
Reports and Summaries

Teacher Workshops--They Really Do Work!

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The Language Institute of Japan (LIOJ) held its 20th consecutive summer workshop for teachers of English as a foreign language in Odawara, Japan, from August 7 to August 12, 1988. This 20th session was an impressive display of dedication to the teaching profession and a very good opportunity for English teachers in the Asian region to exchange ideas.

The annual workshops at LIOJ are organized by Mr. Bob Ruud, Director of LIOJ, and Mr. Nobuhito Seto, General Manager, as part of the Institute's Asia Center's continuing education program for Japanese teachers of English.

Two representatives from Thailand were invited to attend the workshop and to present talks on the TEFL approach used in Thailand. Ajarn Wilai and I had the pleasure of attending, and we both found the workshop to be a valuable experience.

The daily schedule of the workshop began at 8:30 a.m. and ended at 8:30 p.m. By taking part in this non-stop daily regimen of lectures, classes, application workshops, and brainstorming sessions, Ajarn Wilai and I were particularly impressed with the unrelenting efforts of all the participants.

The program consisted of the following:

- Morning lectures presented by specialists in a variety of TEFL areas;
- Morning workshops in which participants could take part in activities and apply the concepts presented in the lectures;
- Language Study Classes, which were sub-divided into specific areas:
 - a. Regular language classes covering a wide variety of ESL techniques, with an emphasis on listening and speaking;
 - b. Specialized language classes covering such areas as discussion skills for "Women in the Workforce" and "Issues of Contemporary Education";
 - c. Writing classes, designed to improve teaching techniques by focusing on "writing as a process".
 - d. Classes covering indirect teaching techniques such as using games with embedded grammar structures and sentence patterns that are commonly used in everyday conversational English;
- Afternoon and evening sessions, on various topics and activities of concern to the participants.

The overall objective of the program was to provide all participants with the opportunity to further develop their expertise in the areas most pertinent to the needs of their institutions.

The Participants

More than 150 language teachers participated in the workshop, and the opening ceremony had a distinct air of enthusiasm and energy. Introductory speeches were given by two participants who have attended 15 out of LIOJ's 20 annual workshops since 1969. This clearly demonstrates the professional value of the annual event. Participants ranged from people in their early 20's to those in their late 60's.

The majority of participants were Japanese, and their quick, clear decisions about which workshops would be of most benefit to their institutions created an active, friendly, and professional atmosphere. Other participants included representatives from Korea, Hong Kong, and the People's Republic of China, as well as from Thailand.

Mr. Masahide Shibusawa, Director of the MRA Foundation which sponsors LIOJ, made the opening speech and invited LIOJ's six former directors, as well as the present director, to give brief lectures on the Institute's development and purpose. It is worth noting that this year 50 percent of the participants had attended the annual workshop more than five times and that 20 percent had attended more than ten times.

This return rate, and the number of participants at the 1988 session, shows how beneficial the Summer Workshop is, as seen by Professionals in the field. My personal opinion is that a return next year by Thai representatives would be of great benefit to Thailand's developing English language instruction plans.

Some of the participants spoke on specific topics and I had the pleasure of presenting a lecture entitled "Teaching English in Thailand." Because of Thailand's on-going development in TEFL, and because of CULI's involvement in that development, I spoke about the effective use of the Communicative Approach. Ajarn Wilai presented a lecture on CULI's Public Speaking programme.

Topics and Activities

The Workshop provided a wide variety of topics and activities from which to choose. This type of content organization allowed all participants to concentrate on their particular interest areas while simultaneously affording them exposure to a broad spectrum of TEFL instructional concepts and approaches.

Among the many workshop topics and activities were: Three Central Processes in Language Learning; Situational Problem Solving; Preparing Found Materials; Motivating Students and Tired Teachers; and, Games as a Vehicle for Learning. Brief explanations follow:

1. Three Central Processes in Language Learning, by Robert O'Neill

Mr. O'Neill explained the importance of student understanding (comprehension), student internalization of language use and usage (not just rules), and student production of that which has already been comprehended and internalized. He also demonstrated ways through which teachers can apply appropriate strategies at different learner levels. One example presented by Mr. O'Neill was the use of pictures or images to help students internalize what they already superficially understand.

2. Situational Problem Solving, by Walter Matreyek

Mr. Matreyek explained how teachers can use real-life, specific problems that are common to an entire group of students as a method for improving the students' communicative performance. He explained and demonstrated how real-life situational problems can motivate students and elicit spontaneous conversation. Mr. Matreyek emphasized that the situation must be common to all students and, if it is, it will not only be effective but it will also be enjoyable.

3. Preparing Found Materials, by Bob Ruud

Mr. Ruud explained how to use authentic materials as supplements to textbooks, and emphasized the importance of such supplementary materials. These materials include newspapers, magazines and books for reading; radio and tape recorders for listening comprehension; T.V. and video for combining listening comprehension with the visual impact of images; and, computers, word processors and typewriters for writing. Mr. Ruud focused his presentation on how to find appropriate materials and how to put them to effective use.

4. Motivating Students and Tired Teachers, by Don Maybin

Mr. Maybin explained how to make classes both active and lively, while simultaneously making them practical. He emphasized how various types of pressure (i.e. peer-group pressure; teamwork; definite goals; and time limits) can be used to improve communication via student-centered conversation, without diverging too far from the specific topic. Mr. Maybin demonstrated how to stimulate and encourage (both students and teachers) by bringing the audience at the LIOJ workshop directly into the center of his presentation.

5. Games, by Maureen Pilon

Ms. Pilon explained how games of many types can be used constructively in the classroom. She emphasized that games reduce student anxiety about making mistakes, increase spontaneous speaking motivation, teach embedded sentence patterns and structures--without the boredom of structural classroom drilling, and teach logical communicative concepts in speaking (e.g. sequence, cause-effect, quantity, and contrast). Ms. Pilon focused on board games because they are the most visible and tangible to both students and teachers, but she also noted that other kinds of games such as "Gestures Games", "Telephone", "Card Games", "Scrabbled Word Games", and "Sentence Building Games" can be equally effective.

I chose to concentrate on student-centered learning activities at the LIOJ workshop. In assessing the needs of both Thai students and Thai teachers, I chose LIOJ's "Games as a Vehicle for Learning" sessions as potentially most beneficial to our present needs.

A major component of these sessions was the actual playing of games with embedded grammatical structures and sentence patterns used in everyday conversational English. A second component of these "Games" sessions was the creation of a new game, this component being of most benefit to the participants.

The premise that "Games" are substantial student-centered learning activities is supported by the following proven points in terms of instructional success:

1) Games stimulate active, thought-provoking, problem-solving, student-oriented participation;

2) Games are highly motivating because they demand and promote student participation and enjoyment;

3) Games provide open-ended opportunities for students to express themselves spontaneously and naturally;

4) Games provide immediate feedback and give students the opportunity to correct themselves;

5) Games reduce the risk of failure in terms of a teacher's evaluation (i.e. teacher grading of students is not advised in game activities);

6) Games require students to work together and/or to compete against each other, both of which encourage student-centered learning through social interaction;

7) Games can provide an arena for extensive drilling of structures without boring students.

Many different types of games can be used, but in our LIOJ sessions we emphasized the use of board games. The sessions included the following board games with their accompanying embedded English instructional value :

1. Scrabble, a game we are all familiar with.

The embedded instructional value of Scrabble includes vocabulary building, spelling-checking, vocabulary review, offensive play (i.e. the spontaneous, confident, aggressive use of words), and defensive play (i.e. a more cautious, thoughtful, analytical use of words).

2. Monopoly, a board game involving play money and the buying and selling of real estate.

The embedded instructional value of monopoly includes counting, evaluation of money and investment, concentration, negotiation, quick thinking, quick and careful speaking, and a generally free use of spoken English.

3. Clue, a board game requiring the players to investigate crimes.

The embedded instructional value of Clue includes vocabulary building, use of common sentence patterns, listening skills, logical thinking required for guessing, and deductive thinking required for arriving at conclusions based on the process of elimination.

4. Pictionary, a game in which a player receives a card with a word written on it and must draw a picture or mime the meaning of the word, within one minute, so that other players can guess what the word is. The words are later put together to form sentences.

The embedded instructional value of Pictionary includes vocabulary review, vocabulary usage, quick thinking, individual and group concentration, and sentence story building.

5. Payday, a board game involving the player's ability to save, borrow, and invest money over a period of time.

The embedded instructional value of Payday encompasses a wider range of practical, grammatical, everyday English conversational sentence patterns and phrases than all other games we used at the LIOJ Workshop. For this reason a more detailed description is required.

Some examples of the embedded phrases and sentence patterns in Payday are the following :

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| - Can I ? | - I can |
| - May I ? | - I may |
| - I want to | - I don't want to . . . |
| - Do you want to . . . ? | |
| - I owe you | - You owe me . . . |
| - I will buy . . . | - I made . . . |
| - I lent you . . . | - You lent me . . . |
| - I won . . . | - My interest is . . . |
| - I think I'll . . . | - I don't think I'm . . . |

I'd like to {

- save my money.
- open an account.
- make a hundred-dollar loan.
- get a loan.
- pay back my loan.
- borrow money from the bank.
- change this into small bills.
- collect my interest.
- keep track of my money.
- . . . etc.

Game Language

The following is an example of how language is used in board games. This example was used in the “Games” lecture and Workshop sessions as a preliminary demonstration of the different types of language that can be learned through games.

It's your turn. (OK, you're next.)

You get another turn. (You get to go again.)

I pass. (You lose your turn.) (Did you skip your turn?)

My score is _____. (What's my score?)

You can't do that. (That's not allowed.) (That's against the rules.)

Who's next? (Whose turn is it?)

Hurry up. (Your time is up.)

Just a moment. (Wait a minute.)

You win. (_____’s the winner.)

You lost.

Good game! (That was fun.) (Let's play again.)

School Days

The final stage of the “Games” session involved our creation of a new board game to be used in the classroom. I worked in a group with four Japanese participants and we created a game which we called “School Days”. The objective of the game is to graduate, but in order to do so the players have to go through three terms of complicated learning activities. The specific activities differ for each player, depending on the roll of the dice, but activities include: writing projects, sports, art projects, quizzes, homework, tutor sessions and final exams in each semester.

How The Game Works :

If a player lands on a “Writing Project” square, he or she picks a card and must do the writing project written on the card.

Three examples of writing projects are :

Write a Christmas card;

Write a grocery list; and

Write a fan letter to your favorite star.

If a player lands on a “Sports” square, he or she must pick a “Sports” card and explain the sport written on the card.

Examples are football, cycling, and fishing.

If a player lands on “Art Project”, he or she must create something related to a single word or phrase (e.g. laughter, newspaper, sea) written on an “Art Project” card.

If a player lands on “Quiz”, he or she must pick a “Quiz” card and answer the question on the card.

Examples of “quizzes” are :

“What is the capital of Canada?”

“What do you say if someone says ‘How do you do?’”

“What does ‘busy’ mean?” and

“What is the highest mountain in the world?”

Homework assignments involve some types of writing exercise. Tutor Sessions require the player to “teach” what is written on a “Tutor Session” card to another player. And, two examples of “Final Exams” are: “Describe your favorite singer” and “Give directions from your house to the nearest train station/shopping center”.

Clearly, the purpose of this game is to give students an opportunity to really enjoy activities they are required to do in a real-life semester or academic year.

An added advantage of creating games such as this is that once a teacher, or group of teachers, has created their own game, they see very clearly how effective games can be for student learning as well as how effective games can be as a teaching aid.

My colleagues and I in the “Games Session” are refining the School Days game via correspondence, which provides us all with an opportunity for ongoing international cooperation and development of our various English language programs. If we’re lucky (and I put strong emphasis on the word “lucky”), a by-product of our efforts on “School Days” could be that the game will be published and produced under international licensing law and available for distribution. If this comes to pass, it will be due mainly to the suggestion made by the “Games Session” lecturer Maureen Pilon, and to the help of Don Maybin, both of LIOJ. An international “Games” publishing company is now considering “School Days” and is looking into its market potential.

By participating in the “Games” workshop, I discovered that there is virtually no limit to the positive, effective use of games as a learning vehicle. The entire process I went through at the LIOJ Workshop can be used in Thailand in teacher training, and any part of the process (or the entire process) can be used effectively with students in the classroom.

In addition to the “Games” session, the 20th LIOJ Summer Workshop was beneficial in other ways. The event in its entirety exposed participants to the widest range of TEFL techniques possible in a six-day period, and we were all impressed by how much we could learn in a 12-hour day. This emphasizes the practicality of teacher training and retraining.

The event also included a special session, attended by all participants, on how to organize workshops of this nature. It provided detailed information on how clerical staff and organizers can work together efficiently, and in harmony, in the running of a workshop. And, because of the rigorous 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. daily schedule, it literally forced participants to schedule their own time more efficiently for maximum benefit. It did all of this and much more.

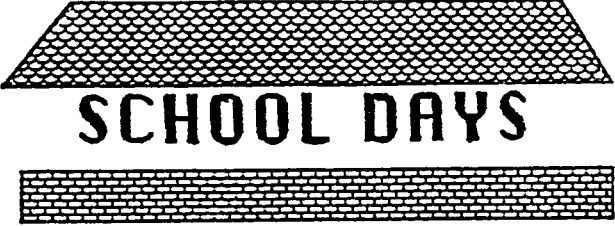
In general, the LIOJ workshop has given us a rare opportunity to learn from our peers in the field of TEFL. It has given us an opportunity to exchange ideas with our colleagues in other Asian countries. Moreover, the workshop has provided us with a host of practical communicative teaching activities and vehicles through which to transfer that information to teachers throughout Thailand.

Needless to say, the determination of all the participants to learn more, in spite of their degrees in English teaching and their experience in teaching, was impressive, and a key factor in the success of the Workshop. Perhaps we in Thailand can put forth more effort on our own part, both individually and as a group, and bring our English teaching standards up to and beyond the point required for our rapidly developing society.

PAYDAY
















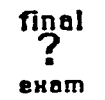








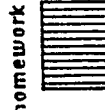








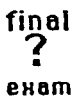









SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 INHERITANCE From Long Lost Aunt Collect \$500	3	4 Deal	5	6 Weekend Company You Pay \$51
Start Hair						
7 Sweet Sunday	8 SURPRISE BONUS Collect \$100	9 Buyer	10 POKER GAME \$100 to play Highest roll wins.	11	12 Deal	13 HIGH SCHOOL DANCE New Dress You Pay \$41
14 Sweet Sunday	15 Deal	16	17 Buyer	18 GROCERIES You Pay \$25	19	20 Buyer
21 Sweet Sunday	22	23 HOME REPAIRS You pay \$50	24	25 Deal	26 TOWN ELECTION All players contribute \$50 to the Pot below	27 All Hours Beer Back One Year
28 Sweet Sunday	29 Lottery Draw	30 Buyer	31 Collect \$325 PAY DAY	*Town Election & Sweetfare money go here. First player to roll 6 on his turn wins the pot.		

"Pay Day" Board Game
Copyright: Parker Brothers, Beverly, MA 01915, U.S.A.



SCHOOL DAYS

START HERE

	1ST TERM homework 	art 	tutor 	writing project 	sports 	quiz 
deadline	quiz 	tutor 	spring vacation 	homework 	writing project 	art 
	art 	writing project 	sports 	final ? exam 	summer vacation 	2ND TERM homework 
art	sports 	tutor 	writing project 	art 	quiz 	homework 
	homework 	writing project 	quiz 	tutor 	sports 	deadline
	tutor 	writing project 	3RD TERM homework 	winter vacation 	final ? exam 	
	art 	quiz 	sports 	art 	tutor 	homework 
GRADUATION DAY CONGRATULATIONS!	5	final ? exam 	deadline	sports 	quiz 	

"School Days" Board Game
Created at the LIOJ Workshop