

Developing Communication and Self-Study Skills in the CALL Room: A Study Abroad Preparatory Course

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(Received on October 10, 2000)

I. Introduction

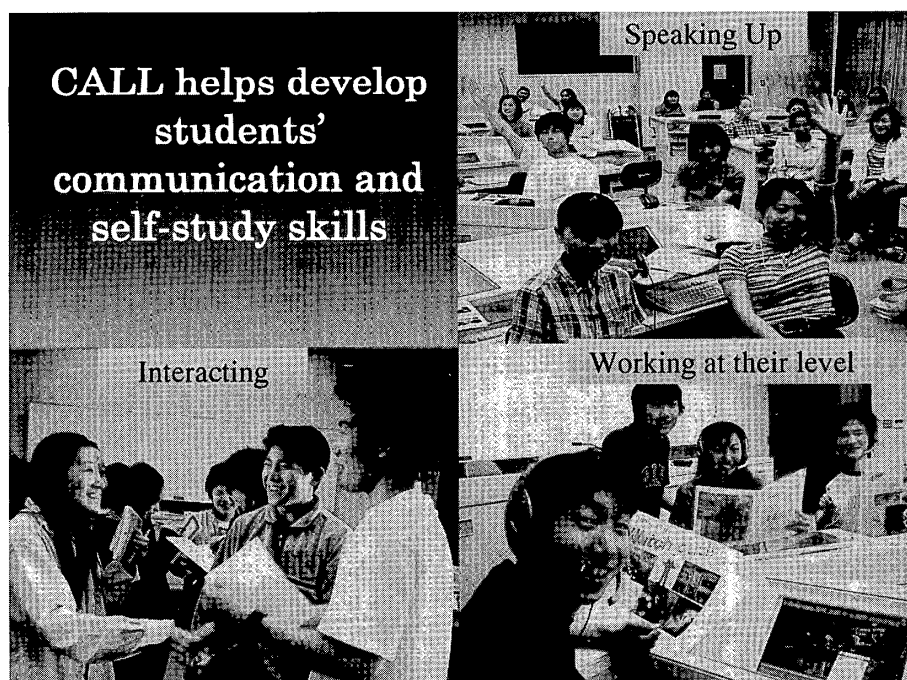
This paper concerns the use of a multimedia classroom — a computer-assisted language laboratory (CALL) — for the development of interactive/communication skills. It focuses on the importance of motivation and consequent self-study. In order to illustrate my points, I will use some stills from the MPEG clips I developed using MPEG 1 and non-linear editing systems. Some of the MPEG clips mentioned in this paper and many others are available on the web at <http://comm.shudo-u.ac.jp/campus/auszemi.files/frame.htm>.¹⁾

A new multimedia classroom was completed at Shudo University just in time for the 1999–2000 school year. It features state-of-the-art computers as well as audio and mini-disk recording systems. The students work at six hexagonally-shaped islands; each island accommodates six students. Now sometimes teachers think of CALL as being limited to having students work at these computers and being given questions via programmed instruction; that is, students will work to answer questions and, depending on the answer, be guided to various parts of the program. The teacher's job then is simply to ensure that the students are working. This leads to doubt about the usefulness of such a facility.

However, the relatively passive image of the CALL room did not materialize in my experience and, in fact, I found far different uses that led to developing students' communication skills.

Based on my use of this room to prepare some students for study at a U.S. university, I found it extremely helpful in building their interactive/communication skills. Informal assessments of these students by native English speakers suggested a real change in their ability and desire to use English; for example, a greater exchange of ideas and increased productivity resulted from a heightened enthusiasm for conversation.

Prior to this, I had taught the same preparatory study abroad course for two years without CALL. The students in those classes and this one exhibited motivation superior to students in



ordinary compulsory English courses. However, the students who used the CALL room were found to be the most motivated of the three groups. The motivation was assessed in terms of the number of self-study hours the students voluntarily put in and the English-speaking faculty's informal observation of the students' productivity.

Despite these promising results, there is still much to be learned about the best way to employ the facilities provided. For example, what language skills can best be learned using these facilities? And what is the best way to use the facilities to teach these skills? The major purpose of this paper is to begin to answer such questions based on my recent and continuing experience in using the CALL room. I will focus on some of the things I have done thus far and then make some suggestions for exploiting the CALL room's potential even more. I will be addressing 1) who my students were, 2) what my English language learning goals for them were, and 3) how these goals became the basis for developing teaching materials and a multimedia course of study using CALL.

II. Who Are the Students?

2.1 *The Course*

My course is one of the Preparatory Study Abroad Classes at Hiroshima Shudo University (HSU). It is for students in the American Overseas Seminar (AOS) set up between Arizona

State University (ASU) and HSU, especially planned for the second- through fourth-year students in the Faculties of Commercial Sciences and Economic Sciences.²⁾

I teach the class in the first semester, and another teacher takes over the class in the second semester. An English conversation course taught by a native English-speaking teacher is also offered concurrently for the two consecutive semesters of the year. For example, there were 30 students in this class in the 1997 school year. Twenty-seven of them were going to the seminar at ASU for five weeks at the end of the Japanese school year in February and March. The remaining three had already attended the program but wished to take the course again even though they would not get credit for it.

2.2 *Student Readiness in English*

All the students in the course had chosen to participate in the program themselves, and they came to the class hoping to improve their English. However, the backgrounds of the students in this class were varied with some majoring in business management, others in economics or marketing, and others in computer sciences. In general, the number of English classes they had taken differed from student to student, and there was a wide range of abilities in comprehension and speaking abilities.

First-year students are required to take two English courses and most second-year students take only one or two. However, there are no required English courses after the second year, so third- and, even more so, fourth-year students are likely to lose some of their already minimal English knowledge and skills. On the other hand, in this class a few students had taken extra elective English courses. One of the new participants had even visited the States, but others had never been abroad, and some of them had never even set foot outside Hiroshima. Therefore, they required attention not only in terms of language but also in fostering their adaptability to life abroad. The difference in ability was kept in mind when planning and carrying out the activities throughout the course.

Therefore, in order to achieve the greatest improvement in the limited time, special care was needed. In order to help the students keep interested in studying, it was extremely important that the lessons in this preparatory course be closely tied to what would be expected of them during the AOS program. I will explain the special features and outline of the study abroad program in the next section.

2.3 Addressing the Students' Learning Environment


For the students, the ability to study on their own was rather limited due to their part-time jobs. Although the AOS has been one of the most affordable study-abroad programs I am aware of, students still have to earn money for the program. This program has an advantage over other programs in that the cost is within the ability of the students to pay themselves with minimal external financial aid, so students with limited financial support who wish to study abroad choose this program. They work during summer and winter vacations and also work part time during the semester to meet the expenses. It was extremely important to try to make the lessons interesting so that, as part of the course, students would want to make time to study on their own, despite its being the busiest time of their lives. The advice from the three experienced students was both timely and helpful in maintaining their classmates' motivation.

III. Special Features of the AOS Program

The Shudo students joining the AOS program complete their five-week residency program

Basic Principle of the American Overseas Seminar

- * The curriculum is based on the educational principle "live and learn"
 - From the classroom to face-to-face experiences
 - Study tours to 20+ sites
 - Many opportunities for interaction with the American people



*Don't worry.
You're doing great!*

Putting knowledge into practice

at the American English and Culture Program (AECF) at ASU from February through March. One of the most important features of the AOS is that the curriculum is based on the educational principle of “live and learn.” What students learn in the classroom is enhanced through various face-to-face experiences of their own. Students have many opportunities for interaction with ASU roommates, ASU teachers and students, and American families.³⁾

3.1 *Class Size and Teachers*

There are no more than 14 students per class to ensure that the students are able to receive highly-personalized instruction and close supervision. The teachers are all full-time ESL teachers at AECF, ASU. The teachers are an extremely important part of the program.

In the past, when the students were asked to nominate their favorite part of the program, they all chose the “wonderful teachers” to be No. 1. The students, no doubt, appreciated what good listeners their teachers were. The teachers always listened to what their students were trying to say with patience and good humor. The teachers’ great intercultural empathy was evident throughout the program, especially at the beginning when a great deal of adjustment and revising of teaching materials are necessary. As a result, the students were not afraid of making mistakes and became extremely active in trying to communicate with the teachers and people around them. The students felt and responded to the teachers’ enthusiasm and dedication, and in order to show their appreciation, they often wrote thank-you notes and made sure that they were diligent in doing their homework.

On many of the overseas programs, part-time teachers are hired just for the lessons, and



the teachers go home and are not usually available at any other time. In our program, the teachers are either with the students in class or in their offices. They accompany HSU students on their field trips as well.

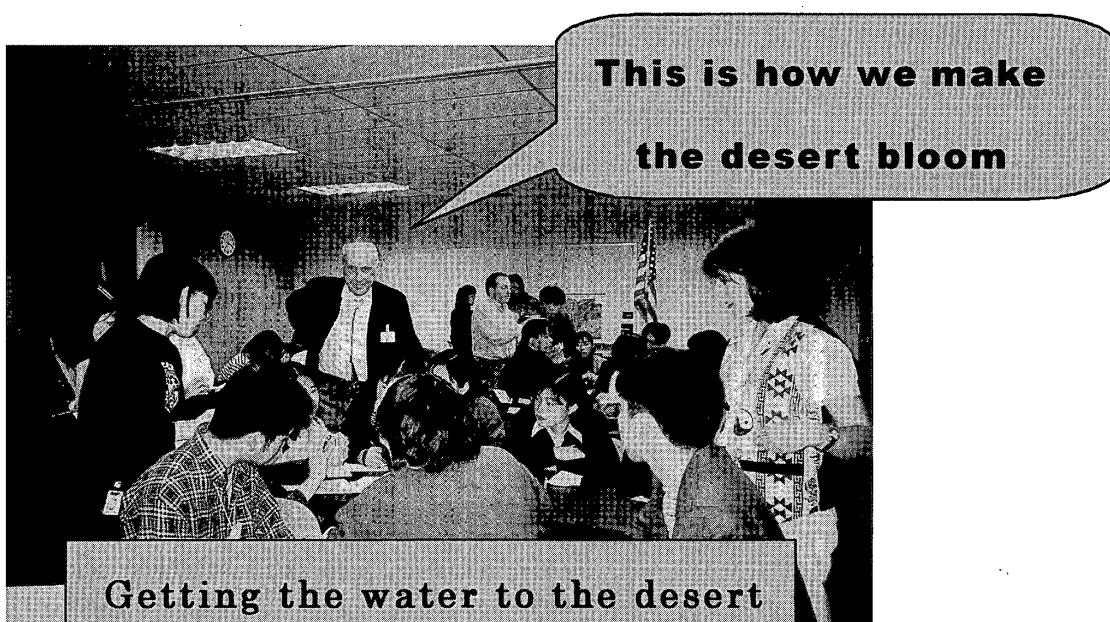
3.2 *Outside Classroom Studying Sites and Activities*

The students study in the morning, and in the afternoon and on weekends, they go on study tours to some 20 sites. A number of these visits are hosted by Arizona businesses providing tours, speakers and other activities. Through these first-hand encounters, the students are given abundant opportunities to improve their cultural understanding and language skills.

3.2.1 Field Trips

The classroom teachers and staff take their students to various sites, driving the vans (minibuses) themselves. At the sites, there are special staff members in charge: for example, managers at corporations or docents (guides) at museums. While the students are receiving explanations from the staff, the teachers accompany their students and, as needed, help them understand. This arrangement makes it possible for the students fully to take advantage of their real encounters with the American people without hesitation. The teachers also drive the students on weekend trips to the Grand Canyon and Mexico.

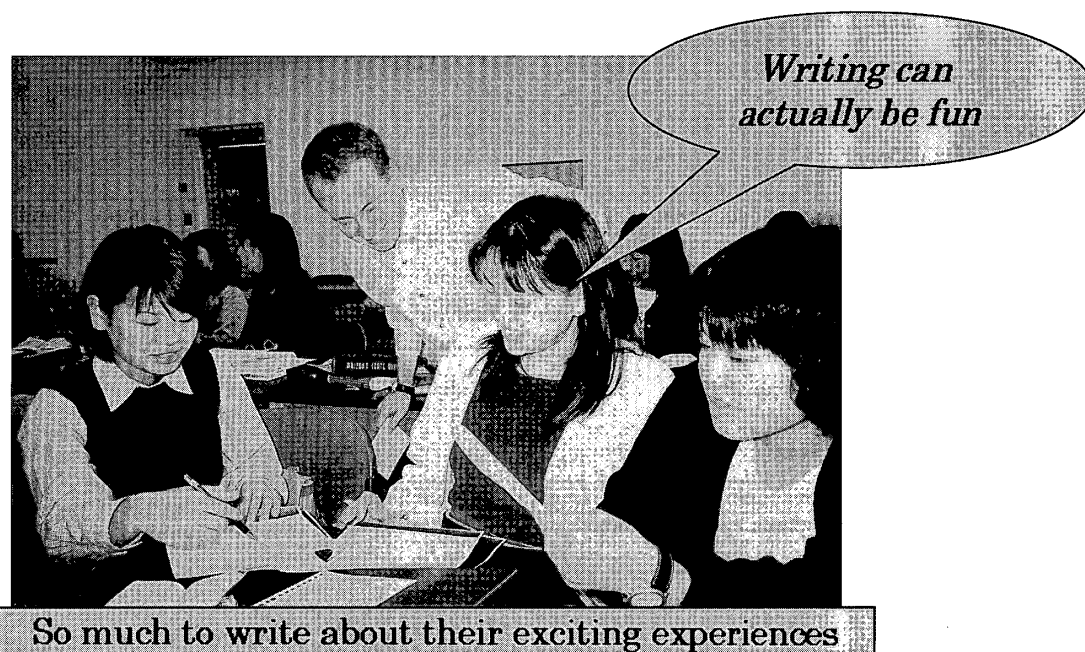
During those trips, students are given worksheets to report on some of their discoveries.



For this, students listen to the speakers attentively, actively asking questions and interacting with the speaker. Teachers then help the students to find further information on these subjects using the Internet when they return to the campus. The students also make full use of e-mail addresses they are given to contact roommates, teachers, etc., to further their understanding and studies. It is noteworthy that the typical scene of students tagging along behind a guide, chatting in Japanese, will not be seen on this AOS program!

3.2.2 Follow-up Activities

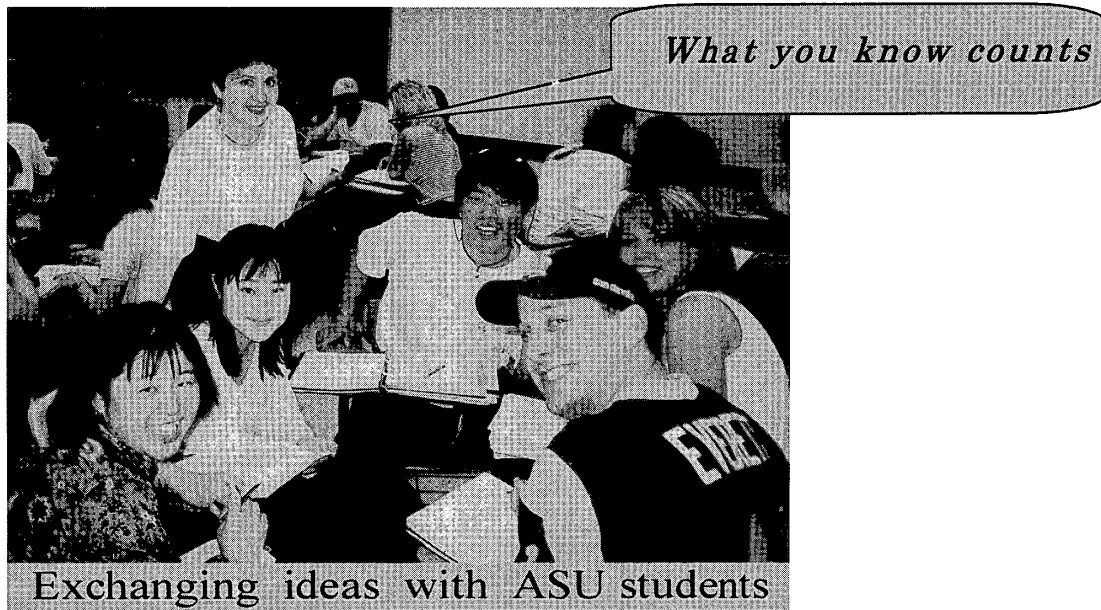
a) Besides answering questions on worksheets, the students are asked to turn in reports and essays. As the students have had little opportunity to write in English prior to this program, these are often challenging tasks for them. However, I have noticed that the students are quite willing to do these assignments and enjoy the opportunities to express themselves in writing. In fact, students look forward to having their reports and essays returned with their teachers' comments and are happy to be able to share their experiences with the teachers they trust and respect.



b) Students also enjoy making oral reports and presentations in small groups in the classroom. In fact, it is delightful to see students looking bright-eyed and enthusiastic, as they recall their memorable experiences.

3.3 *Studying Together with ASU Students*

Unlike most study-abroad programs, this program has students spend several days in regular university classes. They attend Japanese language classes helping American students learn Japanese and, in return, learn English.⁴⁾ Shudo students also attend an International Communication class at ASU.



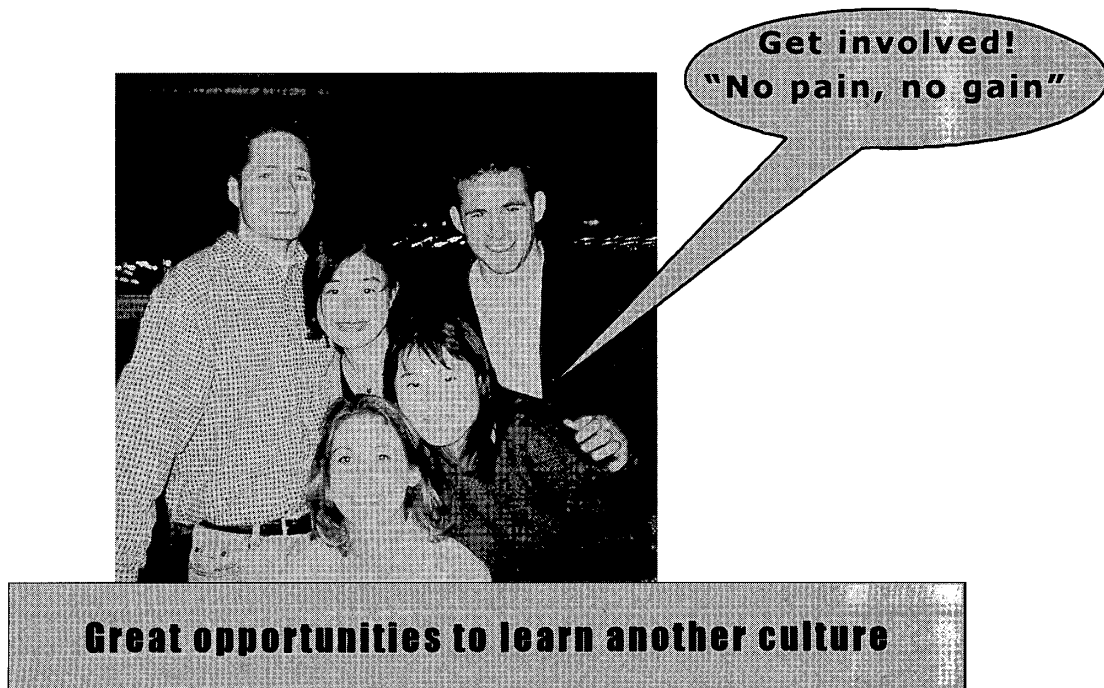
3.4 *Living Arrangements*

3.4.1 *Sharing Dorm Rooms with ASU Students*

Students left alone or put in rooms with other Japanese would just end up only speaking Japanese. For this reason, the students share dorms with ASU students. This is a very meaningful experience for the students, and many have kept in touch with their American roommates after returning to Hiroshima.

This living arrangement is extremely important. In order to make sure that the roommate system works well, one of the jobs of the Shudo teacher accompanying the students to ASU is to be proactive in keeping an open line of communication with each Japanese student regarding how the roommate situation is going. The Shudo teacher and the director of AECF then work closely together to make any adjustment necessary. For this reason, it is important that the teacher accompanying the group be able to communicate easily in both Japanese and English.

Whether in their home country or in the U.S., students tend to be very hesitant about expressing themselves when problems arise. Throughout the program students learn through



these kinds of experiences that expressing their opinions need not be taken as a challenge or complaint and, in fact, that their opinions are sought and respected.

3.4.2 Host Families

After a week at ASU each student has a brief opportunity to stay with a host family.



They stay for just one weekend at the end of their first week, but on occasion some go back for meals or go out with their hosts as “part of the family.” As this is very largely a volunteer activity for the host families, the students see and appreciate the volunteer spirit in which their American families welcome them.

IV. The Goals of the Course

My goals for this preparatory course are for the students to

- 1) improve verbal and non-verbal communication skills,
- 2) develop skills in gathering new information quickly, and
- 3) extend competence in day-to-day interactions.

In order to have the students understand these goals, I used PowerPoint slides and MPEG clips. I developed them using the videos I taped at ASU. They were effective in having students realize the importance of being active both in and out of the classroom.

V. Golden Rules

In order to accomplish these goals, I emphasized four golden rules:

5.1 *Punctuality and Courtesy*

The students are constantly reminded of the importance of punctuality and courtesy. The key phrase for this course is “be on time!” Students should have already acquired these kinds of basic habits and consideration for others. Unfortunately, some still need to be taught to respect their group members and to earn their respect.

This emphasis will be understood when you consider the special features of the AOS program. Based on the “live and learn” educational perspective, almost every day during the five-week period, students go on field trips and expect to meet and interact with American people. There are abundant opportunities, and in order for the students to make the best of the opportunities, they must, at least, show up on time. It is also made clear to the students that should they be late, there is no public transportation in Arizona that they can use to catch up with the others.

5.2 *"The Three-Second Rule"*

A response in any form if made within three seconds gets extra points. Students are encouraged to react in any form whether verbally or non-verbally to their teacher or conversation partners. Reticence is discouraged, and any response is accepted no matter how elementary or childish it may seem at the time.

5.3 *Building Self-Confidence for Active Participation*

Help is provided to overcome shyness or self-consciousness about English. By helping students gain confidence in English, they become able to take part actively both in and out of the classroom. Students are helped to overcome shyness and negative preconceptions about their English and learn not to be afraid of making mistakes. This attitude enables them to make the best of their opportunities in America.

5.4 *Promoting "Independent Access" or "Self-Education"*

Enjoyable and productive classroom activities promote a commitment to independent study. I consider making a habit of self-study to be a crucial point in mastering the target language. No matter how hard we try, what teachers can teach within an hour is obviously very limited compared to the amount of knowledge and skills students can acquire outside the classroom, especially in a real-life environment.

VI. Basic Principles and Practices

With these goals and precepts in mind, I will elaborate on the principles behind them, my strategies, and some of the multimedia resources I used. As for the teaching materials, I developed many MPEG clips using the videos I took at ASU especially for this preparatory course, such as the one below. I used them for reading and listening comprehension. First, the students were to look at them and listen to their soundtracks in English and get information quickly. Then, they shared their findings with their classmates. From the clips, the students realized that they were expected to be very active both in and out of the classroom. They also understood the importance of using English in building relationships with American people.

6.1 *The Teacher as Guide and "Entertainer"*

- Keep students engaged in productive, enjoyable activities.

- Help students realize "English is fun."
- Credit sustained effort for self-expression rather than accuracy.
- Help students to observe contextual clues.
- Use texts in context.

Most of the class time should be spent on learning activities that guide the students toward expressing what they really want to say. The teacher gives students words of encouragement and creates an atmosphere in which they can express themselves with confidence. I don't believe that students will be able to gain good spoken language ability by only drilling on fragments of language which have no context. Students should be given whole and meaningful texts or dialogues in context so that they can learn to work out meanings by making use of their current base of English and their knowledge of the world. This will lead them to improve their strategies to survive in English. Therefore, as little time as is necessary should be spent on studying the correct forms of the language. Students should also be given enough practice to sort out what they have learned as well as to expand and connect it to their own lives and experiences. MPEG clips such as the ones below have been developed for this course based on these principles of learning.

MPEG CLIP TITLE

Watch out!!

Watch this MPEG clip and answer the questions

Keep quiet in the library

The Grand Canyon
one of the seven wonders of the world

spoil the nature

**SMOKING
STRICTLY
PROHIBITED**

The offence carries a
maximum fine of \$500

Be on time!

Watch your step

Use good
hiking shoes

State Flower Saguaro

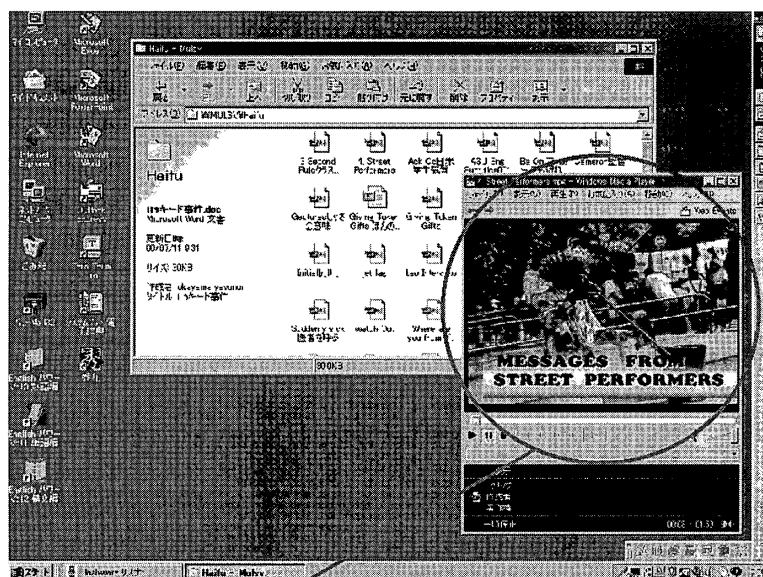
6.2 Concerns for Students' Anxieties

- Recognize students' reluctance to speak.
- Give them "excuses" to open their mouths first.
- Use bilingual materials as learning aids (e.g., Japanese translations of summaries and English subtitles on MPEG clips).

The teacher should be aware that however great the students' hopes for learning spoken English might be, some students may still experience frustration. Their previous education is likely to have been limited to desk- and book-bound learning. There are even those who have never heard authentic English. There is still another reason why Japanese students hesitate to give voice to their ideas. All Japanese are to some extent conditioned not to speak their minds openly. They are often silenced by the thought "What would they think of me?" I paid special attention to this cultural aspect and have tried to free the students from their uneasiness by adhering to the above principles and practices.

One of the class activities which helped to overcome the students' reluctance to speak was a scheme whereby the students earned dollars that were deposited to their 'Okuda International

How to Open the Materials to be Studied by the Student



7 of 7
(707)

The clip window pops up 画面がでます。

Exchange Bank' accounts. They earned these dollars by speaking up, especially for breaking the ice. The dollars were then converted into grade points. As a result, the students who kept silent found themselves feeling embarrassed, so they began actively to participate.

The students' native language should not play an important role in teaching a foreign language. However, as I have described above, students' English abilities are diverse, and some may feel alienated or stressed from not being able to comprehend. It is important to keep in mind that there are students who need Japanese support to some extent. If students have to leave the class uncertain what is expected of them, their stress will be too great, or they will be too downhearted to do any further work on their own.

Therefore, I do not forbid the use of the Japanese language altogether in English classes. The students' native language can be an asset if it is used in such a way that students' interest and joy of studying are sustained. For example, among the materials appreciated by the students were bilingual summaries both in English and Japanese.

6.3 *Respect for Different Cultures*

- Help students be ready to meet new people without inhibition. Then, they can learn a great deal.
- Be aware of students' feelings of frustration or threats to their status in new environments.
- Teach respect for different cultures.

On the AOS program, the Shudo students have many opportunities to meet people from all over the world and Americans with different ethnic backgrounds. This is an opportunity for the students not only to learn from the host culture, but also to share their personal interests and their knowledge of life in Japan with their ASU conversation partners. However, most Shudo students have never had a chance to meet a person from a different cultural background.

Considering the gaps in the social context between people from different cultures, it is essential to teach students how to deal with their feelings of frustration or emotional barriers and to respect and attempt to understand different cultures. I use a number of MPEG clips to introduce to the students different ethnic cultures in the United States.

VII. Motivational Features of MPEG Clips

- In every lesson, an attractive, wide range of clips on different topics can be made avail-

able for the students.

- These clips can be made to serve different levels of English proficiency and confidence.
- Students can experience “authentic English” by enlarging, freezing, or repeating screens as needed.

I have developed some 150 MPEG clips so far to meet students’ needs and English proficiency levels.⁵⁾ Some of them are on the same topic but of differing content.

The students had several choices to make about the topic or level they wanted to work on. For example, I made several MPEG clips for the same topic Pharmacy:

- 1) a short clip for the students at the intermediate level;
- 2) the same clip with English subtitles which I typed in when editing the clip;
- 3) a clip using some news programs in English; and
- 4) the same clip with a Japanese soundtrack for the students who need help outside the classroom. It was up to the students to choose which clips they wanted to study. Some started out with the easiest ones and then changed to the ones at the intermediate level. Some even challenged themselves by beginning with the most difficult ones.

These choices were useful in freeing students from the fear of making grammatical errors. They were also useful in having students pay closer attention to the content-oriented studies. The clips are all in natural English, and the students were free to go back to the CALL to review and work more as needed. If they needed some Japanese support, for some of the clips the students were able to click on Japanese soundtracks.

The impact of the MPEG clips on the students was amazing. Their eyes were glued to the screen. Of all the techniques I used to help the students to meet their learning goals, it was this medium itself that made the biggest difference. More importantly students were well motivated to do follow-up activities and individual studies outside their usual class hours.



VIII. Fostering Students' "Self-Study" and "Self-Education"

- Foster self-study abilities that allow students to gain knowledge on their own, especially, from real life situations.
- Give students many opportunities to read for both purpose and pleasure.

One of the most important goals in this course is to foster, within each student, the commitment to individual study. I believe it is crucial to help students develop good self-study habits. What can be taught during the classroom time is obviously very limited. Therefore, while striving to develop the students' interactive/communication skills in a productive and fun environment, I also try to give them the skills and motivation they need for self-study. Strategies employed to this end were, in short:

- 1) paying close attention to the students' psychological states;
- 2) creating a productive learning environment which could extend beyond the classroom; and
- 3) making the content of learning materials and teaching methods flexible to match the students' rates of progress and personal interests.

Towards this end I had a variety of materials ready for them in both a Class Preparation Room and the CALL. Students use these rooms to listen to and view materials of interest to them. The most popular materials among them are American movies with English closed captions and English soundtracks (that is, both voice and captions are in English.) I provide the students with a large selection of movies. The students look forward to going to the rooms and checking out new movies because many of them are not yet available in Japanese theatres. They are also encouraged by the practice in which these self-study hours were logged and deposited to their 'bank accounts.'

When deciding which movies to watch, the students read through the file of critical reviews, written in English, of the available movies. The students read these without suffering through the strain and effort some of them think they have to put into 'studying' English. That is, they were committing themselves to meaningful reading in order to meet some purpose. Such study encourages the students to pursue their own interests, which can develop a feeling of confidence and justified sense of accomplishment.

Students Making Good Use of the Class Preparation Room

The Most Motivated Students Awards

1. First place (41.3 prep hours per semester)
2. Second place (41 prep hours per Semester)
3. Third place (17 hours per Semester)

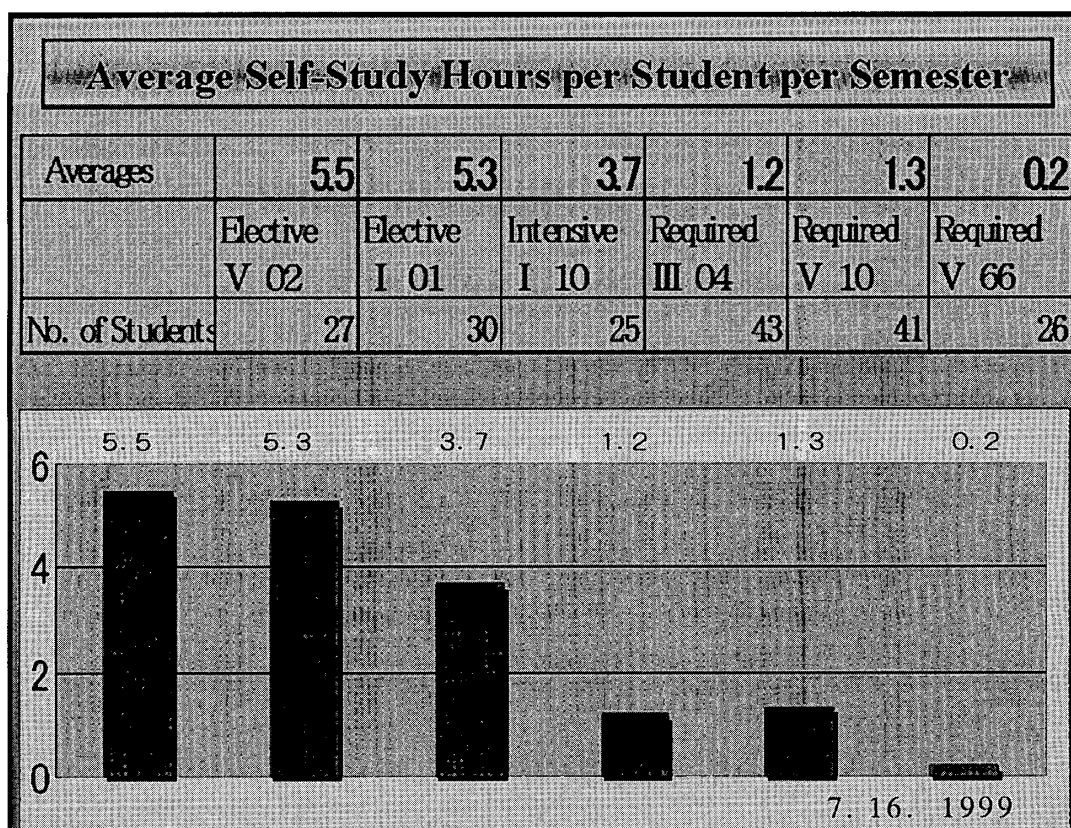


IX. Self-Study Hours for Maintaining Motivation

In addition to the study abroad preparatory course under discussion, I taught another non-AOS course in the CALL. During the same semester, I also taught four other required courses in a traditional language laboratory, a room with individualized audio-visual machines but without computer equipment.

All these classes were encouraged to pursue their studies beyond their class hours. A record was kept of the number of hours students used videos outside class in the Class Preparation Room. In terms of the average total number of recorded self-study hours, the study abroad preparatory class scored the highest, and the other class taught in the CALL scored the second highest.⁶⁾

However, the high recorded level of self-study may not be conclusive evidence that the students of the study abroad program course have become more motivated as a result of teaching using the multimedia facilities. It may suggest that through familiarity with multimedia resources in class, the students are comfortable with using these resources by themselves outside class.



X. A Scene from the Class

After having taught a few classes, in order to improve my teaching I asked students to write suggestions. The students were assured that, just as on the AOS program, their opinions were sought and respected. They wrote their opinions and suggestions freely, and one of the things they wanted to do was to interact with students from other classes. Perhaps they enjoyed interacting so much that they wanted to try out their skills with people other than classmates. Luckily, we were able to invite some students who were studying American culture.

To make the joint-study class fun, a role-playing game was planned. The students imagined they were meeting their unknown friends (the culture class) at an airport in Arizona and welcoming them to ASU. For the first meeting, they made name tags for themselves and for a friend from the other class. They went to the door to meet their friend 'at the airport.' After that they reverted back to our classroom in Hiroshima, and they became teachers showing their guests what they had learned in our class.

This role reversal, giving each student a chance to act as a 'teacher,' encouraged them

thoroughly to review what they had studied. The students came to the class well prepared to open efficiently the computer files with commands in English, including correct pronunciation, in the material. They also made sure that they could explain important manners involved in making requests. As a result the students looked very proud of themselves for having accomplished something.

Various multimedia resources were also developed based on lectures by teachers who visited our classes.⁷⁾ The students were required to write summaries of visiting professors' stories or insights on the week following each of those visits. For example, the professor from the culture class gave a lecture about his experience with a recent rain storm. In order to help students improve their comprehension ability, the taped videos of these visits were made available. Whenever they chose, they could watch them in the Class Preparation Room in order to improve their reports, and self-study hours were added to their 'bank accounts.'

XI. Conclusion

In my teaching, it is my view that language learning is not merely an acoustic and muscular process nor a process which can be accomplished by the inculcation of rules. It is a 'total human experience' that goes beyond the simple act of memorizing correct forms. As some scholars, such as Earl Stevick, advocate, I believe that the deeper the source of a sentence lies within the students' personality, the more lasting value it has for learning a foreign language. From this standpoint I have placed an emphasis on personal and interpersonal significance of the practice activity.

So far I have outlined goals and principles that I believe are important for effective language learning. In my experience multimedia facilities have shown great potential for meeting these goals. However, we have just begun to understand how best to employ this new technology. A further purpose of this paper then is to spark additional investigation into the use of multimedia facilities for language teaching and learning.

Although I have painted a positive picture of my use of the multimedia classroom, there are certainly some problems or drawbacks. One of them is sudden equipment breakdown. For example, if several students arrive late to class, and materials have to be sent to them one after the other using a program such as Flashware, this sometimes cause the system to freeze up.

While we continue to iron out the wrinkles in the system, an all-out effort should be exerted to teach students important basic habits such as punctuality. No matter how innova-

tive or creative the teaching materials may be, the students' cooperation with regard to punctuality and self-study is essential for successful class management and, therefore, learning, especially in the multimedia classroom.

Another big concern is the lack of funds to buy commercially developed materials, especially CD ROM-based multi-level teaching materials with movie clips. The cost of this material is very high since we need one for each student computer. As I have stated above, one of the outstanding features of the multimedia room is that we can make it possible to meet all students' needs and levels. However, it is to be understood that in order to make it possible, we need an attractive and wide range of materials on different topics and levels. Without these, multimedia equipment is only a set of useless empty boxes. If we cannot afford to buy commercially-developed materials, we have to develop them ourselves, and this takes a great amount of time and talent. The students' response and learning makes it worth the effort, however. As discussed at FLEAT IV, considering its great potential, I believe it is important for the ESL community to become more involved with and promote the advancement of the use of the multimedia learning environment.

Notes

- 1) Below are the cover pages of the MPEG clips on the homepage at this URL. Getting the right English expressions and subtitles for these MPEG clips was especially important for me, and I would like to thank Profs. Robert Austenfeld and James Ronald for their extremely helpful



advice in this regard. More information about the AOS program shown in these clips in English is provided by the ASU on the web at <http://www.asu.edu/xed/aecp/esl.html> <speical program>. I would also like to thank Tom Cole, Associate Director of AECp, ASU, for setting up the special program homepage. Because of this publicity, the AOS program has been receiving high praise from all quarters.

- 2) As of the 2003–2004 school year, we will be joined by the students of the newly establish Faculty of Human Environmental Studies.
- 3) That this is a great program I can personally attest to because I accompanied 28 HSU students who were participating in the AOS program for five weeks in the 1997–1998 school year. I believe the reason for the program's success is largely due to the wonderful efforts of the ASU people involved. In fact I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the following people:

Mark Rentz, former AECp Program Development Coordinator, for the highly responsive and efficient way he answered my every question during the development of that AOS program. (He is now the Director of AECp, ASU, 1999~present.)

Patrick Christian, for his conscientious attention to the arrangements with the various corporations and other places we visited.

Patrick (again) and Derek Bennett for their very professional and fun teaching methods that were so appreciated by the students.

Gailynn Valdes, then Director of AECp, for her enthusiastic efforts in making the AOS program such a success. In the weekly reports I received from our students at that time, they all wrote about their wonderful experiences and told me how “very, very, very happy” they were. When asked to nominate their favorite part of the program, they all chose “the wonderful teachers” as number one!

Fumiko Foard, an ASU teacher of Japanese, and Erica Schlather, Marketing Coordinator of AECp, for working together so the Shudo students could attend Fumiko's classes and those of some of her colleagues (see Note 3 below). Our students tremendously enjoyed interacting with ASU students in those classes.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the families who allowed the Shudo students to spend their weekends with them. This especially enhanced the students' experiences since they were treated like family during those stays.

As this is an ongoing project, there are always more people to thank for their contributions. Among those, in recent months, I would like to thank Dr. Sybil Thornton of ASU, who during the recent semester teaching as an exchange professor at HSU, has been assisting me in preparing promotional materials for the program. Thanks, too, to Aisha Levine, an exchange student from ASU 2001–2002, for “talking up” the program to our students. We first met her as a student in the ASU Japanese language class we visited in 1998, and she has been an excellent representative of ASU during her year at HSU.

- 4) To make the experience of studying together as meaningful as possible, a project called “key-pals” (similar to pen pals but using e-mail) was started this school year. The ASU coordinator for this project is Fumiko Foard. Her students and our Shudo AOS participants are now eagerly exchanging e-mail messages and enjoying this new experience. This means that even before they arrive at ASU, our students are able to begin gaining knowledge about English and American culture through this e-mail exchange. Of course the ASU participants are able to do the same as far as learning about Japan. Our Shudo students are quite eager to meet their “key pals” in Arizona. This whole experience has been having a very positive effect in terms of maintaining our students' motivation for further study. It is interesting to note that this sort of “real world communications”

has become possible only due to new technological developments. And the teachers involved are more than happy to be able to provide such learning opportunities to the students.

- 5) Below is a list of some MPEG clips that were well received by the students in this course:

Asking Someone to Take Your Picture
Avoiding Theft
Be on Time! But What If You Are Late?
Being Courteous and Expressing Yourself at Home
Being on Your Guard Against Strangers
Describing Your Illness
Differences in Japanese and American Gestures
Giving Token Gifts
If You Have Something Stolen
If You Lose Your Credit Cards
Immigration and Customs
Learning English Rhythm Using Songs
Making Your Thoughts Known
Meeting Host Families
Pronunciation Practice Using Songs and Sign Language -
Respecting Differences
Responding Quickly in Class
Responsible Credit Card Use
Smoking is Prohibited
Speaking Up
The Science of HIV
Use Sunscreen
Watch Out
What You Should Know About Tipping
What's American Food
When You Don't Want to Tip
When You Feel Like Tipping Big
With a Host Family in the Morning and Souvenirs

- 6) According to the statistics at the end of the first semester this school year, the average total number of self-study hours almost doubled in each class. For example, in the study abroad preparatory class, it increased by 222% (H. Okuda 2000).

There are several factors contributing to this increase:

1. allowing one of the LL workers to work on a flextime basis so that the class preparatory and multimedia rooms are available for a longer time,
2. the addition of attractive new American movies to the collection of my videos now numbering over 100,
3. the replacing of the black and white critical reviews of the videos in the file with more attractive color ones; and
4. making videos available at the same time they are released in Japan.

There are some other factors contributing to this positive aspect; however, these I will discuss at a later opportunity.

- 7) In particular I would like to thank Sue Willis, our contract teacher for coming to the class voluntarily as often as she could. She gave the students some ideas about their upcoming life in America.

The students were always excited to have her there, would often ask her to come back, and even sought her out on the campus. Ms. Willis and I shared ideas about how the students were progressing and creative ways to motivate students to learn. Her contribution was especially appreciated as there was much to be learned in the new multimedia environment.

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