Mask & Gavel

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CONTENTS

Messages

David Kluge ***(Coordinator) … 3***

James Venema & Jim Matchett ***(Journal Editors) …3***

Feature Article

Keizo Asano ***Is EFL Worth Studying at Japanese Colleges? Readers Theatre Provides an Answer … 4***

Views From the Classroom

Aya Kawakami ***Drama on the Global Stage: Cultural Competence and the Role of Drama Techniques in the EFL Classroom … 16***

David Kluge ***Speech in the Language Classroom: A Weekly Class Activity, Not a Contest … 22***

Dawn Kobayashi ***Drama Techniques in the EFL Classroom … 30***

Jason White ***Role-Play Ideas for the EFL Classroom … 34***

In the Classroom

James Matchett ***Debate and the Hokuriku University ESS Club … 39***

Anthony Robins ***Debate to Bring Students Together … 43***

David Kluge (SIG Coordinator)

Congratulations to Editor James Venema, Assistant Editor James Matchett, and their team for producing this excellent first volume of *Mask & Gavel*: the official publication of the Speech, Drama, and Debate SIG of JALT. This volume includes articles on oral interpretation, speech, drama, and debate, the full panoply of our SIG's area of research and activities. Enjoy, learn, and be inspired to use oral interpretation, speech, drama, and debate in your classes—and to write about your experience in the next volume of *Mask & Gavel*!

James Venema (Editor)

It didn't happen without a lot of hard work, both from contributors as well as everyone on the editing committee, but it is here – the first edition of *Mask & Gavel.* I can say with all honesty that I am proud of what we have achieved and excited about the quality of the submissions. I trust this is the beginning of what will prove to be a long-lasting and distinguished publication. Perhaps most importantly, it is a pretty good read. So sit back, grab a cup of your favorite brew and enjoy the articles!

Jim Matchett (Assistant Editor)

I would like to acknowledge and applaud the efforts of our editor, James Venema. It is he to whom most of the credit for putting together this journal should go. All the bases have been covered. Whatever your discipline is, be it speech, drama, or debate or any combination thereof, you will find something of interest in the pages that follow. As a member of the team, I am proud of what has been accomplished.

Mask &Gavel Staff

Is EFL Worth Studying at Japanese Colleges? Readers Theatre Provides an Answer

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This paper discusses issues, insights, and considerations concerning Readers Theatre and its applications to Japanese EFL classrooms based on the author's experiences in taking part in a Readers Theatre (RT) workshop. Although RT is of great use when teaching Japanese college students, the application of its techniques should be introduced within the framework of the EFL settings where almost all of the directors, performers, and audience consist of Japanese speakers who study English as a foreign language, not as a first or a second language. Elements related to the students' social growth such as cooperation, responsibility, and sense of fulfillment should be considered more when RT is taught in college EFL classroom settings.

Introduction

For some time, a great number of researchers and teachers have spent time and exhibited enthusiasm for finding ways of teaching communicative EFL at Japanese universities. Many of them know the attempts they make would be more rewarding if university entrance exams were better able to screen for students who are more serious about their English study. Most freshman students show little interest in studying EFL now that their mission of entering university has been completed. The fact that the students' goals of studying EFL at college are directed simply toward getting credit for their classes can undermine the efforts of many committed EFL teachers. It is about time that university EFL courses presented another goal or purpose of learning EFL other than cramming for scores and grades.

The teaching experience in a required class awoke the author to the roles of university EFL classes; that is, there should be a shift in the orientation of the EFL class from credit-taking to social-growth goals. A questionnaire on this topic was administered to first year economic majors in a first year reading class at the end of the spring semester in 2010. On the questionnaire were the following questions:

Do you think this class was beneficial?
What did you learn in this class?
What is the purpose (goal) of your study at college?
Did you enjoy the group work?
Do you think the textbook is easy (difficult)?

Students answered the questions freely in their own words. The purpose of the questionnaire was not formal research, but to just get a sense of the thinking of these university students. Quite a few students answered

for their goal of their study at college that they gave priority to credit-taking for graduation over improving English. One way to combat this attitude is for university EFL courses to go beyond the goal of providing students with skills in EFL, toward more concrete goals such as getting better scores on standardized tests in preparation for seeking jobs after graduation, or nurturing a well-educated adult with some knowledge of English and English-speaking countries' cultures. In short, is English study at college worth doing with or without setting different goals that are more important after graduation for the lives of students? This paper introduces an activity that gives students such a goal.

Studying EFL for Social Growth

It has been a while since college students were first noticed to be lacking in skills in student-to-student and/or student-to-professor interactions, even in Japanese. A large number of universities have decided to educate their first year students to be more cooperative with peers. In addition, the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry advocates setting three educational goals in the areas of basic social abilities: the power of thinking things out, taking action, and participating in teamwork. A variety of activities in an EFL classroom can and should contribute to such goals.

Readers Theatre in EFL classrooms in Japan is one way of nurturing basic social abilities. What is RT? According to Adams (2003):

> Readers Theatre is a presentational performance based on principles and techniques of oral interpretation and conventional theatre to present all kinds of literary and non-literary material in a choice of staging styles to entertain, instruct and persuade.

RT provides many occasions for students to "interact socially" with their peers (Sloyer, 2003). Social interactions begin with discussions on interpreting the selected English texts to perform, and continue with scripting the texts, staging, practicing, and performing. Students may find time to get together during the class hours but often that will not suffice. They have to negotiate with each other to arrange their schedule in order to find time for preparation. No part of the preparation for RT performance can be done individually, except for practice reading at home. All through this process RT can provide students with a sense of fulfillment, responsibility, pride, contentment, unity, and solidarity.

If one accepts that RT is one answer to the question of how to make college EFL education more meaningful to EFL teachers, and of more value to college students by giving them something worth having—social growth, then the next step is to implement RT in the classroom. How to do this? The following is one way to do RT, based on a workshop at the 35th International Readers Theatre Workshop, held in London from July 20 to August 2, 2008.

RT performance at university Oral Interpretation Festival

Description of RT through the Workshop Experience

The RT Workshop was sponsored by the Institute for Readers Theatre (IRT), San Diego, CA, and co-sponsored by the University of Southern Maine, but was conducted in London in 2008. The two-week schedule of the RT workshop was divided into two parts. The first week focused on theory and preparation for performances. The second week moved away from theory and focused on performances. Specifically, the first-time participants attended sessions in the first week on such topics as RT background, script making demonstration, script making practice, rehearsals of fables, oral interpretation, staging demonstration, performance of the fables, and appreciation of RT performance presented by faculty members. The main textbook was *Institute Book of Readers Theatre: A Practical Guide for School, Theater, & Community*, by Adams (2003). It is the main source for this paper. The second week sessions included writing reports, attending rehearsals and performances, and a special clothing demonstration by a guest faculty member. The total amount of the actual workshop hours was 55.5 hours in two weeks. All of the sessions were solely conducted in English, some in British English but mostly in American English. The following is an abbreviated description of the lessons taught at the workshop.

Three Elements for RT

The basic lesson from the workshop is the three main elements of RT. They are script making, staging, and interpretation. All three elements are defined and described below.

Script making

The workshop used Adams' (2003) definition of RT: "RT is a presentational performance based on principles and techniques of oral interpretation and conventional theatre to present all kinds of literary and non-literary material in a choice of staging styles to entertain, instruct, and persuade." Since RT is a "presentational performance," the first thing to be done is to choose a selection of materials which are felt to be of value or importance to present to an audience.

For RT performance, as a rule, Adams (2003) suggests that in the selected piece there be "drama (conflict of characters, of ideas) inherent" in the selected piece (p. 5). He also suggests to look for a piece that has a "strong basic situation with progressive action" and "characters [that] are vivid" (p. 5). Adams also cautions that first person point of view is more difficult as it assigns much of the text to one performer—the narrator.

Staging

According to Adams (2003), there are three well established styles from the least overt staging of Simple RT on one end of the presentational continuum, to the most active Chamber Theatre at the other end, with Staged RT in between. Simple RT is the "presentation of a script with an emphasis on interpretation of the text through inner responses of thought, emotion and experience (kinesics) with a minimum of physical activity" (p. 5). Staged RT has "a formal setup, but externalizes the actions of the script with characters on revolving stools and narrators situated at music stands" (p. 5). The RT closest to conventional theatre is called Chamber Theatre, which uses "more elaborate elements of stage craft and memorized lines" (p. 5). The main differences among the three are in the amount of stage "furniture" (chairs, stools, boxes, music stands), costumes (from street clothes in Simple RT to costumes for Chamber Theatre), and in the use of hand-held scripts (present for Simple and Staged RT, to none for Chamber Theatre).

Interpretation

As Adams (2003, p. 5) repeatedly states that the "oral interpreter needs to know everything possible about the literature to be presented to an audience," it is vital, at first, to know the connotative meaning,

as well as the denotative, of each word and its precise pronunciation in the first place. In other words, a superficial or surface reading of the selected material must be followed by a deeper reading of it before presenting it to the audience. A reader is supposed to know all of the figures of speech and must investigate to answer such journalistic questions as who, where, when, what and why of the selected materials.

A reader… must investigate to answer journalistic questions such as the who, where, when, and why of the selected materials.

Observations on Scripting and Staging

Much detail was given about the stages of Scripting and Staging. The procedures and observations are included in the following sections.

Scripting before the RT Workshop

Well before the RT workshop began, each participant had been requested to submit material of his or her choice, which was to be scripted by the participant with the assistance of faculty in the first half of the two week schedule. It was perfectly acceptable to pick from "all kinds of literary and non-literary material" for scripting, as Adams (2003, p. 5) writes, and he says that script making is "one of the most enjoyable features" of RT (p. 5). Of concern were the kinds of literary material appropriate and appealing for students in Japan, both cast and audience, with their limited English skills. One piece selected by the author was called "Prayer for Peace in Asia," (see Appendix 3) of about 200 words in length which was used in a reading class with first-year students the previous semester. About 80% of the students revealed in the questionnaire at the conclusion of the reading class (discussed above) that they found the piece difficult, and yet informative and inspirational. In addition, "The Lord's Prayer" (see Appendix 1) and "Luke 11:1-10" (see Appendix 2) were selected. The combination (hereafter called the Asano materials) of these three has a total of some 520 words in length.

Scripting during the RT Workshop

At the RT workshop, the Asano materials came under question in terms of suitability for scripting. The workshop teachers say that some RT techniques or principles for script making call for a few considerations on the appropriateness of the material for cast and audience: appeal, availability to the cast in terms of vocabulary and style, level of sophistication, literary value and content value. Although it was not entirely impossible for an experienced RT script arranger to successfully script the Asano materials, they were not the best fit in that most of the texts in the Asano materials were comprised of one character's dialogue and narration, which, as Adams (2003) cautions, should be avoided because such pieces can be difficult to script. After following suggestions by some of the workshop faculty to cast four people for the piece, and to divide the narration evenly among the four performers, the RT script dramatically improved in terms of a more equal distribution of words spoken by each performer.

Staging

The three religious pieces were selected to be performed at the RT Workshop for two reasons: one is that "Prayer for Peace in Asia" inspired the Japanese students the previous semester, and the other is that the students/performers study at a Catholic university, so the pieces were appropriate. Simple RT was chosen as the RT style for the Asano materials because it is the easiest to employ for inexperienced directors.

Knowing that Simple RT emphasizes the reading element most, the four readers, all native English speakers, were directed to stand in a straight line most of the time with no music stands. For the "Luke" piece, two readers stood in the centre by turns, in front of the rest, having the reader in front take care not

to block the sight lines of the cast members at the back. In order to create a solemn, serious, and solid atmosphere, the four performers read in unison for the whole time. After all the performances, it became clear that only a few presentations done by other participants engaged in such choral reading and even then only partially, so this is a point to consider for self-improvement.

Interpretation

One of the most distinctive findings about the interpretation phase was that the English-speaking participants knew more about the selected materials to be performed than the Japanese director did, which was to be expected in most cases. The native English speakers were able to understand the same piece more deeply and quickly than the non-native English-speaking director. Connotative meaning, sensory images, and tone colour, as they are called in the Adams' book, are the three performance approaches that were the most difficult to learn through actual experiences during the RT workshop.

Also, the group faculty members suggested more than once that the author project his voice more strongly at the group performance. It was very interesting for the author to know that he did not project enough and that it was hard for the audience to hear what was being said, because it is the same advice given by the author to Oral Interpretation class students at his college in Japan. The fact that workshop teachers pointed out the author's "weak" projection suggested that teachers need to work more on this part of interpretation when teaching Japanese students.

Additionally, the lengths of most of the pieces selected by native English speakers were quite a bit longer than the pieces that would probably be read by college Japanese students. Relatively shorter ones took 20-25 minutes to be finished by native English speakers and longer ones took 40-45 minutes or more at the RT workshop. This also characterized the differences between native English speakers and Japanese speakers studying English as a foreign language in selecting the material for RT.

Exploring Ways of Applying RT

The RT workshop has given the author an occasion to become a reader/performer, a director, and a member of the audience, all of which were experienced for the first time in a setting where no Japanese reader and audience existed except for one person. From this experience, it became clear that three aspects need to be considered when RT is done in a Japanese classroom to teach English: the performing aspect, the interpretive aspect, and the cooperative learning aspect, all described in the sections below.

Performing Aspect

The performing aspect is composed of speed, gestures, and onomatopoeia. Observations on how to teach each in the EFL setting follow in the sections below.

Speed

First of all, reading speed should be closely related to the length of the piece of material used for a performance, but English actually read by the performers at various presentations during the RT Workshop sounded very, very fast to Japanese ears. It was so fast at times that it was impossible to follow the material while practicing. There were words or phrases that were deliberately read slower to the audience to give some connotative context during the performances, but they were the exceptions. It is possibly true that native English speakers feel nothing unnatural about the speed at which the performances were done. They might feel, on the contrary, the performances would be strange if read at a slower pace, and might suspect slowness to indicate some special connotations unless the performances maintained the reading speed observed at the RT workshop.

In the case of Japanese students performing RT as part of English learning, it would not be advisable to instruct them to increase the speed to make the performance become more "natural" to native English-speakers, as the audience members are Japanese students. Some hard-working, motivated students could read the performing material as fast as native English speakers, but that might ruin the harmony of the group and most probably performers speaking at such a speed would have to sacrifice natural intonation that should be more important than speed. Since Asano (2005, p. 243) insists, "differentiating the speed of reading aloud in the middle of the performance will help the audience know changes in the meaning orally," it would be a sensible suggestion that students as interpreters take more time to understand the performing material and attempt to connect their interpretation with the proper speed for Japanese student audiences.

Gestures/Body Language

The next issue to be considered in the performing aspect is gestures or body language. Gestures/body language here includes such nonverbal communicative tools as facial expressions, miming, and gestures, which are all employed in RT performances. "Like a conductor learning an orchestral score or the actor memorizing a part," Van Oosting (1986) stresses that "these disciplines of vocalization and movement encourage the fullest range of somatic response." The term "gestures" in this section means either one or two, or all of the nonverbal communication elements described above. Compared to native English speakers, Japanese speakers seem to use far fewer gestures while they engage in conversations in various settings in their daily life. Therefore, there would be some confusing, bewildering, or strange expressions in the contexts of performing materials if more gestures were used. Chances are that Japanese speakers might not know how to use a gesture, or what gesture to use, to go along with the context, not only because of differences in the use of gestures but because of the less frequent use of them. To illustrate this, in the workshop there were some confusing lines from an excerpt from Kevin Patrick Necessary's "The Last Normality."

1. Jack stood up, his hands anxiously brushing at his sides, his eyes avoiding the gazes of the other six gathered.

2. Jack wrung his hands together, his palms balmy and sweaty. "I thought I was doing well with the project."

From the lexical and denotative meaning and from the context, it was relatively easy to gather how Jack felt as he stood, but it was impossible to picture how Jack moved his hands at the words "brushing at his sides." An American colleague in the group showed her hands brushing at her sides which communicated the picture instantly. It was different from what most Japanese readers would have imagined beforehand. Also, the implication of that nonverbal gesture differed from that of the Japanese context.

What are the ways for Japanese speakers to interpret and perform the selected materials where there can be a number of such phrases expressed by an author? There may be only a few ways. A native English speaker would be the most reliable source who could demonstrate in front of the students such phrases that are hard to imagine. Perhaps students should watch American or British films and television shows, as well as look at photos to get a mental image of the gestures together with the contexts. Students could also imagine body language from the context and create some gestures that would go along with the context. These gestures would not necessarily be the same ones employed by native English speakers, but as long as they would help the audiences comprehend the presentation, they would be fine, since both performers and audience are Japanese speakers.

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is the last issue to be considered in this performing aspect. Since RT is a presentational performance "it is concerned with the audience's ability to help create the action imaginatively" (McHughes, 1980, p. 6). In Staged Readers Theatre and Chamber Theatre, full use of the voice is suggested to interpret the performing materials. Interpreters are expected to be able to stimulate the senses of the audience, but

the use of words and how the words sound in English are different from those of Japanese. Sounds described in some onomatopoeic English words are similar to Japanese onomatopoeia but most Japanese sounds conveying the equivalent meaning in English are different, so that it would be impossible for Japanese students to produce the onomatopoetic words that should "make the English words come alive" in the selected materials (Stump, 2008). Below are two examples:

> Example 1. The heat of the sun is pushing at me through the window. I can hear buzzing insects outside.
>
> Example 2. The kettle starts whistling. As the whistle builds it makes me feel hotter. ("Scrabble OR Tile 'M' For Murder," Charlie Fish)

In Example 1, the buzzing insects may make the /zzz/ sound in English, creating a busy, annoying, and hot connotation, but Japanese buzzing insects make /bu: n/ sounds, as in "boon," giving the same connotation. Example 2, likewise, illustrates the differences in onomatopoeia in both languages, i.e., the kettle in English makes /sss/sounds, and in Japanese it makes /pi: / sounds, as in "pea," when the water boils if the spout is equipped with a steam whistle. The point is that Japanese speakers must be provided with model sounds made by native English speakers when presenting to an English speaking audience in order to make the prosaic or dramatic texts more emphatic. The Japanese English classrooms, however, cannot always find English-speaking teachers or informants. English dictionaries, including e-dictionaries, would be of no use when it comes to onomatopoeia because they just explain the representing sounds literally. On top of that, RT materials taken from literature are full of descriptions that depict the characters' physical movements and narrations that sketch out the scenes. One alternative would be to try using Japanese onomatopoeia where it is necessary in place of English onomatopoetic words. This would be more comprehensible and more emphatic to Japanese speakers, and that still would be clearer to native English speakers than the making of uncertain sounds by Japanese speakers. Below is an example of English using Japanese onomatopoeia:

> "I was awakened by some noise at midnight. Every night I hear the lift come and go through the walls and the door of my room. So I started to sleep again, /gu: gu:/, paying no attention to the noise: /kacha, kacha/. In a minute or two, I gasped /ha/. I heard /kacha/ again from the door. I threw the bedclothes aside and jumped out of the bed! I tiptoed to the door! Gathering up my courage, I took a glance through the peep-hole and saw a stranger out there! Suddenly, /kon, kon/, the stranger knocked on the door without a word. I heard my heart thud, /dokki, dokki/…."

This quotation is from a passage the author actually wrote for the RT workshop and performed for the English audience at a session for Oral Interpretation. From the reactions at the discussion later, it was clear that the way the words were uttered effectively made the audience associate the sounds with suspense and enhanced the meaning of the words, although the onomatopoeic words were presented not in English, but in Japanese.

Interpretation Aspect

For the interpretation aspect, teacher-directors need to focus their attention on interpreting the materials to have a more fruitful and educational performance. This means that the teacher-director should keep in mind that RT has more meaning than just getting engaged in choral reading. At the RT Workshop participants were able to proceed to rehearsals at this stage without taking time for considering climaxes and various sensory images that the authors included in the selections. That was almost instantly done by the experienced native-speaking English teachers.

RT can promote a high level of comprehension of the reading text, which is the first step for RT performance, because RT presentation is not done by rote memorization of the performing material without understanding it. RT is not the "oral imitation" of a model reader who reads the performing text. The teacher-director should place more emphasis on the interpretation aspect because Japanese students tend

to skip considering the meaning of the piece deeply and instead go on to perform the material without giving any consideration to climaxes and sensory images (Asano, 2005).

Cooperative Learning Aspect

The fourth aspect, the cooperative learning aspect, as described in Kagan and Kagan, (2009), is that RT can never be completed without cooperation and responsibility. RT requires group members' cooperation or collaboration from the first phase of reading. the selected material for analysis, then onto the phases of fluent oral reading for oneself and for the group, and to the last phase of actual performance. During these processes, one has to listen to others and work out somehow how to read the material together with other members. Also, one needs to be responsible for one's own improvement in reading and in performing one's own role. Each member of the group is essential to the production so that there is a high level of accountability.

At a school setting, oftentimes groups that are to perform are randomly chosen by the teacher-director and for that reason there is a variety of student-performers in them: strong readers, slow learners, weak performers, lazy students, habitual late-comers, quiet students and so on. Therefore, the group must be able to be cooperative with each other and the individual has got to be accountable to the group. Everyone has a chance to contribute in his or her own way.

Readers Theatre can never be completed without cooperation and responsibility.

Three Practical Considerations for RT in the EFL Classroom

There are three practical considerations for introducing RT in the EFL classroom. They are the number of class meetings or amount of time that will be allotted for the activity, the number of readers in a group, and the performance time period. All three considerations are discussed below.

Number of Class Meetings or Time Allotted for RT

First, consider how many class meetings or how much class time could be spent on teaching through RT. For many RT practitioners the most likely scenario would be to have a bite-sized lesson with RT during the course or just for the remaining class time for a change of routine, unless they have a regular course on performance or RT. There are two different approaches to teaching lessons.

Plan 1 would be three 45 or 90-minute-class lessons. In the first class students discuss a piece of literature, already scripted, to lead them to comprehend the linguistic meaning and its communicative aspect, including the messages the piece should convey. Students then practice reading the script in the second class in groups before they do a quick run-through in the second half of the class period. The third and final class would be for performance and wrap-up time for reflections. Students learn from their peers and this experience will help their skills of self-expression progress.

Plan 2 is for spending 20-30 minutes on RT in regular classes. Divide students into groups and have them work as teams. For instance, take a short passage of a reading that is one to two minutes in length and get students to do a choral reading of it. While interpreting it, students examine the passage to comprehend the message it should communicate to the listeners. Students discuss in groups to determine the word, phrase, or sentence that they should place emphasis on. In other words, the number of simultaneous choral readers will vary, depending on the places they want to convey emphasis to the audience. One group might find an important message in the last sentence and another might find it in the first sentence. Students will enjoy the freedom of self-expression this way. They will find out in the wrap-up period at the end of the RT project why they differ in interpretations of the passage.

Number of Readers in a Group for RT

Next, consider the number of readers in a group, not the number of students in the whole class. Be it a 20 or 60-student class, it would be best if the same number of readers are in each group. Since the teacher has no choice as to the number of students to teach, it is suggested that the teacher employ special care for groups that have more or fewer readers than the others. Any group that has more readers would need to re-script the piece to match the number of the readers, but that requires the instructor's assistance. An easier way would be to split the narrator's reading and cast more than one reader to the narrator part, although this solution is not optimum.

In the case of a group with fewer readers, some readers can perform double roles, taking the interval of the double roles into account. An alternative would be for the instructor to participate as a cast member. Students in general welcome the participation of the instructor in the performance because he or she can display a model as a reader from whom they learn meaningful reading points. One disadvantage to the instructor taking part in the students group would be that it may disproportionately or unfairly affect the result of the performance, especially if the performance is included as part of class evaluation.

Performance Time for RT

The final consideration is the performance time of a piece of literature to be read. There can be a RT performance within a minute or one longer than an hour. Taking the constraints of class periods of 90 minutes and the students' limited attention span into account, the performance time of a piece of work will typically range from one minute to 20 minutes. It all depends on the students' ability of English and perseverance, but shorter pieces are recommended for classroom RT performances for a few reasons. First, the class ought to have all the performances finished, with students discussing their own presentations afterward, so this all should be done within a 90-minute period. A second reason is that shorter pieces are obviously easier to be taught by the instructor and also can be more frequently practiced by the students. A third reason given in favor of shorter performances is brevity can outweigh longevity in that students will get more experiences of RT in the same semester; they will be exposed to more variety of readings and a wider range of characters.

Conclusion

Japanese EFL classes can make a greater contribution through approaches such as RT, as described in this paper, to develop basic social skills before the students graduate from college. In addition, RT is a holistic approach that enables the students to read for comprehension, to read orally, to listen to the other readers, to be creative in staging, and to cooperate with classmates in preparing for performances and offering constructive advice for other groups. The results of implementing RT in EFL classes should be the promotion of valuable social skills, qualitatively better language learning, and more job satisfaction for teachers

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Appendices

Appendix 1 The Lord's Prayer (New King James Version)

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done

On earth as it is heaven.

Give us day by day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins,

For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one.

Appendix 2 Luke 11: 1-10 (New King James Version)

1 Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

2 So He said to them, "when you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

5 And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him;

7 and he will answer from within and say, ‘Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you’?

8 I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.

9 So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

Appendix 3 Prayer for Peace in Asia

For homeless children begging in the streets of Colombo, close to a million internally displaced Burmese, prostituted women waiting under Bangkok night lights, church people and peace advocates killed in the Philippines:

We pray for peace.

For the victims of war-torn East Timor, Tuvalu and Kiribati threatened by the rising sea level because of global warming, the alarming rate of suicide incidents in Tokyo, sexually abused migrant workers in Singapore:

We pray for peace.

For factory workers receiving low wages in Beijing, the long-standing rift in the Korean Peninsula, oppressed and persecuted Dalits in India, refugees starving to death in Afghanistan:

We pray for peace.

For tsunami victims in South Asia, troubled relationships between Taiwan and China, babies born without eyes in Saigon caused by Agent Orange, brothels filled with thousands of child sex slaves in Cambodia:

We pray for peace.

We pray for peace so that carpenters building rich peoples’ houses will have roofs over their heads, the life-giving earth will bless us with its fruits, farmers, whose tears and blood have watered the fields, will have food on their tables, textile workers will clothe their weary bodies, and those who struggle for peace will find justice, because Christ is our peace.

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Ken Wilson

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based on his *Drama and Improvisation* (2009, Oxford University Press)

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Time: 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM (90 minutes)
Room: 41

Carolyn Graham

Creating and Performing Jazz Chant Fairy Tales Presentation

based on her *Jazz Chants Fairy Tales* (1988, Oxford University Press)

Day: Sunday, October 14th
Time: 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (60 minutes)
Room: 62

Carolyn Graham

is the creator of Jazz Chants® , which connect the rhythm of spoken American English to the beat of jazz. She developed the technique of jazz chanting during her twenty-five years of teaching ESL in the American Language Institute of New York University.She has also taught at Harvard University and has conducted workshops in the NYU School of Education, Columbia Teachers College in New York and Tokyo, and elsewhere throughout the world. Ms. Graham is the author of numerous Jazz Chants® books, all published by Oxford University Press.

Ken Wilson

worked in Spain and the UK as an English teacher and teacher trainer before getting involved with the English Teaching Theatre as a performer and artistic director. He now trains teachers all over the world and is a prolific author of ELT materials with more than 30 titles to his name. In addition to Smart Choice, he has written about a dozen coursebooks catering to ESLcourses around the world. Ken has written plays, radio and TV programmes and countless other supplementary ELT titles. He has also written and recorded more than 150 ELT songs, including16 original songs in the Smart Choice series.

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Drama on the Global Stage: Cultural Competence and the Role of Drama Techniques in the EFL Classroom

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Introduction

Cultural competence has increasingly become a topic of interest in EFL and while its role in the EFL classroom has been a topic of some debate, it is hard to deny the importance of aiding students in the acquisition of such skills (Norton, 1997). With the globalization of businesses and the establishment of English as the lingua franca for the world, is it enough to merely teach students reading, writing, listening, and speaking in a sterilized, neutral fashion? Does this equip the students with enough linguistic skill and practice to deal with the multiple Englishes and backgrounds of the people they will encounter? The answer is no. Having a vast knowledge of an L2 does not automatically mean that a speaker can use such knowledge to effectively communicate. This paper will discuss the concept of culture and *intercultural* competence and will demonstrate how drama techniques in the EFL classroom can help students hone skills that will aid them in communicating with the myriad of cultures and people they must interact with to function in a global society. It is hoped that through being introduced to some basic activities and their connection to intercultural competence, educators will feel the desire to explore further this much untapped, yet extremely valuable, resource and add it to their teaching repertoire.

Cultural competence is far more than knowing a great deal of random facts about different cultures.

Culture - What does it mean?

When discussing cultural competence, one cannot assume understanding of the concept of culture. With its obvious ties to student and teacher identity, a clear definition is essential. What is culture in terms of TESOL? Dwight Atkinson (1999) describes the received view of culture that is often the norm in TESOL, stating that many see cultures "in their most typical form as geographically (and quite often nationally) distinct entities, as relatively unchanging and homogeneous, and as all-encompassing systems of rules or norms that substantially determine personal behavior" (p. 626). In this view, culture is considered to be an unchanging and uniform thing, that the members of a nation or an ethnic group all share the same traits and views (Atkinson, 1999). This is often reflected in many EFL textbooks that include cultural short stories or notes, often speaking in broad truths that are shown to apply to all in that cultural group (Cunico, 2005). The facts are rarely given in a perceivably logical way and instead are often just tagged on to whatever linguistic lesson the unit is discussing (Cunico, 2005). Cultural competence is far more than knowing a great deal of random facts about different

cultures, facts that are highly generalized, or learning about one or two famous artists or literary figures to "cover" high culture. This type of approach to cultural competence inevitably perpetuates cultural stereotypes and skewed knowledge, certainly not what educators strive to achieve in the EFL classroom.

What is needed is a hybrid/middle-ground definition of culture that acknowledges the uniqueness of the individual with the understanding that this individuality is influenced and molded by a set of shared views and practices (Atkinson, 1999). Although Atkinson (1999) essentially describes culture as being schemas, social practices, tools, and products that are shared across a group of individuals, it must also be pointed out that improvisation, indeterminacy, and change are inevitably based on each person's unique experiences and so no two people can ever have the exact same culture. If educators take on this view of culture, how does this apply to the daily EFL classroom? The idea of aiding EFL students to gain this type of "fuzzy" cultural competence may be daunting for many educators. This is even before discussion of precisely which cultures should be taught. No matter how much variety textbooks and courses hope to achieve in the presentation of information given on different cultures, it is extremely difficult to incorporate enough of a range for the students to truly get an accurate view of the complicated myriad of people that reside in any given culture. What educators should focus on, therefore, is a development of the students' intercultural competence to aid students to become "ethnographers" and "cultural mediators" (Cunico, 2005).

Intercultural Competence and the Role of Drama

While there is some debate about the role of culture in EFL, for the most part it is agreed upon that language cannot be truly understood without understanding the motivations, schema and reasoning behind it, and the culture of the language (Norton, 1997). The teaching of culture does have many benefits and can often spark the interest of students. It is merely the fact that the teaching of culture is often accompanied by gross generalization that can cause problems and help to increase stereotypes. It would be better to focus on the skills needed in the study of ethnography. Cunico (2005) describes ethnography as:

> …the study of a group's social and cultural practices from an insider's perspective. It is both a method involving the detailed observation and description of particular forms of behaviour and a written (and sometimes audio-visual) account based on social and cultural theories. So it combines both an experiential element in which theoretical concepts are used and then developed, in order to write 'culture'. (p. 23)

Essentially, what can be taken from this is that culture is locally unique and extremely heterogeneous and the students must acquire skills, much like an ethnographer, to analyze the localized culture swiftly in order to adapt to it. By learning to analyze culture effectively, learners can avoid national stereotyping while still learning cultural practices and learn, with sensitivity, the similarities between their own and the culture they are interacting in (Cunico, 2005). This type of adaptability and observation skill, however, is often seen as only being able to be acquired if a student travels abroad to their target language country (Cunico, 2005). As educators well know, most students will not have such opportunities and for the most part, will use English as a lingua franca with other non-native speakers. Thus, despite the lack of opportunity for studying abroad, students still need the ability to adjust to many different types of speakers and their cultures. Cunico (2005) summarizes it best: "intercultural competence is more properly an attitude towards 'the other' which should be fostered in all FL students and has universal educational validity" (p23). How can teachers create opportunities for students without requiring them to travel abroad?

First, an examination of the skills necessary for the development of intercultural competence is needed. Essentially, intercultural competence is the ability to observe, incorporate, and adapt to different people and situations, to learn to communicate effectively with those who are different from the learner. Skills such as critical thinking, analysis, exploration, creativity, team work, interpersonal skills (negotiating, mediating, empathy) are vital. In addition, spontaneous thinking and the ability to try new things will also be essential skills for adapting to new situations. All of these skills are ones drama teachers aim to develop in their students. Drama techniques are perfect tools for the development of intercultural competence.

It is important here to define exactly what is meant by "drama techniques", as educators often assume that using drama techniques implies some type of performance (Gaudart, 1990; Royka, 2002). Drama techniques

in education do not require performance, though it can be an aspect of the class should the teacher want to include it–the focus, instead, is on the activities that traditionally are used in the development of skills needed for actors which match, as mentioned above, the skills needed by EFL learners. Essentially, a drama technique is any activity that "asks the student to portray himself in an imaginary situation; or to portray another person in an imaginary situation" (Gaudart, 1990, p. 230). Therefore, "the developmental aspect of drama [is] stressed and emphasis [is] given as to how drama [can] be used to increase awareness, self-expression and creativity" (Gaudart, 1990, p. 230). Also, drama techniques are usually heavily based on group work and group interaction which brings with it teamwork, negotiation, taking on of different roles, and learning to communicate with different types of people--skills required for intercultural competence. Exactly how does drama help in the development of these skills? What are some examples of drama techniques that can be utilized to develop such skills? This will be discussed in the following sections.

Drama as Simulated Experiential Learning

The popularity of studying abroad and the reason why so many institutions insist that it is a vital tool in gaining cultural or intercultural competence is the "hands on" experiences that students have as a result of being thrust into an L2 environment (Cunico, 2005). Students will encounter language they are not familiar with, sudden problems that must be resolved, as well as the need to communicate spontaneously using the limited language they have and adapt in real time. There is a real need to communicate in the L2 and so students will be extremely motivated and will often gain skills that are noticeable upon their return to their L2 classroom after such experiences. As mentioned previously, however, for many students, this type of study abroad experience is neither possible nor desired (Cunico, 2005). While textbooks provide important sample dialogues and grammar points, it is often difficult for students to see the goal for many activities-- there is often little to no emotional investment, essential for motivation. Dialogues are sterile in terms of emotion and there is little spontaneity, even in more advanced textbooks. What is missing is the drama.

Drama techniques are problem solving in nature, often about conflict resolution-- they require students to work together towards a concrete goal that they can perceive easily, and students must use the L2 in authentic types of communication that they are often emotionally invested in, thus increasing motivation (Gaudart, 1990; Sam, 1990; Connors, 1986). A wonderful tool for spontaneous communication, so often encountered in the real world, is improvisation. One such improv activity is "Who, What, Where?" In this activity, the teacher sets up a scene by answering the three questions:

Who? - two people who are organizing a rock concert.
Where? - at a printing company
What? - They have come to pick up their fliers for their big event.

In small groups, of which some members would be participants in the scene and others the "directors", students would briefly discuss some of the background to the scene and decide what roles were needed and what roles members would play, a wonderful opportunity for authentic, problem solving dialogue in itself. Then, after this brief preparation, the scene would unfold in a spontaneous fashion. Further, it is possible to implant an unexpected issue that must be resolved, a "rupture" that the students must react to in a spontaneous fashion (Dickson, 1989). The "directors", the observers of the scene, can call out problems or sudden changes in the story for the participants to work out, such as the printer breaking down limiting the amount of fliers that could be printed. The observers can also jump into the scene when additional characters are required. For teachers who feel that this is too difficult for their students, the activity could begin with some brainstorming of language that would possibly be needed or could start with a scripted version of the situation as a starting point.

Another activity, which is more challenging but wonderful for creativity and spontaneous problem solving, as well as cooperation, is an activity called Freeze Tag. It is similar to "Who? Where?What?", as the teacher will give an initial place for two students to use as the basis for their scene, such as a broken down elevator. The two students will discuss the scene briefly and then act it out. After two or three minutes, another member of the class will call out "Freeze!", and the students will stop in whatever position they are

in. The student who called out will then replace one of the students, in the exact same position and lead the other person in a different scene, using the last frozen position as inspiration. The audience can help by calling out ideas if the students are struggling. This activity can be quite challenging but extremely successful in getting students to explore many different scenarios and emotions in a short amount of time.

As can be seen, by utilizing these types of improv based drama activities, the activity of role plays and dialogues become more authentic communication acts (Connors, 1986). Students must be in the moment--they must listen actively and think about how next to communicate as they listen, exactly as they would in an 'authentic' L2 situation. With the addition of problems or ruptures, students can explore genuine emotions such as anger, frustration, surprise, disappointment, and joy. As Chauhan (2004) states, "an attractive alternative is teaching language through drama because it gives a context for listening and meaningful language production, forcing the learners to use their language resources and, thus, enhancing their linguistic abilities". It can help to provide opportunities to focus on meaning and on life experiences rather than on the mechanics of language itself (Dickson, 1989).

There is an additional benefit and key difference between study abroad experiential learning and incorporating drama techniques in the classroom-- these types of activities, unlike real situations outside of the classroom, can always be modified, allowing the teacher to provide slightly slowed down or phased versions of real experiences, catering to the level of the student, aiding in easing them into the L2 world (Royka, 2002). The students are not suddenly forced to fend for themselves, a situation that can leave some students with a negative view of the L2 environment, the process is not immediate or jarring, but a steady one. The activities are thus beneficial as they allow for spontaneity and exploration, they challenge the student, but there is always a support group and system there to encourage, assist and advise them.

Drama as an Analytical Tool

One of the primary tools developed through drama techniques is analysis: analysis of one's own body language and facial expressions, analysis of characters, points of view, and situations, analysis of motivation, and analysis of the voice and how it is used, to name some examples. As educators, it is easy to make the connection of these types of analytical tools to L2 linguistic competence and even to intercultural competence. Much of how people convey themselves is through body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice. The language people use (word choice, level of formality, the use of slang) also shows feelings, attitudes, and relationships to others they are communicating with. The use of drama, in this case, the examination and analysis of drama texts, much like in the initial reading sessions of a play, can be extremely beneficial (Cunico, 2005). As Cunico (2005) states, while textbook dialogues are written to focus primarily on teaching grammar points or key phrases and tend to be lacking in emotion or conflict, drama is character and emotion driven– writers aim to show the motivation/psyche/emotion of the characters as accurately as possible. Essentially, they try to make their interactions as "real" as possible. Cunico (2005) advocates the use of scenes from plays, stating that while the content is very real, filled with emotion driven interaction, it contains "condensed meaningful interactions … which normally occurring exchanges (do) not" (p 24). Authentic conversations often omit a great deal of assumed and shared knowledge and history, something which drama scenes do not, as they try to provide as much background information as possible to the audience (Cunico, 2005). What Cunico (2005) suggests is that classes re-enact scenes, analyze them in terms of character motivation, underlying feelings, and conflicts and then examine closely how these are demonstrated through language. Further, it is important to allow students the opportunity to observe how "our perception of people/characters is built upon their linguistic choices and styles and how language is used to express social identity" (Cunico, 2005, p 24). This awareness in the L2, and even in the L1, helps students to truly master how they are received by others and the cues that others speaking the L2 are giving them. There are many text sources that teachers may use and it may be daunting to use a play, as Cunico (2005) suggests. It is important to note that, much like any other drama activity,

Authentic conversations often omit a great deal of assumed and shared knowledge and history, something which drama scenes do not, as they try to provide as much background information as possible to the audience.

teachers can modify the text or slow down the process to match the level of the student. Perhaps what would be most easily accessible to students would be to use scenes from a popular film or a television show. Teachers would begin by showing the scene, allowing students to listen to the model conversation, with the visual and audio cues. Teachers could then show the dialogue, in the form of handouts, to the students and discuss the content and how linguistically it reflects the different characters' attitudes, moods, and/or goals of the participants, whether, for example it is to deter, persuade, or resolve an issue. A good developmental activity that could be done here is what is called "hot seating". The class is divided into small groups, arranged in a circle or semi circle, facing a seat in the middle and the teacher elicits student volunteers to be different characters from the scene. The volunteer students would then take turns sitting in the middle of the group and the rest of the members would ask them questions about their character and the situation. This helps the group to gain a deeper understanding of the scene and the person portraying the character is given stimulus to think more deeply about the motivations of their character. In groups, students would then re-enact the scene, reflecting the characters' personality and goals. Students can discuss and advise the students re-enacting on their physicality and tone and how it reflects the character's personality and intent. The scene could then be played out again, based on the group's suggestions. Post performance feedback is a wonderful opportunity for both participants and observers to hone their analytical skills and learn how best to convey the message of the character. An additional activity that can be then done is where students are asked to create an original scene such as: a) a prequel or sequel to the scene, b) a new scene with new characters in a similar situation, c) the same scene but with an alternate ending (different conflict resolution or lack of resolution). The students now must apply what they have learned in terms of the personalities, relationships, linguistic patterns, and emotional content of the characters and use what they have learned in a new and original situation. Again, this can be modified to suit the level of the student.

An additional advantage to using drama as a text source is that many plays or scripts take up important social issues or deal with difficult situations (Cunico, 2005). Students can explore these issues and discuss them. The fact that the discussion is not about the students themselves, but a third party, fictional character allows students to feel freer and safer to explore topics that normally they may be reticent to discuss (Cunico, 2005, Dickson, 1989). Teachers often struggle with students not wanting to give their opinions in class. A possible solution could be to use a drama that has a scene dealing with an issue, such as bullying. The students could then take on different roles from the scene, for example, a new student, a bully, the bully's friends, classmates etc., and have them discuss, after some research, their points of view as the characters. This can help the students, particularly when they take on an opinion or role very different from their own, to see other people's perspectives, to literally be in another person's shoes. The act of doing so can help to develop empathy and seeing problems from multiple perspectives, skills vital for intercultural competence. It is important, however, that teachers actively monitor and aid students in their exploration to ensure that gross generalizations or stereotypes are not created.

Conclusion

It is no exaggeration to say that the possibilities for utilizing drama in the classroom are endless. This paper has discussed two broad benefits to utilizing drama techniques in terms of intercultural competence. However, there are still many more drama techniques that can be explored. For example, drama exercises for physicality, tone or facial expression are also extremely beneficial in aiding students to become aware of how their message is being communicated to others. The primary hindrance to the use of drama techniques is not the students, but the teacher's own fear of trying something new (Royka, 2002). Teachers, primarily those teaching Asian students, often have preconceived notions that their students are shy and unwilling to try activities that put them in the limelight because of their L1 culture (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Many actors, in daily life, are shy and use theater as a way to break out of that shyness. If the teacher participates actively in the activities and creates a safe environment, students will respond (Dickinson, 1989, Royka, 2002). The safe environment that is created will then be the vital buffer that allows the students to explore new situations and new ways of communicating, helping them by being the intermediate step before stepping onto the global stage. The skills of analysis and adaptability, combined with the courage to try new methods of communicating

are essential for the intercultural communicator. These skills, in addition to the fundamental linguistic skills studied in the EFL classroom, are what educators should strive to empower their students with.

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Speech in the Language Classroom: A Weekly Class Activity, Not a Contest

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Many English language teachers at the secondary and tertiary levels in Japan recognize that making their lessons applicable to the lives of their students, personalizing their English lessons, is of utmost importance for motivation reasons. They also often see the beneficial, sometimes miraculous, results of students participating in speech contests (King, 2002; Nunn and Nunn, 2005; Bradley, 2006; Bury, Sellick, and Yamamoto, 2012) but are concerned about the negative characteristics such as the feelings of rejection when students do not win. This paper describes a curricular solution to the problem of providing all students, not just a few chosen ones, a speech-giving opportunity without the "agony of defeat." An additional problem is overcoming the anxiety factor of speaking in front of an audience (Doyon, 2000). The solution is to incorporate speech-giving in English conversation or oral communication classes, first to small groups, and gradually to large audiences, in an activity called My Monologue. This paper describes such a program by giving detailed descriptions of how to teach and organize this speech giving activity on personal topics, also describing variations on the activity, an evaluation rubric, and an evaluation procedure.

Introduction

"Speech in language classrooms? Sure, we have a speech contest once a year. The best students participate." Does this sound familiar? This case is not exactly rare, but not every institution with English language classes organizes or participates in speech contests. Although Bradley (2006, p. 255) states "The English speech contest is a traditional event held by junior high to tertiary institutions in Japan," it is more prevalent at the secondary school level (junior high schools and high schools), and not so common at the tertiary level (junior colleges and universities).

Having students give speeches is a worthwhile activity in language classes. Why is this? Tremblay (cited in Axtell, 2012), in describing a good language lesson in his teacher training manual, states a good lesson is one where "there is adequate opportunity for the students to talk spontaneously about their own experiences

within the lesson . . . exploit what they say as a vital component of the lessons." Bradley (2006) speaks directly to this issue in her article “The students’ voice, literally: Public speaking as a student-centered and interactive learning process,” where she talks about the creating, practicing, and giving of speeches as one of the best activities for students to “speak their mind.”

Most of the literature on speech in language classes is focused on the speech contest. Bury, Sellick, and Yamamoto (2012, p. 17) describe interschool speech contests at the secondary level, and list the benefits of such contests:

> Entering a speech contest has many benefits for students, and incorporates the four English skills as the students write their own speeches, negotiate the topic and structure of the speech with their tutor, research their speeches independently, and then deliver the speech. It also provides the students with an opportunity to function in an autonomous context, further developing their confidence and empowering them to use English in a fulfilling and rewarding way.

They conclude that the English speech contest is good for the students' English ability and autonomy, helping them to be more confident and satisfied with their English use. In addition to their assertions, they present data from a questionnaire that shows that students also see these benefits, with most seeing the speech contest as improving their English ability and self-confidence.

Bradley (2006, p. 255) describes a tertiary level program incorporating an intra-school speech contest, and she states that the pedagogical value of speech contests is that they provide a forum where “the student’s voice can, literally, be heard.” Bradley (2006, pp. 255-256) quotes one participating university student as saying, “The only time I ever said what I really wanted to was in the speech contest” (pp. 255-256). In one sense, this is a great, positive comment, but in another sense it is a strong indictment of the English speaking curriculum. Bradley (2006) concludes, “For this student, making a speech was a tool for developing autonomy and critical thinking, both attributes of learner empowerment.” (p. 256) She agrees with Bury, Sellick, and Yamamoto (2012) that speech contests encourage the development of learner autonomy, and she adds the benefit of the developing of critical thinking skills. Bradley (2006) goes on to say that speech contests have additional benefits of developing students' academic skills:

> The speech process, as structured at Miyazaki International College, is a holistic tool for empowerment, entailing the four English skills and the ability to apply them autonomously to other English medium academic challenges, such as listening to lectures, making presentations or writing papers. It facilitates academic progress because the skills are learned in a nurturing affective climate. (p. 256)

This sounds like an excellent program, but it is referring to a speech coach tutoring a few select students. Bradley (2006, p. 256) quotes another student, commenting on the infectiousness of the speech-making bug: “I am a weak student, but my friend X was too. But after her speech, she changed and is confident and takes part in class now. If I can do that, I will join [the speech contest].” Students recognize the benefits of presenting speeches.

However, Bradley is not blind to problems with speech contests, and comes up with a list of problematic areas in the form of questions speech coaches may ask themselves: “How much should I give the student? What’s the role of native/non-native pronunciation? Is competition beneficial? What if my tutees lose in a speech contest? Do speech activities highlight gender differences? If so, how do I deal with that?” (Bradley, 2006, p. 256). The most important of these questions for this paper are “Is competition beneficial? And what if my tutees lose in a speech contest?” in that they strike at the heart of the the problem with speech contests.

The central educational question is how can students reap the benefits of participating in speech contests without suffering the negative aspects of participating—especially the pressure to win and the consequences of losing? Bradley (2006), perhaps unknowingly, hints at a solution when commenting on her student's quote: "The speech had given her an intellectual opportunity beyond the regular curriculum, a notion I have come to share." (p. 256). The solution is to have students write, practice, and present speeches not "beyond the regular curriculum," but within it: make the activity of giving speeches part of the curriculum. This idea is not new: Nunn and Nunn (2005), King (2002), and Yamashiro and Johnson (1997) refer to speech as part of the curriculum. Nunn and Nunn (2005) give reasons why the giving of speeches in class is a good activity:

> One reason why students often surprise us in their speech-making ability might be partly because they are not being asked to speak spontaneously. They have time to do detailed preparation. We have come to appreciate the fact that our initially 'reluctant' students, given time to prepare, seem to pay far more attention to detail than students who at first sight appear more ready to communicate and demonstrate abilities which are not revealed in other classroom activities.

They state that speech giving allows students time to think about what they want to say, time to prepare how to say it, and time to practice saying what is on their minds. The key word here is "time": if students are not given time, Nunn and Nunn (2005) paint a painful, and perhaps all too familiar picture of what often occurs:

> simply asking students to give a talk is often unlikely to produce anything except embarrassed mumbling at the front of the class. Careful preparation during the first weeks of the course is needed to encourage students to really commit themselves to expressing their own reality in a presentation.

What Nunn and Nunn (2005), King (2002), and Yamashiro and Johnson (1997) all propose is to make speech making a curricular activity, a part of the course so that all students, and not just a chosen few, can benefit from this activity. How to do this is suggested by Doyon (2000). In an investigation of the anxiety and shyness factors at work in a Japanese English classroom, Doyon (2000) states: "For example, pair-work may be very low on a scale of anxiety producing transactions, whereas giving a speech in front of the class might be very high." The solution is to practice speech giving in the safety of a small group, and then progress to speech giving in front of the class or in front of a large audience. A detailed and extensive approach to speech giving in English conversation and oral communication classes in Japan which involve the students talking about their own lives in their own words is described here. This paper first describes the speech approach, then explains how to do the activity, next explores variations on the activity, and finally describes how to evaluate the activity.

The Speech Approach

Japanese students at secondary or tertiary levels typically study English conversation from a textbook. Each unit has a theme. The themes can often be related to the student's life, but in most textbooks are usually done as an afterthought, if at all. One English conversation textbook, *In My Life* (Kluge & Taylor, 2011), has as its basis a scrapbook created by students and has the giving of a speech based on the scrapbook as one of the two main activities of each unit, but this focus on speech giving is rare in a conversation book, if not unique. Here is a description of a speech activity that can be conducted to use speech as a regular class activity, relating the topic of the textbook or class to the students' lives, and working first in small groups and working up to speaking in front of the whole class. The activity is called My Monologue.

My Monologue Procedure

Here is how to do the My Monologue activity. The teacher finds a way to tie the theme of the textbook unit to the students' lives. For example, if the topic of the textbook unit is sports, the teacher can select any of the following topics (or other related topics):

sports you did in high school/junior high school
sports you do now
sports you like to watch on TV
sports you like to watch in the Olympics
sports you want to try in the future
sports you can do and sports you cannot do
an athlete you like or respect

Students are given a topic related to the theme of the unit. They are asked to write a speech on the topic. They can write it freely or according to a model that can be written on the white board. One of the advantages of the teacher giving a model is that the teacher can direct the students to use new words, phrases, or structures learned in the unit. For example, if the unit teaches the structures "I used to ____, but now I _____." and "I really enjoy _____." the teacher can insert these phrases into the monologue, like this:

Hello everybody! Let me tell you about sports and me. When I was in junior high school I used to ____, but now I ___. My best memory doing ___ is _____. I really enjoy ____ because _____. I ____ ___ times a _____. I usually _____ with _____. In the future I would like to try _____ because _____. Thank you.

The length and difficulty of the monologue can depend on the age and level of the students in the class. The students are given time in class to write their speech, so that the teacher can give assistance, and students can consult with their classmates. They then hand in their speech to be corrected by the teacher. (This can be graded.)

Giving a speech to a small group in Toyohashi

In the next class, the teacher returns the corrected monologues to the students and asks them to write a second draft of their speech, incorporating the suggested changes. This is so the students actually look at the suggested corrections, and then physically write the improved speech so they have a clean script to work from. In either that class or in the next class, students practice the monologue aloud by themselves so that they can do it without the script. Before practicing their monologue, the teacher should explain the evaluation rubric so that students know what they will be graded on. One such rubric, devised by the author, is the SELLS technique, described in a section below. After the students finish practicing by themselves, they present their monologues to each other in groups of four. While students present their monologues, the other three members of the group practice backchanneling, as shown below:

Speaker	Audience
Hello everybody!	Hi!
Let me tell you about sports and me.	Okay!
When I was in junior high school I used to ____, but now I ___.	I see.
My best memory doing ___ is _____.	Sounds __fun_____!
I really enjoy ____ because _____.	Great!
I ____ ___ times a _____.	Wow!
I usually _____ with _____.	I see.
In the future I would like to try _____ because _____.	Sounds __cool____!
Thank you.	Thank **you**!
Are there any questions?	*(Ask questions)*
Are there any more questions? No? Thank you.	*(applauds)*

After the speaker finishes, the next speaker in the group gives her speech, and so on until each student in the group gives her speech. In this way, all students have experience giving a speech every two weeks or so.

Variations

The activity described above can be done with some variations, with the number of performers and size of the audience being the main variables: only a few students give speeches to the whole class, all students give speeches in front of the whole class one at a time, or all students give the speech one at a time to one student at a time. These variations are described below.

A Few Select Speeches in Front of Class

After the groups of four students are all finished giving their speeches, each group can be asked to choose one person from the group to perform in front of the class. For example, in a typical class of 24 students, that would mean six students would give a speech, usually 2-3 minutes long including question and answer periods. If there is not enough time for six speakers, the six selected students can do rock-scissors-paper in pairs to select three speakers to perform their speeches in front of the class.

All Students Give Speeches in Front of Class

After practice in their groups of four, all students could be asked to give their speech one at a time in front of the whole class. This can be done as an oral exam. It is good to give some time for students to practice either by themselves or with a partner on the performance/test day before having to perform in front of the whole class.

All Students Give Speeches to One Student at a Time

In the author's institution, once a semester all first-year students meet in a large classroom. They are seated facing a partner from another section of the course. One is designated as the speaker and one as the audience. Speakers are given four minutes to give their speech to their audience partner and to answer questions. After four minutes, all audience partners move to a new speaker and the whole procedure is repeated. This is done a number of times, and then the speaker and audience change roles and the whole procedure is repeated. The advantage of this variation is that students can speak to students they do not usually encounter in class, and all speakers get good practice repeating their speech and responding to different questions.

Evaluation

The following evaluation system can be used for the activity or any of the variations described above. The SELLS rubric for evaluating the speeches was developed for this activity. Students are told that they will be evaluated on what "sells" the message of the speech. Students are told before they practice the speech that they will be evaluated on the following SELLS criteria,: S=Smooth (smooth delivery, means memorized well and practiced often.), E=Energy (performed in an energetic manner), L=Loud (speak in a loud enough voice so that everyone can hear), L=Look (look at everyone—eye contact), and S=Smile (smile at the audience throughout the speech). Using this rubric the teacher can evaluate students if each student gives a speech, as in an oral exam. Students can evaluate themselves by using their own digital camera or mobile phone video capability and ask a group member to record their speech. Students then watch their recorded speech, and using the rubric, can evaluate their own speech performance as homework. When students give their speech in front of the whole class, the audience can evaluate the students using the SELLS rubric on small pieces of paper. For all students to evaluate all other students would make them too busy to enjoy and participate in their classmates' speeches, so some kind of system where students only have to evaluate every fourth speaker works best. If teachers communicate the grades to the students (a good practice), they may want to wait until after collecting the students' self evaluations before giving their own so that the teacher's evaluation does not affect the student's self evaluation.

Conclusion

The My Monologue activity and the variations to the activity allow students to reap the benefits of speech on a regular basis, and to alleviate speech giving anxiety they practice their speeches first in small groups and then perform in front of the class. The speeches serve as a way for students to prepare and practice talking on the various topics of the unit, relating the topic to their own lives. These speeches can and should be used to segue into conversations on the topic. The students, after extensive practice and performance of a set speech, and after answering a variety of spontaneous questions, feel more confident and ready to engage in spontaneous conversation on the topic. This My Monologue speech activity turns a conversation class into a speech and conversation class where students gain practice in speaking in English about their lives. It allows students to gain confidence in speaking English in front of a group of people, and helps them to own their English. Students gain all the benefits of participating in a speech contest, but without experiencing the negative, demotivating emotions. All students can benefit.

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Dramatic Classrooms

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Drama Techniques in the EFL Classroom

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What are drama techniques?

Drama techniques are basically games that are used to help actors enhance their creativity and unlock spontaneity. They are heavily influenced by the work of Viola Spolin. She was an actor, a director, and an educator who worked with both adults and children in America. She developed a series of theater games to increase creativity and to build trust and confidence in the drama group. Originally her work was intended to develop young actors' skills, but the suitability of her techniques for EFL soon became apparent. They were later published under the name of 'Theater Games for the Classroom'. Many of the drama techniques that are used now are derived from her work with theater games.

Why use drama techniques in the EFL classroom?

Drama techniques can be used in the EFL classroom for a variety of purposes and with different educational goals in mind. They can be used to:

1. Develop students' creativity and to boost students confidence.
2. Encourage group participation and build trust and acceptance in the group.
3. Utilize cooperative, noncompetitive interaction.
4. Support learner autonomy with the teacher often taking the role of bystander or fellow participant.

Drama techniques can be used as a major component of an English course. Additionally, they can be used as 'fillers' to lift the mood of the class, for example after some demanding textbook based work or when students are starting to tire. Drama techniques are also a lifesaver when you need to fill in those spare five minutes at the end of a lesson.

Are drama techniques the same as drama?

The main difference between drama techniques and drama is that drama techniques are not intended for performance. They are spontaneous 'games' to promote group synthesis, build confidence and encourage creative thought. They require no rehearsals, costumes or scripts; nor do they have to be perfect. All they need are some participants and some ideas. With drama techniques it is the process and not the product that is important. They are also sometimes called theater games.

What activities can be used to get started?

Here are three simple warm up activities to get started. They can be used for all ages and student levels as participants will use language that is already available to them in new spontaneous ways.

Space ball (adapted from *Improvisation for the Theater* by Viola Spolin, 1999)
Aim: To explore descriptive language and develop creativity
Time: 5-10 minutes

This is a really great activity to give students and teachers an idea of what drama techniques are. First get students to stand in a circle. Pretend to take a chunk of the air in front of you and begin forming it into a ball with your hands. As you do so ask your students: "What is it?" The students will hopefully answer "It's a ball". Keep forming the ball and tell the students that it's changing. It could become: larger, smaller, heavier, lighter, stickier, more slippery – the possibilities are endless. Show the students how the ball has changed through the handling of the ball and facial expressions. Encourage students to call out how the ball has changed.

Now comes the fun part; throw the ball to any student, who must catch it in an appropriate way. That is, if the teacher transformed the ball into a heavy ball, the student must catch it as though it were very, very heavy and make some appropriate comments: "Oh my goodness! It's so heavy! I can't lift it!" Now it is their turn to mold the ball, transforming it in some way, and then throw it to the next student. Repeat until all willing students have participated.

It's important for students' creative development that they don't plan how the ball will transform in advance but rather that they allow it change organically at the moment of manipulation. Creativity is closely linked to spontaneity, therefore pre-teaching or planning will block the free flowing of creative ideas. By keeping the students' focus on the game itself and not on thinking, judging or evaluating what to say or do next, creative, intuitive utterances are more likely to be produced.

Slow motion tag (from *Theater Games for the Classroom* by Viola Spolin, 1986)
Aim: To think about space and movement and to introduce side coaching
Time: 5 minutes

This is a wonderful activity to get students to focus on cooperation. It is particularly useful to encourage students to work well together in pair or group activities. It is played exactly the same as regular tag, except the students must move in slow motion. This means that students must stay focused and see where their movements will lead them to keep them out of 'its' way. The teacher will side coach (that is give students verbal instructions), cautioning students who are tempted to run or move too fast.

By making the game slow motion, the goals change. Suddenly the game becomes a cooperative, collaborative experience. Students work together to allow themselves to be caught. In this way, the game helps to bond the class and encourages them to work together: skills that are essential in communicative activities. Once the students are comfortable with the game, students can take the role of side coach. Side coaching is an important part of drama techniques and, by putting the students in a position to control the direction of the game, chances for using a lot of spontaneous language can be created.

What am I doing? (From *101 Drama Games and Activities* by David Farmer)
Aim: To focus on verbal instructions and develop quick thinking skills.
Time: 10-15 minutes.

This is a useful activity to get students up, moving, and thinking. Get the students to stand in groups of around six. The first student (Student A) will mime an action. The next student (Student B) must ask: 'What are you doing?' Here comes the tricky part: Student A must answer something different to what they are miming. For example, if they are miming talking on the telephone, then they must answer something completely different like 'I'm watching TV' or 'I'm cleaning the table.' This is often quite difficult: it takes considerable concentration to do one thing but say another. Student B will now mime Student A's answer to the next student, Student C. Student C will ask 'What are you doing?' and as before Student B must answer different to what they are miming. Additionally, they must not repeat an action that has already been said. The steps are repeated until everyone has had a turn.

Notes: If it is the first time for students to do this kind of an activity it might be a good idea to limit the actions that they can do. For example, students could be asked to focus on only hobbies or outdoor activities, things students do in the home etc.

Where can I find out more about drama techniques?

There are some great resources available for teachers who want to use drama in the EFL classroom. Here is just a brief list of books and websites to get started. There are many more available and resources aimed at drama in education can often be adapted for the EFL classroom.

Book Resources

Burke, Ann F. & O'Sullivan, Julie C. (2002). *Stage by Stage,* Heinemann
A guide to using role plays and drama with children. Recommended for children more familiar with drama.

Framer, D. (2007). *101 Drama Games and Activities,* www.dramaresource.com
A great source of quick, easy activities easily adaptable for the EFL classroom.

Maley, Alan & Duff, Alan (2005). *Drama Techniques* (3rd ed), Cambridge University Press
Aimed for adult EFL learners, but many activities can be adapted for children.

Phillips, Sarah (1999). *Drama with Children,* Oxford University Press
A good introduction to drama with EFL children with lots of activities for songs & chants and puppet work.

Spolin, Viola (1999). *Improvisation for the Theater*, Northwestern University Press
Aimed at actors in training, but many of the games can be adapted for the EFL class.

Spolin, Viola, (1986). *Theater Games for the Classroom,* Northwestern University Press
Theatre games written especially for children's drama classes. Includes songs, games and plays.

Swale, Jessica (2009). *Drama Games for Classrooms and Workshops* Nick Hern Books
101 activities to use with children aimed at theatre workshops, but work well in the EFL class too.

Wilson, Ken (2008). *Drama and Improvisation*, Oxford University Press
Aimed at adult EFL students, but many activities are suitable for children too.

Webpage Resources

Drama in the ESL classroom http://esldrama.weebly.com/index.html
Resources for using drama in the ESL classroom.

Drama resource http://dramaresource.com/
The website of David Farmer it includes lesson plans resources and information on drama in education.

Improlology http://www.improlology.com/games/viewallgames.html
Contains many improvisation games suitable for EFL classes.

Mantle of the Expert http://www.mantleoftheexpert.com/
Concentrates on the work of Dorothy Heathcote in children's education.

Role-play Ideas for the EFL Classroom

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Introduction

Role-play is an effective communicative activity that can be implemented in the foreign language classroom to increase enjoyment and success for EFL and ESL learners. Krish (2001) states that activities such as role-play are vital for developing communication skills. Furthermore, role-play provides opportunities for an increased amount of language production in a non-threatening environment. Role-play can also broaden the scope of the classroom to include the outside world and provide a wider range of language usage opportunities. In addition to the variety that role-play adds to the usual classroom activities, it also provides a change of pace (Budden, 2004). Another possible outcome is increased student motivation and lower anxiety levels for foreign language learners. Bray (2010) notes that role-play can "transform the atmosphere of a classroom" which leads to increased motivation and lower anxiety for students and teachers alike. There is a small risk involved with using role-play; however, the rewards far outweigh the risks. Rewards include fun and excitement in the classroom, genuine learning, useful skills acquisition, group cohesion, and a greater opportunity for learner autonomy. Role-play is essentially a lot of fun, and when learning is fun student learning and overall success is more likely.

Simulation, Role-play, and Improvisation

The terms simulation, role-play, and improvisation are often used interchangeably; however, they are actually different. Simulation is the common act of two or more students reciting a given dialogue that focuses on a specific scenario. Popular examples of simulation include ordering food at a restaurant, checking into a hotel, and asking for or giving directions. In simulation activities students are simply reinforcing the learned vocabulary and phrases through repetition of scripted dialogues.

Role-play is often used as an extension of simulation because students can use the same scenarios, but with role-play they are not given a scripted dialogue. Using simulation and role-play together can be an effective way of building speaking skills for foreign language learners. Many EFL textbooks have chapters or lessons that present a topic, provide a scenario with dialogue, and then as a final activity have the students role-play the same scenario with their books closed. The key difference between the two activities is the purpose. For role-play the purpose is to solve a problem or reach a specific goal. An example is having students deal with the situation where the food they ordered in the previous simulation is served cold when it should be hot.

Improvisation is similar to role-play except that the scenario is open-ended. An example of improvisation is two students pretend to be taking an exam and one of the students asks the first student for an answer. In this improvisation the first student has to decide how to respond to the second student's request. The second

student must then decide how to react to the first student's initial response. There are several interesting paths that this improvisation could take, such as the first student agreeing to help the second student cheat, or the students getting in an argument because the first student refuses. The improvisation could also be enhanced by adding a third participant as the students' teacher who catches them in the act.

Another fun improvisation is to have students pretend to be at a theme park like Universal Studios Japan or Tokyo Disneyland. The improvisation could go any number of directions depending on the choices made by the participants. With no scripted dialogue or defined scenario the participants could decide to go on a ride, have lunch, play some games, or leave. The key for improvisation is to only give the setting and not a specific goal to reach or problem to solve (which would make it a role-play exercise). Although they are different in specific content, simulation, role-play, and improvisation can be viewed as three points on the same scale because they are all dramatic techniques consisting of acting out different scenarios.

Components of Role-play

Role-play consists of three main components: the problem to be solved or goal to be accomplished, the situation or setting, and the characters involved in the scenario. The problem to be solved or goal to be accomplished can be taken from previous classroom topics, often found in the textbook, real life current events, or from popular stories, movies, television programs, and even songs. Ideally the problems or goals used for role-play should reflect useful, real life situations. For example, doing a role-play for Japanese elementary and junior high school students involving booking a hotel or checking in for a flight has a lower probability of success than other, more familiar, scenarios. The situation or setting should be something appropriate for the age level and familiar to the students if at all possible. For instance, restaurant scenarios are best if the restaurant is a place like McDonald's or Kentucky Fried Chicken because almost every student will have eaten in these places before, sometimes on a regular basis. If the goal is to have students practice scenarios at an American-style restaurant then a scaffolding technique can be used where the students first practice role-play at familiar fast-food restaurants and then move on to Western-style restaurants. Some American restaurants such as the Outback can be found in Japan as well, so there is a good chance that at least a few students in any given class will have eaten there.

Important Steps in the Role-play Process

Before beginning any role-play exercise there are several important steps the teacher must perform. The first step is to build a positive classroom environment through various techniques such as the use of humour, pair and group activities, and demonstrating that the teacher truly cares about the students and their success. One specific strategy that seems to go a long way in creating a positive environment is for the teacher to show a willingness to take risks and laugh at him or herself. Because it takes time to build a positive environment it may be wise to wait a few class periods before attempting a role-play activity. Once the teacher has taken steps to build the positive environment, the next step is to create interest in the topic. There are several strategies that can create interest in a given topic, such as showing humorous film or television clips depicting the role-play scenario, or reading current news articles related to the topic. A wonderful example of using film clips is the scene from *Mr. Bean's Holiday* (2007) where Mr. Bean is at a French restaurant and does not realize what he has ordered. After his plate of seafood arrives he proceeds to deposit the raw oysters, which he finds disgusting, in the purse of the lady at the next table. After the students have viewed this scene, and have almost assuredly had a good laugh, the teacher can introduce a role-play exercise about getting the wrong food. One strategy to gauge the students' interest in a topic is to do an informal class discussion asking for ideas and feelings about

a topic. For example if the class consists of younger students there probably would not be much enthusiasm for scenarios involving travel, but a class of adult learners would respond very well to these role-plays. Another important step is to teach any important vocabulary or key phrases that may come up during the role-play exercise. Similarly, it is important to discuss any cultural differences that the students may not be aware of connecting to a particular role-play. One example related to the previously mentioned restaurant scenario is that people eating at American restaurants do not call out for their waiter as they do in Japan.

One important strategy that seems to go a long way in creating a positive environment is for the teacher to show a willingness to take risks and laugh at him or herself.

When these preparatory steps have been completed the teacher should demonstrate the role-play exercise together with a few of the stronger students. This will help to make the class more relaxed about performing the exercise. Using props whenever possible will also increase the likelihood of success. An example of using props is bringing in a bag of fries from McDonald's and having students role-play the scenario of the fries being cold and wanting to return them. Similarly, rearranging the classroom to facilitate a role-play can also increase the chances of success. For a role-play on asking for and giving directions, have the participants sit in chairs that are arranged to simulate taxi seats. This way the students avoid the face-to-face setting that may be uncomfortable for them. It is also easier to ask for directions from a taxi driver than a random person on the street.

The final step of any role-play involves the evaluation phase. After a role-play has been attempted it is paramount for the teacher to give positive feedback to all participants. At times this may be difficult if the role-play was unsuccessful, but there is always something positive that can be said even if it is something as simple as "good try" or "nice effort".

Possible Role-play Scenarios

The most successful role-play activities will be those that stimulate student interest and also connect with familiar settings. In addition to the previously mentioned restaurant and giving directions role-plays there are several other scenarios that are useful for foreign language students.

An easy role-play to start with is having students pretend they are meeting for the first time at a new school and they need help finding their classroom. This role-play can be combined to teach greetings and responses as well. The teacher can play the role of a homeroom teacher or even the principal who greets the students and then helps them find their classroom. If possible, students could go into the hallway outside the real classroom to make the role-play more authentic. Simple role-plays like this can be valuable when first introducing a class to the activity.

Another example is a scenario where two students role-play friends making plans for the weekend. Have the students sit back to back and use their cell phones instead of talking while facing each other. The excitement from being able to have their phones out in class will translate into more excitement and enthusiasm for the activity. Also, the comfort will be increased because the students have their phones to focus on instead of the daunting task of communicating in English.

Another creative and fun role-play is to have one of the students play the role of teacher dealing with a few rowdy students. The chairs can be arranged to simulate a private conference in which the teacher is reprimanding two students who caused a disruption during the lesson. More outgoing students will relish the chance to play the authority figure in a school setting, and it is very likely that the rest of the class will pay attention and enjoy this role-play.

Other enjoyable role-plays include family situations where the participants play various family members. Two close classmates could do a role-play as father and son or mother and daughter. A third class member could be added as a grandparent or a sibling. There is a plethora of scenarios involving family members that can be utilized, such as a father teaching a son to play baseball, a mother teaching her daughter how to put

on make-up, or siblings disagreeing about what show to watch on television. Props such as baseball gloves and make-up kits would add an element of believability and enjoyment to these role-plays as well.

An important point to keep in mind is that the teacher needs to present the role-play and then let the students do what they can with it. Practice the same scenario several times with different students if the exercise is going well. If it is not, join in the role-play and guide the students through the areas they are struggling with.

Role-play can be a valuable component of any EFL or ESL classroom if the teacher believes in the activity. Success may not come immediately, but through creative planning, practice, patience, and perseverance role-play can become an integral piece of any foreign language teacher's repertoire of class activities.

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Simply Dramatic Language Teaching

First Conference of the Speech, Drama, and Debate SIG
Presenters Sponsored by Oxford University Press

Date: October 16th, 2012
Time: 6-9 pm
Place: Nanzan University, R Building, Room 63
Content:

*Opening Ceremony (5 min)
*K. Wilson Workshop: Can Improv Activities Work in Japanese Classrooms?
based on his *Drama and Improvisation* (2009, Oxford University Press) (60 min)
*C. Graham Workshop: Creating and Performing Jazz Chant Fairy Tales Presentation based on her *Jazz Chants Fairy Tales* (1988, Oxford University Press) (60 min)
*Ken Wilson Presentation: Smart Choice Series (60 min)
*Closing Ceremony (5 min)

Carolyn Graham

is the creator of Jazz Chants® , which connect the rhythm of spoken American English to the beat of jazz. She developed the technique of jazz chanting during her twenty-five years of teaching ESL in the American Language Institute of New York University.She has also taught at Harvard University and has conducted workshops in the NYU School of Education, Columbia Teachers College in New York and Tokyo, and elsewhere throughout the world. Ms. Graham is the author of numerous Jazz Chants® books, all published by Oxford University Press.

Ken Wilson

worked in Spain and the UK as an English teacher and teacher trainer before getting involved with the English Teaching Theatre as a performer and artistic director. He now trains teachers all over the world and is a prolific author of ELT materials with more than 30 titles to his name. In addition to Smart Choice, he has written about a dozen coursebooks catering to ESLcourses around the world. Ken has written plays, radio and TV programmes and countless other supplementary ELT titles. He has also written and recorded more than 150 ELT songs, including16 original songs in the Smart Choice series.

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Debate and the Hokuriku University ESS Club

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"It is difficult for us. That's why almost all of people coming today have never experience a debate. Some says it is a weak point about debates for Japanese generally. This is a good opportunity."

President of HESSA

On December 10, 2011 the HESSA (Hokuriku English Speaking Society Association) debate contest was held in Kanazawa. Participating in the event were four teams from three universities: one from Toyama University, one from Hokuriku University and two from Kanazawa University. In October, members of the Hokuriku University ESS (English Speaking Society) club approached me and asked for help in preparing for the contest. At the first meeting later that month, I quickly determined that the members had little experience with debate, so the first order of business would be giving them some fundamentals. When I asked them the topics to be debated, they replied there were three: whether or not nuclear power plants should be banned, whether or not animals should be kept in zoos, and whether real names or anonymous names should be used for social network systems. The following is a description of the process the students and I went through in order to help them get ready for the debate contest. I did not know which style of debate they would be doing, but I decided to prepare them in American Parliamentary Debate (see Appendix 1), the style used in *Discover Debate* and the one I was most familiar with. In point of fact, they actually did Cross-examination Debate (see Appendix 2) in the contest, but I didn't find this out in time to practice it with students.

Giving Opinions and Supporting with Reasons

For the next meeting I found some information online about zoos and handed it out. The students took sides and we had an informal discussion about the merits and demerits of keeping animals in zoos. Most were against the idea, thinking it inhumane and cruel to confine animals in small spaces, but one member argued it was necessary to keep animals in captivity to do proper research. After the discussion, I gave them some exercises (see Motegi, Suzuki & Hesse, 1999, pp 50-53) designed to state main points and provide reasons to back up their opinions. I then divided the group into two teams to prepare an affirmative and negative constructive speech for the resolution "Nuclear power plants in Japan should be banned".

The First Constructive Speeches: Signposting, Giving Reasons and Evidence

In the first practice debate, the two teams presented their respective cases on the nuclear power plant resolution. The affirmative team had three points: alternative power, waste disposal, and safety, arguing that alternative power was available, a lot of radioactive waste from power plants must be buried and, in the case

of an accident, such as the recent disaster at Fukushima, radioactive contamination might occur. The negative points were cleanliness, efficiency and necessity. They argued that nuclear power doesn't produce much carbon dioxide, it is economical, and Japan doesn't have enough alternative energy sources to take care of the country's need for power and electricity.

When they had finished presenting their affirmative and negative cases, it was time to work on refutations. I gave the students some exercises (see Lubetsky, LeBeau and Harrison, 2000, pp 62-67) on how they could divide points into two categories; that something is not true or it is not important. Using their arguments, I pointed out the affirmative could argue that it was not really important how efficient nuclear power was if it wasn't safe and peoples' lives were in danger. As for cleanliness, they could say it wasn't really true that nuclear power is clean if dangerous radioactive waste is left over. On the negative side, I showed how they could argue alternative power sources wouldn't be very helpful if Japan didn't have the capacity to produce them. The students began to get the idea of refutation and we decided to try it out in the next practice debate.

The Second Constructive Speech: Refuting and Rebuilding

Still working on the nuclear power topic in the next debate, students presented the constructive speeches and practiced some refutation beginning with the first negative constructive speech and continuing in the second affirmative and negative speeches. I had emphasized that in the second speech, they needed to attack and then rebuild what the opponents had attacked. This they did fairly well considering it was their first try. Finally I gave them some information (Lubetsky, LeBeau and Harrison, 2000, pp 108-109) on rebuttal in which they summarize the main points and show why their side had superior arguments. It was time for them to try out a complete debate, including rebuttal speeches, on the resolution that "Real names should be used for a social network system". They divided themselves into two teams for the debate and prepared for what would be their last practice before the debate contest.

A Full Debate–Sort of

Several difficulties presented themselves in the last practice debate. One was my unfamiliarity with the topic, since I was not, at that time, a member of any social network services (SNS). I was hoping they knew more about the topic than I did, but soon after they started another difficulty surfaced. Students had researched and gotten information in Japanese and then tried to translate into English. Because of their translation difficulties, it became extremely challenging for me to understand what they were trying to say, especially the first affirmative speaker. Even worse, A., the first negative speaker, suddenly developed a severe case of speaker's block and would not say anything, no matter how hard we tried to coax her. I wasn't sure how they would finish the debate, but finally N., the strongest debater present, took over, providing some key points and helping others to explain theirs. Most of the arguments revolved around privacy issues and whether a real or false name would better protect people in an SNS. Thus ended their last practice debate. The next time they would be facing another university team in front of a judge.

The HU ESS club debate team in action

Results

Unfortunately, I was not able to see the contest but I heard about the results afterwards. In the first round, Hokuriku University faced the Kanazawa University "A" team, the topic being "The nuclear power plants should be built additionally"[sic]. They were on the affirmative, meaning they were in support of nuclear power. Since we had practiced this topic, they had some good arguments and were able to win the debate.

The Kanazawa University "B" team, which had defeated Toyama University in the first round, was the next opponent in the championship round. The topic for debate was "When you use SNS, you should be anonymous

[sic].” HU was again the affirmative team, in support of anonymous names for social network services. This time they lost, one of the reasons no doubt being because I was not able to adequately help them prepare this topic.

Reflections

So what had the students gained from this experience? I asked one student, N., to consult with other team members and give me some feedback about how they felt about doing debate. This is his statement, uncorrected.

We participated in English debate contest for the first time. We didn't know how to debate, so we needed to take knowledge of debate. At first, we debated about the theme in Japanese. Secondly, we collected to persuasive opinions in debate and it translated Japanese into English. Finally, we debated about the theme in English. When we started this practice way, we couldn't insist our opinion because we embarrassed to speak to myself opinion. Beside, our opinions lack of persuasiveness. In order to improve such a situation, we increased club activity days for debate practice. After that we were making gradual progress to debate that tried to debate again and again. It was very hard but we realized that we were fascinated with interesting of debate.

The contest day, we didn't shy to speak in front of people. And our team was able to positively insist to persuasive opinions. As a result we won the first match. Through we participated in English debate contest, we got logical thinking and aggressiveness. We think they are important for win to debate. If we also get an opportunity to English debate contest, we want to try to do again.

I give the students a lot of credit for participating and doing something extremely difficult, debating in their non-native language in front of an audience. I was especially proud of A. for accomplishing something she was unable to do in practice; namely, speak in front of a group. From their own statements above, it is clear they were able to overcome shyness and argue aggressively. Moreover, I believe that through this practice they learned several fine points of debate, such as how to support opinions with evidence and refute arguments. Thus, paraphrasing the words of the HESSA president, it was a good opportunity for them.

References

Lubetsky, Michael, Charles LeBeau & David Harrington (2000) *Discover Debate-Basic Skills for Supporting and Refuting Opinions.* Language Solutions, Inc.

Motegi, Hideaki, Katsuyoshi Suzuki & Stephen Hesse (1999) *Taking Sides-Critical Thinking for Speech, Discussion and Debate*. Tokyo: Kinseido

Appendix 1: American Parliamentary Debate

First Affirmative Constructive Speech

The speaker introduces the resolution and states the affirmative case with main points, reasons and evidence. Tries to show the present system is not working and there is a need for change.

First Negative Constructive Speech

The speaker refutes the affirmative case and states the negative case with main points, reasons and evidence. Tries to show that the present system is working and there is no need to change.

Second Affirmative Constructive Speech

The speaker answers the negative attacks, rebuilds the affirmative case and refutes the negative's main points. Tries to show that the affirmative plan for change will work better than the present system does.

Second Negative Constructive Speech

The speaker answers the affirmative attacks, rebuilds the negative case and continues to refute the affirmative main points. Tries to show that the affirmative plan for change will make the situation worse that it is now.

Negative Rebuttal Speech

The speaker continues attacking the opponent's case while rebuilding the negative case without introducing any new main points. Summarizes and tries to show why the negative side should win the debate.

Affirmative Rebuttal Speech

The speaker continues attacking the opponent's case while rebuilding the affirmative case without introducing any new main points. Summarizes and tries to show why the affirmative side should win the debate.

Note: Constructive speeches are usually 8 minutes in length and rebuttal speeches are 4 minutes, but that may vary. Also there might be four rebuttal speeches instead of two.

Appendix 2: Cross-examination Debate

This style basically has the same format as American Parliamentary Debate but there are two significant differences. First, the constructive speeches are shorter and when the speaker finishes, the opponent "cross-examines" by asking some pointed questions designed to show some weakness in the case. The HESSA debates had this order:

1. Affirmative Constructive Speech (2 minutes)

2. Negative strategy time (2 minutes) Cross Examination (4 minutes) Strategy time (3 minutes) Negative refutation and Constructive Speech (2 minutes)

3. Affirmative strategy time (2 minutes) Cross Examination (4 minutes) Strategy time (3 minutes) Refutation (2 minutes)

4. Negative strategy time (2 minutes) Cross Examination (2 minutes) Strategy time (3 minutes) Refutation (2 minutes)

5. Affirmative strategy time (2 minutes) Cross Examination (2 minutes)

6. Strategy time (3 minutes)

7. Negative rebuttal (2 minutes)

8. Affirmative rebuttal (2 minutes)

Debate to Bring Students Together

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While the use of debate in ESL classes is recognized as a positive and beneficial practice, it does not necessarily appeal to all teachers. I myself did not have any particular educational background in spoken debate in Britain, where it is something largely equated with parliament and the hallowed environment of the Oxford and Cambridge Unions, rather than its more widespread role in education in the U.S. However, what I did experience in education, including the examination system, was a strong focus on critical type essays, which mirror debates in many ways.

So, what can debate bring to the Japanese educational environment, particularly at tertiary level? In this article, I discuss this and focus on one particular situation, which the editor of this journal, James Venema, and myself, experienced. In the Spring 2012 semester, we carried out debate classes independently at our respective universities, with the aim of a final debate to bring teams of students from our classes together.

Teaching Situations and Benefits of Debate

To briefly explain our differing situations, while James teaches at a private women's university, I teach at a co-educational public university of education. Readers are likely to see a potential mismatch between the latter, with its more uniformly higher level students and the former, which like many private universities is affected by changing Japanese demographics causing a lowering in competition to enter and where students are more varied in ability level. However, this points to the first of the benefits which I would like to highlight of such a debate course, motivation. James believes strongly that the ultimate goal of facing students from a higher-ranked university can be something challenging and empowering which can raise the abilities and confidence of students.

Two more benefits which I would like to point to are, firstly, the activation of students' oral and intellectual abilities. There has now been a long history and development of communicative classes, albeit they have far from replaced more traditional modes in Japan. However, classes often remain teacher-centered, with teachers sometimes taking too much control leaving students in a passive and subordinate role, both educationally and when it comes to active use of the target language. Secondly, the use of debate readily offers the opportunity to truly combine language and content, which I feel is essential at university level. In turn, a strong focus on content offers the opportunity for students to realistically practice research skills and move away from the fact oriented education and examinations which they have experienced before university.

How did we successfully operate both independently and with the shared final purpose indicated above? This was achieved by both teachers making use of James Venema's proto-coursebook, *An Introduction to Debate* (unpublished), which introduces key concepts such as deciding propositions (resolutions) and their different types, the use of "signposts" and "supports", and the criteria in judging debates.

Debate Content

With regard to content, here I focus on what I am more familiar with, which is what my classes did, as opposed to what James's classes did. Although in previous debate classes, I have used the topics in the coursebook *Debating the Issues* (Macmillan Language House), in this semester, I decided to focus on the following four areas: education, young people, immigration, and the Olympics. These were chosen for various reasons, including their relationship to a course with a more historical focus in the following semester, the opportunity for cross-cultural comparison (particularly between Britain and Japan), closeness or relevance to their own experience, and timeliness (especially in the case of the Olympics which were about to be held in London). Background material on content included items of vocabulary development (particularly from *Key Words for Fluency* (Thomson+Cengage), questionnaires, and authentic reading and video items. The latter included such content as: a student caught up in riots in the UK in 2011 (*The Daily Mail* newspaper), differing attitudes of immigrants towards Britain (P. Panayi, *The Impact of Immigration*, Manchester University Press), the changing role of women in the Olympics (*The Independent* newspaper) and contrasting Olympic sprinters, Jesse Owens (1936) and Usain Bolt (2008/2012) (BBC video).

Development using this content was going on in parallel with teams preparing for a debate on each topic. In general, three class meetings were used for each topic, with the teams and proposition being decided in the first lesson, with the teams having some time for preparation (in addition to that done out of class time) during the second lesson, and the debate itself taking place during part of the third lesson. Logistics offered both benefits and challenges. With a fairly large class of 29, it gave the opportunity to break up the class, with the two current debate groups, of three members each, going to separate locations, and the remaining students staying in the main classroom. While it might seem to be a challenge to find three simultaneous locations, the unfortunate effects of staff downsizing due to budget reductions have readily provided such locations. More challenging is organizing the class so that the debate teams can be helped at the same time as the main class (those students who are not team members for that topic) is going on, and careful timing, particularly at the problematic preparation stage for refutation speeches (see below), to give the debate teams adequate time to prepare while keeping the main class positively occupied.

Organization of the Debates

Before turning to the organization of the final debate, I just briefly consider the organization of the debates in general. As indicated above, good propositions were developed and a vote taken on the best, the formation of debate groups was literally "out of a hat (a bag)", and the order in which the groups spoke was by "rock, scissors, paper". Video clips of debates (usually broadcast weekly on BBC World) were shown to give an idea of the atmosphere of a real debate, and the idea of "before and after" voting by the audience (other class members) to see if they were "swayed" was borrowed. Until our fourth debate, we had two teams of three, but in preparation for the final joint debate, we had two groups of four members in our fourth debate.

I now come to the final joint-debate and would like to consider some of the issues in its organization. On this occasion, it was decided that the debate would be held at James's university, following previous debates held once each at our respective universities, but by no means annually. So, what were the issues? The first main issue was location and access. The Nagoya area has numerous universities, but neither of ours are ideally located, being respectively in the north east (his) and south east outskirts (mine). With most public transport radiating from the centre, that really necessitated the use of cars. The second issue was timing. Although

universities in Japan follow a generally similar timetable, there were still issues to cope with. While we both had our regular classes on Wednesday mornings, the times were different. At my university, there is the rather typical setting aside of Wednesday afternoons for meetings (faculty) and club activities (students). (As many teachers will know, the latter are central to many students' lives.) On the particular date chosen, some students also had to get back for a meeting connected with a later teaching practice period. James was able to come to an agreement with another teacher in a Media Studies reading class to use that class time for the debate. The third issue was team selection. While James used a hybrid system of teacher recommendations and student voting to chose the strongest students, I had a more "mixed bag", as, logistically, we could not take the whole class. Therefore, my teams (two teams of four, plus a standby person for each team) were made up of those who had not already taken part in a debate (basically compulsory) and those who particularly wanted to go and who did not have conflicting appointments. The debate was scheduled in our 15th class in both cases, but I still had one more class (16th), which I made voluntary for those who went to the inter-university debate. The fourth issue was topic and proposition selection. In the weeks leading up to the debate, James' s students first offered a list of possible propositions on accessible themes. My students selected five of them in order and a collective final decision was made. We thus decided to have two debates on the following propositions:

1. "Smoking should be banned in all public buildings in Japan."
2. "The legal drinking age in Japan should be lowered to 18 years old."

For each proposition two members handled the affirmative speech and two the refutation, partly to reduce time pressure. The final issue was judging. Obviously, it was easier for teachers at the debate site (one full-time and one part-time) to fill this role. As you will see, any doubts about impartiality were dispelled by the results.

Debate Day

So, what happened on the day? Nine of us and myself arrived in two cars, plus one (more sweatily) by underground and bus. The host students welcomed us and after opening remarks from the student MCs (a role which also offers useful experience) and James, the first stage speeches (five minutes each for positive and negative speeches) for the first resolution were immediately followed by those for the second resolution, allowing the team concerned with the former to start on their refutation speeches as soon as possible, to shorten the break time. Although this was subsequently longer than the planned five minutes, as necessitated by the undoubted challenge of rapidly responding to at least somewhat unexpected arguments, we remained basically on schedule. There was another five minutes maximum for each of the refutation speeches. After a brief discussion, the judges tied one debate and gave the other to my students. All students were presented with a certificate with their name. Although a small point, it offered a welcome degree of 'validation'. I gave the final words, completing a balance between our institutions.

What were the final benefits for the students? As I indicated in my final words to the audience and debaters, both my students and I were impressed by the abilities of the opposing teams. The results were close. From my memory, the opponents performed the best among the three debate sessions we have had over the years. It appeared that this event had motivated everybody and we looked forward to the next session, hopefully one year on. In addition, the teams had benefited from a wider range of feedback from judges other than their regular teachers concerning their strengths and weaknesses. My personal wish is to look more closely at the strategies and dynamics of such debates and I hope to contribute an article on this to a future issue of *Mask & Gavel.*

In conclusion, both James and I would strongly recommend that you consider the challenge of such an inter university joint-debate if you are able to find willing participants. If you are near enough to us geographically, why not join us?

With particular thanks to Douglas Jarrell and Melissa Senga in their roles as judges.

Encouraging Flourishing:
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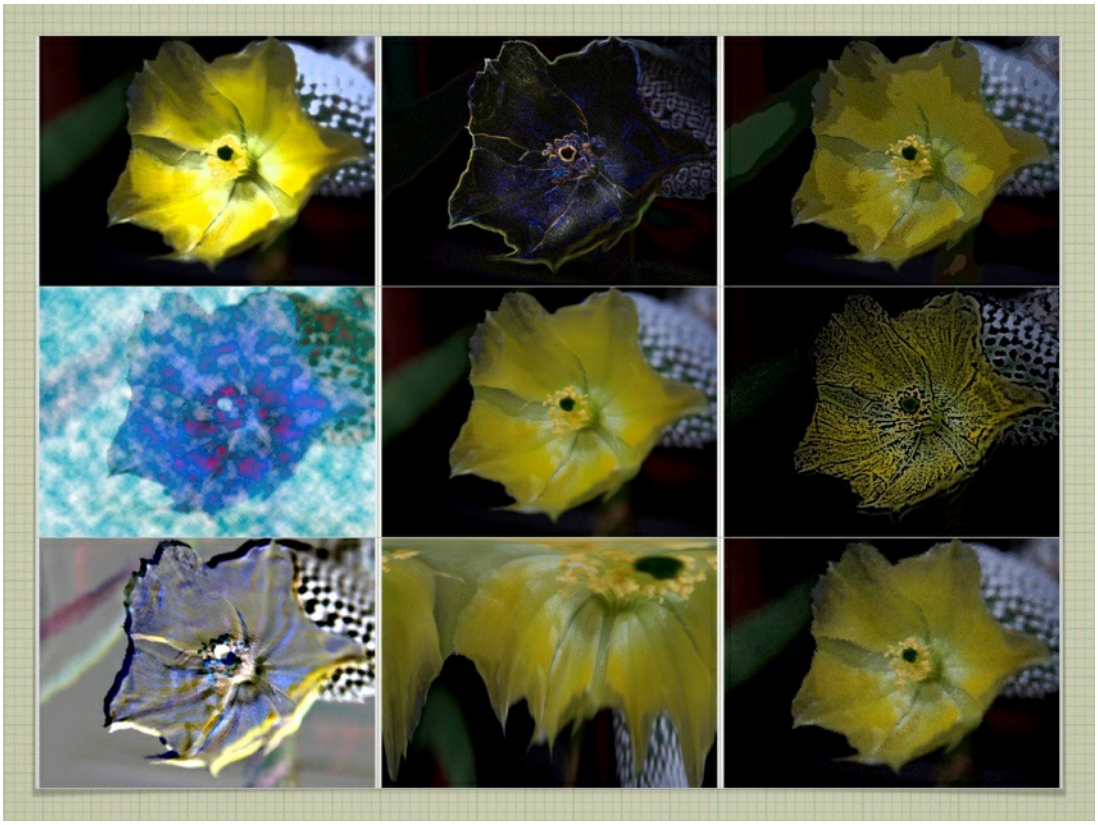


TOKYO ETJ (ENGLISH TEACHERS IN JAPAN) EXPO AND BOOK FAIR MINI CONFERENCES OF JALT LIFELONG LANGUAGE LEARNING SIG; SPEECH, DRAMA & DEBATE SIG; AND JALT'S WEST TOKYO CHAPTER

DATES & TIME: NOVEMBER 3RD AND 4TH; 9:00 AM - 6:30 PM
LOCATION: KANDA INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES, BUILDING NO. 3, UCHIKANDA 2-13-13 CHIYODA-KU, TOKYO 101-8525

In conjunction with The 2012 Tokyo ELT Expo and Book Fair, JALT's Lifelong Language Learning Special Interest Group (LLL-SIG); the Speech, Drama & Debate Special Interest Group (SDD-SIG); and the West Tokyo Chapter of JALT will sponsor a strand of presentations on the topics of speech, drama, and debate. Comprehensive displays of the latest ELT materials for children and adults will be available throughout the two days of the conference as well.

We invite proposals for papers, workshops, performances, or panel discussions on the topics: drama, speech, or debate, particularly in the context of lifelong learning.

Submissions should be made to:
< getumwhiletheylast@gmail.com >.

The deadline for submissions is: July 25, 2012.

We will notify everyone who has submitted a proposal by August 25th, or sooner, about its status.

GUIDELINES: You are required to submit the following...

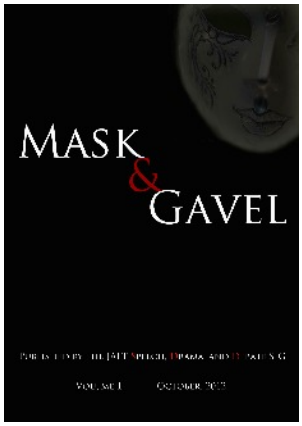
Title: 12 words or fewer.

Summary: [What is printed in the conference handbook] 50-75 words.

Abstract: [What is seen by those doing the vetting. It may be sent out to potential participants over the SIGs' mailing lists or FaceBook pages as well] 150-200 words.

Bio data: [within 50 words]

Indicate your preference for presenting on Saturday, November 3rd or Sunday, November 4th; morning or afternoon. We cannot guarantee that your preference will be honored, but we will do everything in our power to fulfill your wishes. If you plan to use a computer for your presentation, you should bring your own laptop. If you require amplified sound, you will need to bring your own portable speakers as well. The room will be equipped with a projector and screen.



Call for Papers for *Mask & Gavel*, the publication of the Speech, Drama, and Debate SIG

We are now open for submissions for the second edition of *Mask and Gavel,* a peer-reviewed publication of the Speech, Drama, and Debate SIG. We welcome the following kinds of submissions:

1. Research articles on topics connected to the themes of our SIG, speech, drama and debate. (For submission guidelines please refer to the guidelines for the Feature Articles section of *The Language Teacher*.) Submissions for research articles will be read by two referees who will make a decision on whether the article can be accepted for publication, as is or with rewriting.

2. Practical or opinion articles on topics connected to the themes of our SIG. (For submission guidelines please refer to the guidelines for the Reader's Forum section of *The Language Teacher*.)

3. Conference, workshop, and book reviews. (For submission guidelines please refer to the guidelines for the Conference Reports section of *The Language Teacher*.)

Submission guidelines for *The Language Teacher* can be found at <***http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/submissions***>.

Submissions should be sent to the editor, James Venema at <james.venema@gmail.com>.