

Making Your Own Teaching Materials

A summary by Ingrid Zwaal (Jeonju National Univ. of Ed.) of her Sept. 4 Chapter monthly meeting presentation.

There are two problems with ready-made materials: The first is the cost – they can be very expensive. The second is that the material does not always address your exact needs. So I started making my own teaching materials. At my first KOTESOL meeting, I learned about cloze listening using pop music. Back then the Internet was in its infancy, so I transcribed every word. It was very time-consuming. Now you can just search for any song on the Internet, copy it, replace some words with blanks, and you have an easily made activity. It's good for older students but not for my young learner classes. It's good for grade 6 students because they like music, but they think they are too cool to sing or chant in class anymore.

The first game I made for my young learner classes was a concentration board that hung on the blackboard. I made pockets with cut off envelopes so I could place the cards in them and control everything. The next year, I worked for a university that invested in games. They spent a lot of money on simple boards with 5-6 alphabet letters repeated 5-6 times on each board. There were colors on the boards to practice, too. The students liked them. I used them for names, sounds, and making words for each letter depending on the students' levels. There were also small concentration cards with the alphabet on them. But what they didn't have were cards matching upper-case and lower-case letters. I ended up making those cards myself. They were simple: I cut up thin cardboard and used my own writing. They might not have been beautiful, but they were effective.

My coworker at my next job introduced me to Elizabeth Claire (*ESL Teacher's Activities Kit*) and Jill Hadfield (*Elementary Communication Games*). My students

needed to practice past tense and future tense, so we changed Claire's Go Fish game cards by retyping and pasting over the original present continuous sentences on photocopies. I changed some of the Hadfield exercises to concentrate on more specific information and listening. It is hard to invent everything I want, so I learned to steal, and if you are going to steal, steal from the best materials makers!

The cards were a great way to drill sentences for structure and fluency in a very enjoyable way. I never had to urge my students to speak faster - they did so naturally because they wanted to play more, and the repetition gave them practice. So, we started to think of other childhood cards games and how we could use them to practice more English. The card game Crazy Eights became Crazy Prepositions. For an example, take a look at <http://genkienglish.net/theonecardgame.htm>. Snap, dominoes, I Doubt It – they all can be used to make games, depending on how easy or difficult you want to make it. Keep in mind that laminating with each set having a different colored back makes it easier to reuse the cards and to put found missing cards back into the pack they belong in. If you cannot draw, try using the pictures from Andrew Wright's *1000+ Pictures for Teachers*. You can get your students to draw or color for you, too. If you don't have a laminator, many printing shops and stationery stores will do the laminating.

These are only a few suggestions. Find-a-Words, Bingo with instructions, Find Someone Who..., there are a lot of ideas out there. Take them, and make them your own. And don't be afraid to share them with others. If you share your materials with others, they will share their materials with you!

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■ Joining Korea TESOL

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Paper membership application and renewal forms are available at Chapter meetings for those who prefer making a hard-copy application.

Membership payment may be made by:

- Bank transfer to **KOTESOL**, Korea Exchange Bank account number: 630-006952-841
- Payment to the Chapter Membership Officer at a Chapter Meeting

Creating a Sizzling Language Classroom Environment

A summary by Prof. Grace Wang, Yonsei University, of the presentation she gave at the September 4 Chapter Meeting.

What makes an English language classroom environment sizzle? That is, could make it so motivating and interactive that students would want to come to class in anticipation of using English, choosing to play with the language on their own without being told to speak it? We consider seven interrelated principles drawn from adult and language learning literature, and how they may be applied to create a highly motivating classroom environment for university and adult learners. These principles are: (a) Safety, (b) Sound Relationship, (c) Sequence and Reinforcement, (d) Immediacy, (e) Teamwork, (f) Intrinsic Motivation, and (g) Interlanguage Development. They seem to hold the keys to unleashing the energy for learning within classrooms, which makes it possible for students to become more active, motivated and self-driven in their learning.

Safety

Students need a safe learning environment for them to become energetic and motivated in their learning. A feeling of safety develops when students of university age are able to trust in the competence of: (i) the program, (ii) the teacher, and (iii) the feasibility of the objectives.

Sound Relationship

Students need to be in a sound relationship with their teacher, involving mutual respect, open communication and listening. Sound relationships are built when time and attention is given to rapport-building between the teacher and the students. A tone of mutual respect is required as well as genuine dialogue.

Sequence and Reinforcement

Students need a sequence of learning opportunities that does not overwhelm them, as well as regular reinforcement of what they have learned in varied and interesting ways. Good sequencing ensures that learning activities progress from the easy to difficult, simple to complex, familiar to unfamiliar, group efforts to solo efforts, etc. Adequate reinforcement ensures that there is enough repetition of new content in interesting and engaging ways so that the students can arrive at a sense of comfort and familiarity with it.

Immediacy

Students become motivated when they can see that what they are learning is really useful for a perso-

nally meaningful context or situation. Interest rises if students can realize that what they are learning in the classroom can immediately be used outside the classroom. This principle is closely tied to that of intrinsic motivation. When students are able to see the relevance of what they are learning to their own interests and needs, their motivation to make the effort for learning increases.

Teamwork

Students learn better when they can work in pairs or groups with people they can trust. Encouraging or allowing students to work in pairs and small groups with classmates they know and trust can help build a sense safety and community for them. Through teamwork, the classroom environment thus becomes more supportive and less alienating for the students.

Intrinsic Motivation

Students need to find their own motivation for learning that arises from their individual needs, wants or desires. This principle respects the right of students to be engaged in learning activities that fulfill their needs rather than those of the teacher or learning institution. It underscores the importance of conducting student learning needs assessments to inform university course curriculums. Students are encouraged to discover their own reasons for learning and set personal goals and, as a result, become more self-directed and empowered as decision makers of their own learning.

Interlanguage Development

Students need to be allowed to progress through their stages of interlanguage development unhampered by negative influences. Interlanguage is the second language system that a learner creates, operates by, and continually revises while moving from the point of 'zero knowledge' of a foreign language towards complete mastery of the foreign language. At any stage in language learning and development, the student is progressing through and performing at a certain stage of interlanguage development. Interlanguage is a legitimate system of language that the learner continually reworks and adjusts to attain closer and closer approximations of the target language. Thus, by seeing students as interlanguage developers in their own right, teachers are better able to accept their imperfect language production as being a part of a constructive process.

Gwangju-Jeonnam KOTESOL Outreach Workshop

- Time: Saturday, October 2, 2010, 1:30 p.m.
- Place: Suncheon National University, Student Union Building (Building 5), 3rd Floor, Institute of International Affairs and Language Studies, Room 305; Suncheon City

Schedule

- 1:30 pm: Registration and Welcome (Admission free.)
- 2:00 pm: Plenary Presentation: **Teaching With Songs and Chants**
Sara Davila (KTT Presenter; Kyungil University, Daegu)
- 3:00 pm: Presentation 1a: **Vocabulary Learning: More Than Just Memorization**
Allison Bill (Jeonju-North Jeolla Chapter; Jeonju University)
Presentation 1b: **Adapting to English Language Teaching in Korea**
Sabel Lee (Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter; Gwangju City Hall)
- 4:00 pm: Presentation 2a: **Using Video in the Elementary Classroom for Reflective Teaching**
Faith Fishley (Chapter Membership Coordinator; Suncheon National University)
Brian Thomas (Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter; Yonggang Elementary School, Gwangyang)
Presentation 2b: **Developing as a Teacher**
David Shaffer (Chapter President; Chosun University)
- 5:00 pm: Teaching Idea & Activity Share-time: Everyone
Bring your activities/ideas to share with us (about 3-5 min. each)
- 5:20 pm: Announcements
Book Drawing
Closing

Upcoming Chapter Events

November 13. Chapter Monthly Meeting

1. *Teaching Collocations*
James Bland (Chosun University)
2. *Tips for Teaching Young Learners*
David E. Shaffer (Chapter President, Chosun U.)
3. Annual Business Meeting: Election of Officers

December 11. Student Symposium

- Student Perspectives on ELT in Korea*
1. Learning English: The Secondary School Years
 2. Autonomous Learning Practices
 3. Learning English from NESTs
 4. Teaching English as an English Learner

Upcoming KOTESOL Events

October 16-17, 2010.

2010 PAC—KOTESOL Internat'l Conference
Advancing ELT in the Global Context
Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul
Saturday lunchtime: Visit our Chapter room.

October 17, 2010, 4 pm.

KOTESOL Annual Business Meeting
Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul

November 13, 2010.

The 15th Annual Jeonju-North Jeolla Chapter KOTESOL Drama Festival
Jeonju University, Jeonju

November 27, 2010.

Daejeon-Chungcheong Chapter Thanksgiving Conference and Dinner
Language Teaching in the 21st Century
Hoseo University, Cheonan, Chungnam