Thailand TESOL strives for equality.

One of the association’s missions is to promote learning opportunities to English teachers and learners with an aim of reducing the gap in English education domestically and internationally. This issue features articles on primary school teacher training, online teaching tips and educational gifts as a reflective practice for teachers. These articles, among others, reflect our missions. Nonviolent communication through English education is expected to help reduce social inequality.
Be Proud of Your Thailish Accent

by Unaree Taladgoen

Being criticized as an EFL teacher who has a Thailish accent rather than a so-called native, near-native, or native-like accent seems to be inevitable. It is frustrating when English language speakers consider those who occupy native-like or near-native pronunciation as superior language users. As previously noticed after an online learning video clip was broadcast on the first day of the online learning trial, the English teacher present in the clip was not only condemned with the ungrammatical contents she was delivering, but also her accent. Regarding the ungrammatical language, we, as EFL teachers, have to admit that proofreading before the lesson delivery, either in an online or ordinary classroom setting, is a must to avoid instilling incorrect language patterns to students. However, concerning the teacher’s accent, it should not have been critically cyber-bullied as every language user has his or her unique way of speaking.

In the world of English language learning and teaching, language learners usually desire to acquire a widely accepted accent, in this case it is supposed to be a General American or Received Pronunciation accent. Consequently, it is a common fallacy that those who have deviated accents from the norm seem to be considered as inferior or deficient language learners or users. This is unfair and devastating.

As an English teacher, we have to take one step back and contemplate intricate components that play important roles in English language learning. The primary objective of English learning is to use language as a means of communication in this globalized world. Jennifer Jenkins mentioned in one of her research studies that the mainstream speakers of English were non-native speakers, and their interlocutors were also non-native speakers. Therefore, the key aspect of English speaking must be the level of intelligibility, accuracy, and precision. Additionally, appropriateness is another important factor to consider how successful an English language speaker is.

To achieve communication goals is not only through having a norm accent, but it also involves various elements. If non-native speakers keep criticizing each other’s accents, how will they get through the language barriers and become fluent language users? If students are blamed for having deviated accents, how will they improve their verbal communication ability using English? Keep in mind that each English speaker has a diverse socio-cultural background, and his or her accent is unique and charming. We are all non-native speakers, and we should emphasize how to achieve clear and intelligible pronunciation that leads to successful communication. For example, self-talk is an easy and practical method. Language learners are encouraged to initiate speaking practice by talking to themselves. They can do that in front of the mirror, in the bathroom, or the car. They can also do it while they are doing other activities. A little practice every day will gradually make a better language user.
Once again, stop criticizing and start practicing. Most importantly, be proud of your accent. No matter what accent you have, be proud of it.

“We should emphasize how to achieve clear and intelligible pronunciation that leads to successful communication.”

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What’s Going On

Thailand TESOL’s English Proficiency Enhancement (EPE) Project

One of the main purposes of Thailand TESOL is to support English language teaching and learning at all levels. It has been realized that the level of English language proficiency of the teachers, especially the primary school teachers, is the major cause of the ineffective English language teaching in Thailand.

Thus, Thailand TESOL has provided the English Proficiency Enhancement (EPE) project with support from the Regional English Language Office (RELO), starting in 2019. As the name of the project suggests, it aims to help primary school teachers of English to teach their young learners effectively. The training, prepared by experts in English language teaching and learning, is well-organized to provide in-service primary school teachers of English with the necessary skills starting from practicing correct pronunciation, using appropriate classroom language, applying
effective ways to develop vocabulary and reading skills, to selecting the correct grammar to communicate in writing. Small group training is arranged to give close attention to every trainee since many of our primary school teachers need support to boost their confidence. Our trainers are not only highly competent in teaching English but also great in encouraging people with low proficiency and little confidence.

This was confirmed by the highly satisfied teachers who were trained under this project in 2019 and also by the teachers in Lamphun, who unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 could attend only two days of the four-day training course in 2020. They all said they were impressed, grateful and thankful to all involved in the EPE project. We also congratulate them on their participation, patience and perseverance. We are positive that the project will have a significant impact on the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in Thailand.

Secondary School Teachers from Lower Northern Provinces Attended a Training

A training program arranged with Thailand TESOL, the Embassy of the United States of America and Naresuan University was held on February 29, 2020.

The program was entitled “SMART Lesson Planning Objectives and the 6 Principles of TESOL in Action.” This project was organized by the Thailand TESOL Lower Northern Affiliate, Assistant Prof. Dr. Jantima Simpson and her executive team. The participants were 63 Thai secondary school teachers from 9 lower Northern provinces: Phitsanulok, Uttaradit, Phichit, Sukhothai, Phetchabun, Kamphaeng Phet, Tak, Uthai Thani, and Nakhon Sawan.

This highly successful activity was supported by Thailand TESOL and the Embassy of the United States, Bangkok, who arranged for a professional facilitator, Ms. Loraine Brasel to assist with the training. The Department of English, Faculty of Humanities, Naresuan University generously offered Mr. Adam C. Paschal, a full-time lecturer to assist with facilitating the training program.
Elevating Vocational English (EVE) Project by Burapha University Language Institute

Under the support of the Eastern Economic Corridor Human Development Center (EEC-HDC), the Elevating Vocational English (EVE) project has been conducted. Burapha University Language Institute started the EVE project in October 2019. A study on the needs of English was carried out to examine the demand on competency of future workforce. The preliminary findings showed that the companies in the EEC area need workers who are graduating from vocational colleges to be able to read instructions and manuals in English as well as engage in conversations related to their jobs. Technical words are the focus of developing English competency for vocational students. To elevate vocational English, learners and teachers have to be empowered. Learners should be surrounded by English used for future jobs.

The EVE project aims to create a new ecosystem for learners to use and learn English. To create the change, the stakeholders of such an ecosystem include the target companies, the administrators, the teachers, and the learners. The English atmosphere at colleges and the motivation to improve English are the keys for vocational students to acquire technical English. The project is divided into 4 stages as follows:

1. Mindset of the administrators
2. Teacher training and materials development
3. English atmosphere

The mindset workshop for leaders was organized to brainstorm ideas from administrators of colleges as well as to be an event where employers can share their needs to the colleges. By the end of the workshop, a to-do list of each college was slightly different depending on the contexts. The same goal was set for all colleges, and the administrators have a clear picture of the next stage.

Teachers are one of the most influential factors for students to acquire target vocabulary. Since the vocational students need to know technical words, the collaboration between English teachers and subject teachers is encouraged. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is applied to train the teachers from different subjects to use English language in their classrooms. Under the EVE project, the subject teachers were trained to select target vocabulary and integrated them in their lessons. They were allowed to use Thai language in their classrooms; however, they were advocated to
create teaching and learning materials in English.

To create English atmosphere, a pilot was done with four vocational colleges, i.e., Chonburi Technical College, Thai-Austrian Technical College, Chachoengsao Technical College, and Chonburi Vocational College. They were offered the English signs around the colleges as well as English language activities for teachers and students. Besides, the English language learning books series and podcasts were developed to support their teaching. The link to download the books and listen to the podcasts are as follows:

Jump Start Your: English for Tourism Business and Services (bit.ly/JumpStartEngTourism)


Podcasts:

EP. 1 https://youtu.be/7ph2_mWnDFM
EP. 2 https://youtu.be/1ShVfeNENE0
EP. 3 https://youtu.be/aag4i04RVZQ
EP. 4 https://youtu.be/3A0ctIs0IWA
EP. 5 https://youtu.be/AFC2wbCMOwM
EP. 6 https://youtu.be/c8gmrsrjtsc
EP. 7 https://youtu.be/l81YyBZSUq0
EP. 8 https://youtu.be/nzXDJ-ez-II

The final stage of the EVE project is to observe the competency of vocational students. In the early of 2020, we organized the English competition for vocational students. This competition is one of the strategies to motivate students, teachers, and the colleges to improve students’ competency. The performance of students from colleges who join this project is at the satisfactory level.

Teachers and administrators from colleges are requesting the ongoing support. This is the start of the EVE project which hopes to inspire learners of English to get better at English as well as to bring out a new way of learning English for schools and colleges.
Tips for Teachers

From Classroom to Online Platform: How to Effectively Redesign Your Lesson

by Nonglak Pangroean

Given our current situation, moving from a traditional classroom setting to an online platform during the COVID-19 pandemic can create uncertainty, anxiety, and panic not only among teachers but also parents, and especially students. Although there are many similarities between traditional classroom learning and online learning, there are also many differences in the way on how to deliver a lesson. Below are some important points worth considering on how to redesign your lessons to deliver the online learning experience more effectively.

First and foremost, the teacher should have a clear concept of “Distance and On-Site Learning” and “Digital vs. Non-Digital Learning.” Second, physical distancing is the main factor that may affect the delivery of your lesson. Third, there is no perfect teaching model that will fit all school contexts for teacher and students alike. Before considering what applications or what platforms you will use. All teachers should redesign their course syllabus by focusing on the meaningful learning outcomes; a clear, small oriented results toward the overall outcome should be the basis of selecting an appropriate content and learning objectives. Furthermore, having a periodic assessment or evaluation should be the motivating factor for teaching improvements. The redesigning of lessons should be ad hoc and tailored to the local needs of students, meeting their overall educational requirement and the standards set out by a given subject.

Perhaps, all of your lessons will have to be redesigned, and if so, it should be easy, as well as meaningful, interactive, make use of the fewest applications, and simplistic. Hopefully, by employing this outlook and approach, students will continue to be motivated to learn. And if the need for technologies fails to meet our expectations, teachers abound can still adapt to other plans and contingencies, where possible.

Notwithstanding, even if these points mentioned above are not relevant to your teaching criteria, they are still worth considering when redesigning and developing your lesson in light of this NEW NORMAL. This new normal, on par with, the existing cultural trend of learning—made more evident with the current COVID-19 crisis—will be a major factor for the imparting and delivering of education for the upcoming school year and beyond.

Moving from classroom learning to online learning is already a challenge for most teachers; however, if teachers don’t change their method of teaching to incorporate technologies or other innovative means to motivate students to participate, the experience of learning will be static and meaningless.

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Repositioning Teaching Principles During the Pandemic

by Jariya Sairattanain and Hai Lin

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, adopting distance education has inevitably become an imperative. Meanwhile, concerns have been raised about the effectiveness of virtual teaching when compared to the pre-pandemic era. There is no doubt that this rapid and unplanned change, to a large extent, presents a great many challenges to those who strive for sustained professional growth. However, this ongoing situation might serve as a potential opportunity to help us re-conceptualize teaching methods. Inspired by PPP model (Presentation-Practice-Production), we put forward CCC principles (Communication-Consultation-Comment) to make remote teaching have a desired outcome.

The first stage concerns how to digitally communicate before class. We hold that our Generation Z learners are no strangers to Facebook group. Making use of this familiar platform, thus, reduces their cognitive load – remote learning, after all, is a brand new experience for students. For example, at the initial stage, we uploaded our recorded videos to explain the sudden shift. Also, a poll was created on Facebook to let students voice their preferable online learning tools. In this way, students would be mentally and psychologically ready for what lies ahead. More strikingly, Facebook group enables us to implement the concept of flipped classroom. Prior to classes, contents such as PowerPoints, video clips and work sheets are disseminated online, which contributes to self-paced learning. In other words, the time stress that resides within live classrooms is relieved. Students have sufficient time to delve into their learning materials.

After a trial lesson on the selected meeting online tool – Zoom, both of us noticed that many language learners were reluctant to turn on their cameras and there was little interaction amongst themselves. Therefore, small group consultations (3-4 people) are introduced to create effective collaboration. Aligned with the flipped classroom, the teacher during the “consultation” session no longer serves as a knowledge transmitter since it runs the risk of demotivating online learners. Instead, a mentoring or a coaching role needs to be formulated for enhancing their understanding of learning contents. Accordingly, the emphasis is shifted to be more advanced levels of cognitive work such as knowledge application and synthesis. By doing so, we have seen our learners exhibit their willingness to speak English and actively seek out interactions with peers and teachers.

After each online class, we encourage our learners to express their feelings and concerns about learning experiences, which we describe as “Comment”. At this stage, “Padlet” can be employed as a channel for self-reflection, where students are allowed to post comments with anonymous identity. In this way, it is accessible for teachers to keep track of learners’ emotional and affective trajectories. At the same time, this type of feedback can be of service to assist teachers in making prompt and effective
adjustments, which ensure productivity for the next online meeting.

All in all, COVID-19 has unprecedentedly been a heavy blow to teaching industry. Aside from coping with the stress and fear of contracting the virus, teachers have to devote more effort and time to preparing their online classes. While the current situation is replete with uncertainties, we reckon that divergent pedagogic approaches need to be further explored for the sake of online teaching effectiveness. It is hoped that our CCC principles will provide insight into online teaching management in troubled times.

“Inspired by PPP model, we put forward CCC principles (Communication-Consultation-Comment) to make remote teaching have a desired outcome.”

Dictation for Integrated English Courses

by Linchong Chorrojprasert

Current courses for learners of English as a second or foreign language in all age categories are usually designed with the integrated skills as the focal components. The main aim is to provide learners with the knowledge and the skills to acquire communicative competence—including all four skills: receptive and productive skills. This article aims to discuss and suggest how we can use dictation, one of the commonly found teaching and learning activities in English classes, as an effective tool in our integrated English courses.

The use of dictation has long been both approved and questioned. Though often found in various forms in ESL and EFL classes all over the world, it is regularly considered one of the teaching activities that belongs to the “traditional” school of pedagogy. However, if efficiently designed, dictation can serve as an effective tool for multi-faceted purposes and serve beyond the fulfillment of basic objectives of integrated skills. Here are the guidelines on how dictation can prove to be another success for your class.

The selection of the key word must be in relation to the main lesson. The length of the dictation scripts and follow-up activities must be planned based on the learning objectives and lesson plans. The script length should be approximately 30-40 words for young learners and 50-60 words for adult learners. The key

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word should first be introduced with clear definition and explanation if needed. Examples how the word is used in sentences are then given with interesting ideas or useful concepts. The script can be read three times with or without the punctuation marks. If the learners are to apply their grammar knowledge and writing conventions, the punctuation marks should not be read out. This will foster their listening skills as they pay attention to the inflection of stress and intonation. Based on the class and learner factors, the teacher may choose to introduce the key word prior to giving the dictation or use it as a topic for whole class discussion afterward. This can help with the learner readiness as well as pave way for critical thinking exercises. When the scripts are shown with explanation on both grammar and vocabulary, learners will be more engaged in the discussion with opportunities to practice their pronunciation and speaking skills as they are already familiarized with the ideas and provided with the needed vocabulary from the dictation. Through the discussion, teachers can introduce and foster any useful learning habits, positive attitudes or even useful life skills.

In addition, dictation can help to develop the short-term memory for learners which can be essential for both young and adult learners as they have to withhold the information while figuring out the spelling and grammatical structure of the texts. It beneficially leads to the main lesson. If well planned and conducted, the dictation activities should take around 15-25 minutes with the impact and benefits many times outweigh the time and efforts.

Example: Key word = recipe

A recipe is a set of instructions telling you how to prepare and cook food, including a list of what food is needed for this. Do you know a good recipe for chicken green curry? (35 words)

The word recipe is often used when talking about cooking. It includes two things: a list of ingredients you need and the steps to take in order to make it. You can find recipes in cookbooks or on websites. A recipe can also be a formula: the recipe for success is hard work, good timing and a little luck. (60 words)

“If efficiently designed, dictation can serve as an effective tool for multifaceted purposes and serve beyond the fulfillment of basic objectives of integrated skills.”

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Educational Gifts

by Jocelyn Wright

Due to the recent COVID-19 crisis, Korea TESOL decided to hold their 2020 national conference online. At this historical event, I facilitated a workshop on “educational gifts,” defined not necessarily as material things like presents but mostly as activities and interactions that take place in classrooms or schools. Here, I present my reflective practice activity for teachers.

Background

My workshop was inspired by reading on Nonviolent Communication (NVC). For context, NVC is a philosophy about and process-oriented approach to communicating that involves work on oneself, with others, and within systems which was developed by Marshall B. Rosenberg in the United States from the turbulent 1960s on. Those who choose to practice NVC, also referred to as compassionate communication, aim to make life more wonderful by expressing themselves honestly and listening empathically, or by giving and receiving joyfully from the heart. The basic model presented to assist learners of NVC, which I promote here, involves making evaluation-free observations, expressing feelings, identifying universal human needs, and taking specific actions or making clear requests to meet these (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. NVC Model
Aim

In an educational context, there are “gifts” we as teachers love to give and receive. Usually, we feel happy as these fulfill our needs. Then there are those we appreciate less, that do not delight us, although we may later acknowledge their value. Daily, we may strive to increase the exchange of certain gifts and decrease that of others.

Activity

One way to bring to consciousness exchanges in our classrooms or schools and the associated feelings and met or unmet needs is to complete Table 1. In my case, I love receiving learner questions because they stimulate me and reassure me that students are engaged and interested in understanding. I also feel grateful for their queries, which fulfill my need for contribution. As for giving, telling stories and sharing experiences energize me by satisfying my craving for fun and connection. By contrast, because I try hard to prepare meaningful assignments for my students, I feel disappointed when they only invest minimal effort into completing them. I have a deep desire for reciprocation and sincerely wish to celebrate their success. Last, regarding gifts I do not like to give, I could say traditional exams. Personally, I feel bored preparing, administering, and marking them because these activities do not contribute to my needs for stimulation and discovery.

Table 1. Form for Analyzing Educational Gifts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>“Gifts”</th>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>Needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I like to receive</strong></td>
<td>learner questions</td>
<td>stimulated</td>
<td>engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>reassured</td>
<td>contribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>grateful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I like to give</strong></td>
<td>storytelling/sharing experiences</td>
<td>energetic</td>
<td>fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I do not like to receive</strong></td>
<td>a lack of student investment in assignments</td>
<td>disappointed</td>
<td>reciprocation celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I do not like to give</strong></td>
<td>traditional exams</td>
<td>bored</td>
<td>stimulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>discovery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Even with this barebones example done in 5 minutes, I immediately observe my need for connection and desire for stimulation. With extensive brainstorming, aided by feelings and needs inventories such as those on the Center for Nonviolent Communication website (https://www.cnvc.org/), I might pinpoint other interesting patterns. The next step is to identify strategies that allow me to harvest more of my preferred educational gifts. Thanks to the insights gifted to me here, I might actively encourage learner-generated questions, rehearse storytelling techniques, and look at alternatives to traditional exams and ways of redesigning assignments so learners willingly accomplish more.

Doing this reflective activity from time to time can give us fresh perspectives on our practice. Wherever you teach and at whatever level, I hope it helps you orient your future educational gift exchanges in truly satisfying directions.

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