

I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.

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What is an effective mode of instruction in language education? There are numerous theories, even more research studies and mountains of teaching suggestions in an attempt to answer this question. However despite the time and energy, there is no consensus about which approach is likely to be 'best'. This presentation points out the impracticality of pursuing and selecting 'the one' theory and pedagogy but suggests that instructors should instead extract the most appealing bits and pieces from many sources by considering what works for their particular group of students and their classroom agenda. This workshop does not rely on the newest or most theoretically profound trend in language teaching. Rather, I am concerned with sharing how I approach the common and familiar challenge of how I make the conventional textbook used in the university classroom more 'learnable', in other words, how to move from the textbook to the classroom.

First, I will describe my personal experience as a Japanese language instructor in an elementary school. These children taught me the value of "doing for understanding" in my language class.

At various times in this presentation I will use words like skit, role-play, and drama. There doesn't seem to be a consistent definition of these forms of action in a classroom and so I use the terms interchangeably. The point is that no matter what term is used, "acting a scene out" skyrocketed my students' enthusiasm, participation, and motivation to learn. Also "acting a scene out" worked as an agent to decrease the level of anxiety among the students by creating an enjoyable classroom atmosphere. This experience encouraged me to have a second look at my instruction at the university level.

Secondly, I will briefly call upon some well established scholars in the areas of L2 theory (Krashen, Ellis), drama education theory (Heathcote, Even, Noro et al.) and general learning theory (Piaget, and Vygotsky). The children that I taught showed me the effectiveness of drama elements for language teaching, and these theorists and practitioners lend support for the appropriateness of the pedagogy.

In the third part of this presentation I will exemplify three different approaches with an element of drama that I have used in the university classroom. Each of these illustrates how I translated a textbook exercise into a classroom vignette.

1) Teacher Monologue: used to introduce vocabulary in a communicative context.

2) Guided "Skit": used to introduce a grammar concept by providing visual cues and contexts in order to support students' holistic understanding of a particular grammatical structure.

3) Scene Sense: used to encourage students to discover the practical use of terms that are so difficult to explain like, Sumimasen, because the meaning is so dependent on the setting (scene) in which they are used.

Finally I will briefly report on a survey of university students' perceptions of **Guided "Skit"** employed during my 200 level Japanese class between September 2011 and December 2011.