic rationalism
Classical education is valued and forms the core of the curriculum. The argument is based on the value of heritage.

5. Curriculum as technology
This is an instrumental approach to the curriculum. It is based on a supposedly value-neutral belief centring on curricular goals and appropriate goal-focused means.

More commonly in materials theory, these EVS in turn are further subdivided into 'approaches' and 'designs'. Earlier authors used the terminology of 'method' to describe plans for presenting language information to students (see Brown, 1995), but most now follow Richard and Rodgers'(2001) use of 'design' to replace 'method'. The three main EVS are Classical Humanist, Recostructionism, and Progessivism; Classical Humanism where education is used to teach students about societal values, to, in a sense indoctrinate children into their society, to create future adults who will embody the same values, to maintain the same set of cultural beliefs over generations; Reconstructionism is where change is emphasised, where there is more treatment of the learner and how learners can be trained to achieve change; and Progressivism is an environment where educational values are centred on personal development, individuality, the promotion of natural learning processes and with empowering each learner with the ability to learn for themselves. The difference between these last two is neatly summed up by White (1997): "Reconstructuralism involves 'doing things to' [the learner]…", whereas "[P] rogressivism is concerned with 'doing things for' or 'doing things with' the learner".

Broadly speaking, these EVS inform the scope and sequence of more precise syllabi which, in turn, find representation in actual teaching examples. Richards and Rodgers comment "that central to an approach or method in language teaching is a view of the nature of language, and this shapes teaching goals, the type of syllabus that is adopted, and the emphasis given in classroom teaching." (p.25) Furthermore, each of the main EVS is accompanied with a set of beliefs surrounding the nature of learning and of language. Richards (p.132) summarises this process; "We have seen … that central to an approach or method in language teaching is a view of the nature of language, and this shapes teaching goals, the type of syllabus that is adopted, and the emphasis given in classroom teaching."

Table 1 shows the linkage between the EVS, the main underlying belief about learning, which language teaching method represents the EVS, theory of language and main focus of the EVS.

There is a simple linearity in these connections. One learnt Latin via grammar-translation methods, and one learnt the canon, both liturgical and

> *"Why do teachers feel a disparity between their chosen—or given—textbook and their needs?"*

literary in an attempt to become a full member of one's society. Or a person had their habits altered to produce

output in the given structures of a language system in an attempt to change their behaviour to reconstruct their self. Or a human developed abilities, or competencies, in communication aspects because language was seen as a function of the brain, and that human self-developed their potential.

Another way of looking at these connections from the stand point of a MW is to see the process as beginning with conforming to a view of language, i.e. scientific grammar, or of learning, the writer then creates a scope and sequence within the framework of a syllabus and associated methodological grammar type, before finally formalising decisions in teaching techniques, which are labelled 'pedagogic grammar' as they are the final result of the process ending in what happens in the classroom/textbook. The particular view of language is—possibly—not so relevant as the curriculum type to which the writer wishes to conform. The MW may *start* with the premise of writing, say, a communicative textbook. Then, they select an appropriate scientific grammar before creating actual teaching activities. This orientation is the result of needing to maintain a vision of a real classroom in mind during the writing process, rather than work only on principles. Brown claims that the process is the opposite, however, and he describes how MW begin the writing process, "Method [i.e. approach] writers hold beliefs about an underlying grammatical model (that is, scientific grammar). They decide on a syllabus type" (p.7) In the absence of empirical evidence, this claim may be viewed with suspicion.

EVS	Educational Method	Language Teaching Method	Underlying Theory of Language	Key Focus
Classical Humanist	Classical	Grammar-translation	Latin-based grammar	Heritage memorisation
Reconstructionism	Behaviourism	Audiolingualism	Structural linguistics	Oral habit formation
Progressivism	Cognitive	Communicative methods	Language as communication	Competencies

Table 1: EVS and Representations in Educational Methods

Some examples of this process can be described as shown in Table 2. A key point to note is that the term 'grammar' as used by teachers is often confused with 'scientific grammar'. Before an underlying scientific grammar can be used in a classroom setting, a number of steps must be performed. The first of these is to derive a full corpus of natural language, a task done by researchers, not writers. This often comes in the form of a compendium volume, as in the standard *teachers'* grammar the "A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language" by Greenbaum, Leech, Svartvik & Quirk (2011), or Swan's "Practical English Usage". It is from sources like these that a MW decides upon and checks language content, and derives a pedagogic grammar, i.e. a textbook that has language items selected, sequenced and presented. The full realisation of a methodological grammar may not be complete. Indeed, for many of the more generative and cognitive-based sciences of grammar, the generation of content items may never be possible, as the scientific grammar attempts only to describe possible inclusions and how items are generated, not the full gamut itself.

Scientific Grammar (example)	Methodological Grammar (example)	Pedagogic Grammar (example)
Krashen: Theory of Second Language Acquisition	The Natural Method	Numerous textbooks using based on this
Chomsky Generative Grammar	Swan, Azar, Quirk/ Greenbaum/Svartvik/Leech	Most modern EFL communicative texts
Lexical Functional Grammar	The Lexical Approach	Many textbooks based on this approach

Table 2: Scientific, Methodological and Pedagogic Grammars

Conclusion

As part one in the series, this article has discussed educational value systems and how they relate to actual pedagogic methods. Historically, there has been a strong connection between an EVS and the actual pedagogic tools used to realise the EVS. Traditionally, EVSs have been supported both by philosophically strong underlying theories of language and theories of learning. In a real sense, it hardly mattered what happened in the classroom, how teachers used textbook materials in actual practice because of the strength of belief in the integrity of the system. What is lacking and will be the subject of the second article in this series is the methodology of how the actual teaching techniques are established. It is, I believe, a fundamental mistake to view teaching techniques as representative of EVS. It is possible, say, within a communicative methodology informed textbook to introduce techniques that were developed for, say, grammar-translation systems. Furthermore, it may be impossible for any single belief system to claim propriety of any single technique. Picking and mixing systems in an eclectic manner can be criticised as in doing so we would degrade the integrity of our method. However, there can be no objection to the usage of any appropriate technique if done in a principled and directed way. I would argue that there needs to be a more precise recognition of the non-linear status of techniques and methods. That is to say, to paraphrase Michael Swan, don't lump the baby with the bath water. If a technique of, say, grammar-translation is appropriate in a certain CLT-informed methodology, then it could be used effectively. What is required in Japan in the 21st century is a mature understanding of the precise interrelationship between technique and value system, and not a simple one-to-one rejection of all techniques that are supposed to fit a non-favoured educational value system. This will be the topic of the second article.

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"What is required in Japan in the 21st century is a mature understanding of the precise interrelationship between technique and value system."

Using News Stories in the Classroom

Richard Miles
Nanzan University

Learner level: intermediate and up (university students)
Length of the activity: 5-15 minutes
Resources used: 1 news article
Goals: review conversation strategies, generate critical thinking, improve general knowledge and increase interest in current affairs

Preparation

Utilizing news stories in the EFL classroom is certainly nothing new, particularly at the university level. Until the arrival of the internet though, most teachers had to rely almost exclusively on newspapers or magazine articles for their classroom materials. Fortunately, now there are endless possible resources at teacher's disposal. Typically I try and pick a news story in the morning, before a class, so that it is topical. There are many websites to look at, and I just print out the one that I have chosen.

Procedure

Primarily, I use the articles as a form of review, a warm up, or as a supplement to the main lesson. Whereas, I do use them at all levels, I mostly use them with higher-level oral conversation classes, particularly ones that meet more than once a week. In essence they have replaced the five to ten minute chat/warm up time that many oral communication classes begin with.

First, I will bring in one of the main news stories of the day. At the beginning of the year I often rely on stories dealing with Japanese issues, making it easier for students to understand and discuss. Gradually, I then wean them off these and begin introducing more international issues and stories. Here is the simple process I often follow:

1. Put the title on the board and have students speculate on what the story is about.
2. Read the story out loud to them (they have no script). Sometimes I shorten or cut the stories.
3. Students are sitting in randomly assigned pairs, and one of them then has to summarize the story after I have read it. Students are then allowed to check anything they were unable to understand, by discussing it together or by asking me.
4. This is the key step, where I will assign another conversational task to the student who did not summarize the story.

Rather than devoting extensive time to looking up new words from the story or by asking a multitude of comprehension questions, the purpose of these stories for my classes is to provide students with a springboard into a new conversation and to review certain conversation skills or vocabulary already learnt in class. For example, if we have recently learnt how to paraphrase another person's comments, the second partner will have to paraphrase their partner's summary and subsequent opinion on the story.

If we have recently practiced debating skills, then the partners will proceed to debate the issue or topic within the story. If we have recently talked about how to change the topic naturally in conversation, the second partner will have to divert the first partner away from discussing the story. Sometimes, I will simply just tell the second partner, it is your job to lead the conversation after the summary. This means they

> *"Are news articles really effective in the classroom and how should teachers utilize them?"*

can take it in any direction they choose (debate it, change the topic or generate a discussion).

The key is that the stories serve two purposes. Firstly, to provide more interesting and varied topics to discuss at the beginning of class, rather than 'how was your weekend'. The second is that they also provide topics with which students can practice their conversational skills.

One obvious benefit from this aside from simply practicing certain skills is that students also often start to show an interest in particular news items and issues. Many subsequently go and read about the issue in more detail, often choosing to research further for midterm reports or final presentations. One reason for their peaked interest

could be that they have merely scratched the surface of the issue in these short discussions, and have not been subjected to long teacher-centered discussions or lectures about it.

Options

Once the routine has been established it can also be useful to once in a while have students each bring in a short story and lead a small discussion, following the format you have already established. This is great for autonomy and can provide insight into what particular themes and topics are of particular interest to the class.

Depending on the class, it can be useful to deliberately bring in stories they know nothing about, or which are depressing, to try and challenge them to keep a conversation going. Often students will rise to the challenge, knowing you are pushing them at a higher level.

Rationale

Are news articles really effective in the classroom and how should teachers utilize them? There is a great deal of support in the literature regarding the effectiveness of such materials (de la Chica et al, 2005), in addition to the many personal anecdotes from teachers documenting how they utilize them. Farmer (2008) argued that news articles are successful if used in a structured way with a clear purpose. They are also relevant, topical, authentic, up-to-date and tend to come from 'authorities' on the subject (Carr, 1994; Daly; 2004 & Farmer, 2008), which tends to make them more appealing to students, particularly higher-level students, than textbooks (Banville, 2005). One of the biggest reasons often put forth for using

news articles is that they generate and promote critical thinking and analytical skills (Carr, 1994 & Park, 2011) and can activate schematic knowledge in students (Antepara, 2003). They may even be beneficial for teachers as well (Carr, 1994). Whereas students tend to approach articles by focusing heavily on grammatical and vocabulary aspects (Daly, 2004), Bermejo (2000) believes they need to be encouraged to focus more on meaning. This can generate further questions, and help students to start and sustain conversations themselves (Park, 2011).

Although Antepara (2003) and Farmer (2008) detailed very clear and quite likely effective processes for using news articles in the classroom, it is often not possible to devote entire classes or courses to news articles if you are not teaching a specific current affairs class, or if your regular university oral communication meets only once a week. It was Carr (1994) who stated that exploration of news issues need not replace the regular English language curriculum, but can serve as a useful supplement. It is still possible to focus on a particular skill, such as listening, or as Antepara (2003) illustrated particularly well, to focus on the structure of the article by asking and attempting to answer the 5 Ws (wh questions).

Caveats

There are of course potential pitfalls to be wary of when utilizing news articles in class, such as avoiding disaster stories which tend to create a negative 'atmosphere' in the classroom (Clifton, 2006). News stories also have a rather short shelf-life (Banville, 2005 & Daly, 2004) and the complexity of the grammar and the vocabulary are

often one of the most challenging tasks learners are likely to face (Daly, 2004). There are also often many culturally specific references which can prove daunting to understand (Park, 2011), especially if you have a class where few students have traveled overseas. I have also found first-year students more reluctant at first to offer much in the way of discussion, when dealing with 'serious' current affairs. Teachers should also expect some misunderstandings and difficulties when attempting this activity for the first time. I have found however, that once students become familiar with what you are doing and why you are doing it, they quickly become far more engaged.

In summary then, using news articles for a short supplementary activity, in my case a review of conversational strategies, can be very beneficial for intermediate and higher-level students in many regards.

"Using news articles for a short supplementary activity, in my case a review of conversational strategies, can be very beneficial for intermediate and higher-level students."

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