‘World Englishes’: a Multimedia-, Content-based Course

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ABSTRACT:

This report will introduce a syllabus used in the ‘World Englishes’ portion of a multimedia-, content-based course. This class was designed for first-year university students, with a class size of approximately 25 students. The general objective for the course is to facilitate students’ communication in English through the use of a variety of multi-media sources (video, Internet, print media, audio) and forums (informal small group discussion, class-fronted presentation, formal group Presentation & Discussion). Students reactions on the topic and class format will also be introduced and discussed.

A range of topics and issues fall under the ‘global issues’ banner. One increasing important, but unusual issue is that of ‘world Englishes’. Many Japanese students tend to have a rather ‘blinkered’ view of ‘English’, seeing it as being limited to use by and with exponents of a handful of ‘native-speaker’ varieties – Americans, Britons, Australians and such. This view defies both what is actually the case (Kachru 1992) and perhaps even the learners’ personal experiences both abroad and at home. The study of how English is used globally cannot have but a positive effect on both their worldview and view of themselves as speakers of English. Convinced of the importance of the topic for its intrinsic interest / value and in the general framework of the course, we faced reality – lack of classroom-ready materials.

‘World Englishes’ Syllabus

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Output/ Activities</th>
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| Schema Building (overview) | • Quotations  
• The 3 concentric circles (Kachru 1992) | • Mini-lecture  
• Discussion |
| Posing the Key Issues | • 6 fallacies (Kachru 1992) | • Reading  
• Identifying the key points  
• Jigsaw teaching |
| Schema Building (examples) | • “History of English” (1986 BBC series)  
• Internet | • Discussion  
• Watching the video  
• Searching the Internet  
• Small-group presentations |
| Exploring More in Depth - focus on Hawaii Creole English | • “Hawaii debates use of ‘pidgin’ in school” (The Japan Times 12/17/99)  
• “Yarn Wig” (a poem in Saturday Night at the Pahala Theater 1993) – script and audio cassette tape  
• “Picture Bride” (video)  
• Example expressions | • Reading and Discussion  
• Listening to actual examples  
• Watching the video |
| Adding Another Perspective to the Topic | • “From Palace to Prison” (CBS 60 minutes)  
• “From Palace to Prison” (Time July 9th 2001) | • Watching the video  
• Reading  
• Relating to the content topic  
• Discussion |
| Research and Presentation (final test) | • Internet  
• Other reading materials | • Research  
• Synthesizing ideas  
• Thinking of discussion questions  
• Presentation  
• Leading a discussion |
Students' Reactions
'Reactions' will encompass both the work presented by students on given task and also their personal reactions elicited through pre- and post- questionnaires and the term-end course evaluation.

Presentation
For the final presentation, students made a 5-minute presentation followed by a 5-minute discussion. For preparation, students had to choose an aspect or an issue on the topic of World Englishes and do further research on it. In addition, students had to prepare discussion questions. In a group of 4-5 students, each student made a presentation on the topic and led a discussion.

Survey
The pre-questionnaires were prepared to elicit students’ conceptions of themselves as English speakers and conceptions of native speakers in general.

The post-questionnaires asked the same questions as the pre-questionnaire as well as questions related to their perceived changes in their view of English and speakers of English.

The course evaluation comprised of questions about the topic, the course, and the instructor's teaching effectiveness.

Works Cited