

CURRICULUM AND STUDENT MOTIVATION

BY

JENNIFER E. JONES

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING DEGREE AT THE
SCHOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAINING GRADUATE INSTITUTE,
BRATTLEBORO, VERMONT

JULY 2009

IPP ADVISOR: BONNIE MENNELL

The author hereby does grant the School for International Training the permission to electronically reproduce and transmit this document to the students, alumni, staff, and faculty of the World Learning Community.

© by Jennifer E. Jones 2009. All rights reserved.

This project by Jennifer E. Jones is accepted in its present form.

Date:

Project Advisor: Bonnie Mennell

Project Reader: Daniel Sumber

Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank all of my students for their honest feedback and willingness to reflect on their learning.

I would like to thank everyone at SIT, especially Bonnie Mennell and Susan Barduhn, and my fellow SMAT 25s for their inspiration and commitment to education.

To all of my former teachers who were helping me even when I did not know it, thank you. Now I get it.

Thank you to Miss Tupelo Honey and Cinnamon Sally, for their unconditional love and cuddles that comforted me when I thought I would never finish this.

ABSTRACT

This paper details the process and results of an experimental project-based curriculum for a college preparatory ESL course and its effects on student motivation. The course, designed to appeal to students' desire for variety, community and self-expression, was divided into three modules, each with a different focus. Participants were international adults studying English at a private school in Austin, Texas. Results indicated that the course structure and content can play a large role in students' motivation levels. Course documents are appended.

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER
(ERIC) DESCRIPTORS

Classroom Environment
Curriculum Design
Learner Engagement
Motivation
Teacher Influence
Technology Integration

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 : Introduction	1
Purpose.....	1
Context overview	3
Chapter 2 : Curriculum And Community In A Speaking/Listening Course.....	7
The Challenge	7
Course Overview: Fall 2007	8
Student Profiles.....	10
Module I – Group Projects.....	12
Description.....	12
The Zone of Proximal Development.....	14
The ORID method as a framework.....	15
Active listening	17
Scaffolding for presentations	18
Way of Council.....	19
The listening component.....	20
The presentations	22
Student feedback and self-assessment	24
Teacher reflection	27
Module II – Community Ethnographers	27
Description.....	27
Student feedback.....	32
Teacher reflection	32
Module III – Focused Group Discussion	33
Description.....	33
Role descriptions:.....	34
Student feedback.....	37
Teacher reflection	38
Chapter 3 : Curriculum And Community In A Speaking/Listening Course.....	40
Course Overview: Spring 2008.....	40
Student Profiles.....	41
Module I – Individual Presentations	42
Student feedback.....	45
Teacher reflection	45
Module II – The Podcast.....	46
Podcast segments	46
Student feedback.....	50
Teacher reflection	51
Module III – Focused Discussion Group/Podcast	52
Description.....	52
Student feedback.....	54
Teacher reflection	55
Chapter 4 : Final Reflection.....	56
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	62
APPENDIX A – COURSE DOCUMENTS	63

A-1: Level 5 Speaking & Listening Fall 2007 Syllabus	63
A-2: Level 5 Listening/Speaking Group Project Requirements	66
A-3: ORID Method for Content.....	67
A-4: ORID Method for Group Process.....	68
A-5: Presentation Rubric.....	69
A-6: Group Project Log	70
A-7: Project Self-Assessment	71
A-8: Presentation Feedback	72
A-9: Level 5 Speaking & Listening Spring 2008 Syllabus.....	73
A-10: Podcast Responsibilities	76
A-11: Podcast Guidelines	77
A-12: Course Reflection	80
APPENDIX B - LISTENING COMPONENT	81
B-1: Listening Pieces	81
B-2: My Stroke of Insight.....	82
B-3: Cultures at the Far Edge of the World	83
B-4: 15 Ways to Avert a Climate Crisis	84
B-5: Slowing Down in a World Built for Speed.....	85
B-6: Killer Presentation Skills	86
B-7: Is 4am the New Midnight?.....	87
B-8: Why We Do What We Do and How We Can Do it Better.....	88

Chapter 1 : Introduction

Purpose

I had heard it too many times: “Oh god, I *hate* this class. I can’t get them to *do* anything!”; “I only had *one* student in my class today. They just don’t even come anymore.”; “It doesn’t matter if I give them homework; they *won’t* do it.”; “They’re just going to speak their L1 anyway.”

Where I teach, frustrated teachers complaining about their students is a break-room pastime. I have to admit, that I was not immune to the frustration. What bothered me though was that the focus was always on “them” and “they”. In teaching there is definitely a give and take from both the teacher and the students. From what I was hearing and feeling, there seemed to be an imbalance that fostered negativity and hindered learning. I tried my best to inject enthusiasm and energy into my classrooms, but I knew that, in order to sustain that energy, I would need to get to the root of the issue. In 2007, while in the second summer of the MAT program at the SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont, I was able to do just that.

In a Second Language Acquisition course, I joined a group of my classmates to explore the role of motivation in second language learning. To begin, we compiled a list of common problems that we thought might be motivation-related: absences, lack of participation, tardiness, speaking L1 in class, failure to complete or do homework, poor progress, poor classroom behavior, and apathy. We then created a survey to find out if our SIT colleagues (including ourselves) identified the above mentioned problems as

being related to motivation, and how often each problem presented itself in their classes. In addition, we asked how they managed these issues. The results affirmed some beliefs, but also raised some questions that I was eager to explore back in my teaching context.

In the fall of 2007, I would begin teaching a new course: a college preparatory (Level 5) Listening/Speaking class at the small language school where I taught in Austin, Texas. This was a new track for our school, and I was excited about the opportunity to work with the higher level students. I was also aware of the burn-out factor, both for students and teachers. Studying 18-20 hours per week for 16 weeks is intensive and, at times, exhausting for everyone. As I prepared for the course, I anticipated the students' needs and the challenges that I might encounter. I had learned that a universal approach to motivation would not work. What motivates a 48 year-old Korean woman does not necessarily motivate a 16 year old French boy. One of the things I was most curious about was the dynamics of a group and the effect of an individual on a group. Another was how personality characteristics help or hinder a student's level of motivation. I wondered how much of a student's motivation was derived from nature and how much from nurture. Most importantly, I wanted to see if my actions as a teacher could have an impact on my students' motivation.

I chose to experiment with creating a new curriculum for an adult college preparatory Listening/Speaking class. My purpose for this was to explore student motivation and how curriculum motivates or demotivates students. My ultimate goal was to create a learning environment in which my students' intrinsic motivation would grow. To explore this, I focused on three specific strategies: 1) devising a modular, project-based curriculum, 2) applying the principles of Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal

Development, and 3) creating a sense of community and connection in the classroom by using Way of Council. I would examine the fluctuations in the students' learning curves, their levels of motivation, and what factors increased or decreased their motivation.

Context overview

Before delving into the details of the project, it is necessary to know a bit of general information about the students at my school and the culture of the school.

At the privately owned language school where I teach, students come from all over the world to learn English. In a short time they learn to use English as a vehicle for learning about each other's languages and cultures. Some cultures blend easier than others. For the most part, each semester is one joyous discovery after another. The Turks and Moroccans delight in saying "Ohiyo gozimas" to the Japanese students every morning. The Colombians learn to write their names in Korean. "Wow!" and "Really?" are frequently heard in the classrooms and hallways as the students learn about other cultures. For some, they are experiencing other cultures for the first time. In the U.S., the ESOL school environment is about so much more than learning English.

There are two main types of students at this school. The first group is generally 18-30 year-olds who intend to go to university in the U.S. These students come from all over the world and generally plan to get an undergraduate or graduate degree in the U.S. Depending on the economic situations, some intend to go back to their countries, while others hope they will find legal employment in the U.S. after earning their undergraduate or graduate degrees. Most of these students are hard-working, ambitious individuals who

see learning English as a way to a better life. Within this group, however, are some who come from relatively affluent families and have never really been on their own or had to do much work. Meeting class requirements, as well as functioning independently on a daily basis, is often difficult for students in this group. The second group consists of parents who are only in the U.S because their children are enrolled in American schools. Almost 100% of these parents are Korean mothers between the ages of 35-55. Most are in the U.S without their husbands, who are back in Korea working to fund the two separate lives. The only way for these mothers to stay in the United States while their children go to school is to get a student visa (F-1). The majority of these families plan to stay in the U.S. until the youngest child has gotten into university. For the mothers, this could mean at least 10 years of living as single parents of children living without a father. Suddenly, these women have become single parents and full-time students in a country and culture that is completely foreign to them. Understandably, they are stressed out and exhausted. Learning English is not the first thing on their minds.

While there are two clearly different sets of student needs at the school, there is only one course track: academic. Students are placed in levels according to their performance on a written and verbal assessment. For the most part, the students are placed correctly. However, since there are many parents who are not college-bound, but need to coast on their student visas for years, they often repeat the same level multiple times, making very little progress. There have been a few really ambitious “mom-students” who proved to be exceptions to this rule. Teachers are often left to manage the following situations: 1) a beginning level parent who has no intrinsic motivation to learn English and thus repeats the beginning level many times, 2) a level 3 or 4 class filled with

parents who have taken the class sometimes 3 or 4 times, and, quite honestly, have neither the skills nor the desire to make it to level 5. This creates a balloon effect in the level 3 and 4 classes. Normally, the students would continue to the next level, take and pass the TOEFL, leave the language school, and enroll in the community college. As a result of these larger classes, some students are placed at higher levels or lower levels simply to avoid overcrowding.

There are five class levels: one (beginning) to five (college-prep). Level 5 was added to the program in the fall of 2007, with the hopes of better preparing our students for the transition to a community college or university classroom. Our language school, like others, has an agreement with the local community college to grant admission to international students with a paper-based TOEFL score of 532 or higher. With the creation of Level 5, came an alternative to passing the TOEFL. If a student took and passed at least 3 level 5 courses, and got a passing grade on a verbal and written portfolio approved by a panel of teachers, that student could bypass the TOEFL requirement and enroll at the community college. Ideally, this is a great idea, but there are problems.

Given the nature of the school as a private business entity, decisions about enrollment and placement are often made on the basis of filling up a class or “the customer is always right”. The school requires that there be at least three to five students per class so that the school can cover its overhead. In addition, the owners frequently do whatever it takes to make the students happy, regardless of its overall impact on the integrity and consistency of the program. With four other English schools on the same street, the threat of losing business to the competition is quite present.

In addition, because the parents are allowed to coast along, with no real end goal, their presence in the classroom can have negative implications in the dynamic and the motivation of the group. A younger, motivated, college-bound student might ask to be moved to another class because he/she does not want to be in the group with the moms, who do not have the same ambition. Some of the moms are very nice and will do some of the work, but in general, because of their duties at home, they can not keep up with the demands of the class. This can be a frustrating situation for both the teacher and students involved.

Chapter 2 : Curriculum And Community In A Speaking/Listening Course

The Challenge

With the addition of the Level 5/College Prep track to the program, I was offered the opportunity to teach the Level 5 Speaking/Listening course. To prepare for this, I considered the many skills that would be required of these students at the college level: giving individual and group presentations, participating in discussions, problem-solving, listening to and understanding the rapid speech of native English-speakers, and clearly expressing needs and opinions. The biggest complaints I had often heard from higher level students was that, despite their book knowledge of English, they still could not understand native speakers and express their ideas clearly. I was aware of the challenges that awaited me in teaching a higher level course, particularly the higher level students at this school. Ironically, the challenges lie in direct contrast to the students' complaints. The higher level classes had had a reputation for low attendance and students with low motivation. It is a problem most closely related to "senioritis" in American high schools. There are a few reasons for this. The students in the higher levels have usually been in the U.S. for at least two years. Their English is good enough for them to have jobs, which means that they spend a lot of their time working and saving money for their anticipated college courses. They either miss classes or come to class completely exhausted, having worked until very late the night before. Their fluency increases with their exposure to native speakers English; however, their accuracy decreases. They are often unaware of this discrepancy and have an inflated sense of their English language abilities. Another

factor is that sometimes a student “passes” the paper-based TOEFL halfway through the semester. A passing score for admission to the community college is 532. In my opinion, this requirement is not high enough. It is not uncommon for a student who scores a 532 to still have a great deal of difficulty communicating in everyday situations, let alone participate in a university course. With these factors in mind, I devised a curriculum that would challenge the students on multiple levels.

Course Overview: Fall 2007

For the fall 2007 semester, I created a new curriculum with three five-week modules (see Appendix A-1, p. 63 for syllabus):

- Module I - Group Project

Groups of two or more students were required to choose a topic, research it, and give a formal presentation complete with visual aides and a handout. The objectives were for the students to learn how to give a formal presentation, improve their language skills, and build their confidence.

- Module II – Community Research Project

Students were given the choice of independently continuing their inquiry into their topic from Module I or choosing a new topic. They then had to gather information about their topic. However, this time they were required to interview people as a means of research, rather than relying solely on the Internet and written sources. Throughout the five weeks, students would report their progress to a support group in class. At the end of the five weeks, each

student would give an informal presentation on their findings, and reflect on the process of the inquiry. The primary objective of Module II was for the students to build language skills and confidence to successfully interact with the native English-speaking community.

- **Module III – Student-directed Discussion Groups**

Each student was responsible for choosing a discussion topic for the week. They were required to bring in any pertinent, factual information about the topic to share with their classmates. The students would then engage in a discussion using prescribed roles to explore the issue from various perspectives. The main objectives of Module III were for the students to learn to clearly express their opinions, and to listen to, understand, and respond to the opinions of others in an active discussion.

- **Real-World Listening**

The listening component of the course was designed to give students consistent exposure to native-speakers. It was not a separate module, but rather an integrated part of the course throughout the whole semester. The listening material was gathered from the Internet. A primary source was www.ted.com (Technology, Entertainment, Design), which is an organization that invites fascinating people from a variety of fields to speak at their facility in California. Other sources included, NPR, www.youtube.com, and video clips from the Internet. (see Appendix B-1, p. 81).

In each module, the primary objective was not only for the students to learn presentation, research, and discussion skills, but for them to take charge of their own learning. As much as possible, I wanted to simulate the demands and environment of a college course, while still providing a safe and secure forum.

Student Profiles

Before further detailing the three modules, it is necessary to give a brief introduction to the class participants. The fall 2007 class began with seven students: Amy, Heidi, Jin Li, Ji Young, Keiko, Maahir, and Oruc. (All names have been changed.)

- Amy is 19 year-old Vietnamese woman. She is very confident and outspoken. She is highly motivated and happy, with a great perspective on life. Her English is good, but is challenged by pronunciation problems.
- Heidi is a 19 year-old Taiwanese student living in the U.S. with her aunt, who had also been a student of mine. She is almost 100% fluent with no detectable accent. She is very motivated to learn and go to the community college. She often complains of having nothing to do after school, yet she doesn't take advantage of activities at the school or other social pursuits.
- Jin Li is a 20 year-old Chinese woman. She has been in the U.S. for two years; her mother married an American man. Her English is good; she is a fast learner. She is motivated; however, at times, she seems to be more focused on partying, clothes, and meeting men. She hopes to get into the community college as soon as possible.

- Ji Yeong is a Korean woman in her late 20s. She joined for the first two classes. Then she decided that she did not want to do the work, and she was allowed to go down a level.
- Keiko is a Japanese woman in her late twenties. Her husband is working for an American company that is paying for her English lessons. She had spent time in the US in the past (during her teen years). She is nearly 100% fluent but does not believe it. She is highly motivated, has a strong personal desire for success, and has high expectations of herself and others. She does not plan to go to university in the U.S..
- Maahir is a Moroccan man in his early 30s. His English is good but limited; it takes him longer than the other students to articulate a thought or formulate a response to a question. He is motivated to get into the community college but has neither the time nor the desire to do the work required to get there.
- Oruc is a Turkish man in his mid 20s. His fluency and accuracy are weak. Every teacher who had had him in previous classes recommended that he be in level 3 or 4. However, he complained and complained to the owners of the school until they agreed to let him take Level 5 classes. He is a nice person and generally means well, but he is overconfident and unaware of his low ability.
- Tom is a Korean man in his mid-late 20s. He started the class one week late. He has been at the school for a few semesters and is known for his poor attendance and lack of effort. He claims that both are due to his commitments after school and his financial constraints. He needs to get into community college as soon as possible. His English is not quite good enough to do the work at Level 5. His

fluency has improved, but his grammatical accuracy is very weak. He is somewhat aware of his limitations. However, after a lengthy meeting with the teachers, he promises that he will come to class and work hard if he is given the opportunity. He is highly motivated by financial constraints and the prospect of having to return to Korea if he does not get into the community college as soon as possible.

Module I – Group Projects

Description

As the semester began, I explained to the students my plan for the course. I did this via an open discussion and invited their questions. In anticipation of their needs and goals, I had already designed the framework for the course. However, from the very beginning, I made it clear that their input was very important to me. I gave the students a questionnaire that asked for personal information, goals, and what they wanted to learn in the course. Expressing their ideas clearly, especially to native English speakers, and improving listening skills were their chief concerns, so those became primary goals for the course. As we had a relatively small class, I told them we could take the time to customize the course to their needs as we went along. It was important for me to remember this as well. Being open-minded and focusing more on the experience than a predetermined result was critical to the process.

Letting the students choose their own topics was a critical part of the curriculum. From past experience, I had learned that even students with the most basic English language skills will talk at length about something in which they are interested. I believed

that some ownership in the content of the course would keep them engaged and motivated. Also, as the level 5 students prepared to venture into the “real world” I knew that honing their ability to discuss their interests would be an especially important skill.

To begin, the students individually brainstormed topics that they were interested in exploring. When they had a list of at least three topics, I asked them to write them on a piece of paper and hold them up. Ideally the groups would form around shared interest rather than friendships, but it did not all work out that way. Heidi and Keiko, being the most advanced in the class, immediately gravitated toward one another. Oruc had trouble deciding on a topic, but he eventually joined them. They shuffled ideas around and finally decided to research the cultural differences between Turkey, Japan, and Taiwan. Amy and Maahir partnered together and decided to explore air pollution. They both seemed genuinely interested in this issue. Jin Li originally partnered with a young Korean woman, Ji Yeong, who attended the first two classes. However, Ji Yeong dropped out and moved to level 4 after the second class because she did not want to do the required work. Tom then joined the class and partnered with Jin Li. Jin Li had originally wanted to research child labor. However, when she joined with Tom, he explained that he was not interested in child labor. I gave them extra time to discuss their ideas, and they eventually settled on Tom’s first choice: the conflict between North and South Korea. Tom, being Korean, felt strongly about this topic. Although Jin Li did not seem personally interested in the issue, she agreed to it anyway. Sensing that she may have simply been avoiding confrontation, I encouraged her to express her ideas and told her that she did not have to research this topic if she did not want to. She assured me that it was okay. I felt that the

organic process of choosing topics had been somewhat compromised, but I decided to let it be and allow the students to work things out on their own.

The Zone of Proximal Development

Differences in ability levels was another factor to be considered in the grouping process. In this Level 5 class, despite the students being in the same level, there was a variety of abilities. In letting the groupings happen naturally, I had to let go of the control and fear of a disastrous outcome. My fear was appeased by my belief in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), a theory established by Russian researcher and child development theorist, Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky believed that optimal learning takes place in situations where an individual's capabilities are stretched just beyond what they can do independently, but they are able to achieve a desired outcome through scaffolded help from a teacher or more capable peer (Mitchell and Myles 2004, 195-6). For our class, I hoped that the collaboration required in the group work would challenge each student and not only enhance their learning, but increase their motivation. As the teacher, I had two important things to remember: 1) get out of their way and let them learn from themselves and each other, and 2) only intervene if and when frustration levels began to inhibit the learning.

By the second class, the framework for the projects was set forth. The students had chosen partners and topics. They were then given a handout detailing the specific requirements for the group project (see Appendix A-2, p. 63). We discussed each step in detail, and the groups began to discuss their plan to gather research. Part of the class time was used for the groups to work together on their project. To ensure that their discussions were productive, I introduced the ORID method for both content and process.

The ORID method as a framework

The ORID method, also known as the “Focused Conversation method” was developed by the Institute of Cultural Affairs. Among its many purposes, the method provides a logical framework for students to structure their own thinking. There are four basic levels of thinking involved in the ORID method:

Objective: dealing with data and sensory observation

Reflective: related to personal reactions and associations

Interpretive: about meaning, significance and implications

Decisional: concerned with resolution

(Nelson, 3)

I saw the potential for its use in the level 5 speaking class and decided to try it for a few reasons. The primary purpose was to help the students gain a higher level of awareness, a meta-awareness of their learning. The other, more practical, purpose was that I could not physically be with each group at the same time. I had to create a system that would stimulate student dialogue independent of me. One of the most challenging parts for students is finding appropriate sources and sorting through them to find out which ones are actually relevant to their inquiry. The ORID Method for Content (see Appendix A-3, p. 67) was designed to first, help the students determine if their sources were fact or opinion, and second to analyze the information and make a personal connection to it. Through the method the students considered their research on an objective, reflective, interpretive, and decisional level. Respectively: “What are the facts of the story?”, “What does this story make you think about?”, “Why do you think the situation in the story is happening?”, and “Can anything be done about it?”. Once the method was introduced, it

became a framework from which the students could get the most from their sources. During class time, students in each group shared what they found and determined what they wanted to use for their presentation. In addition they jig-sawed with the other groups to get more input and share ideas. I circulated between groups and asked questions to help them narrow the scope of their project.

With the group work and presentations, a major concern of mine was that the students might feel overwhelmed or lose track of time, resulting in a rush toward the finish. To help with this, we discussed the importance of setting clear goals and tasks. Each student was given a “Group Project Log” in which they would record what they had accomplished and the next step they would take. At the end of each week, we took the time to make sure each individual within each group had communicated clearly and understood his or her responsibilities. Some of this was done by the students verbally answering questions on the ORID Method for Process (see Appendix A-4, p.68). A key function of the ORID for process was for the students to take the time to reflect and measure their participation in their group project. The following questions were asked: What did your group accomplish this week? (objective), What parts of the project are you satisfied with? What needs improvement? (reflective), What events led to the results that you are happy with? (interpretive), and What will the group/you do next? (decisional). By responding to these questions, I hoped the students could avoid the confusion and anger that sometimes surfaces with group work, or at the very least have the tools to manage conflicts openly and effectively.

Active listening

Inevitably, there were some breakdowns in communication. Fortunately, I had planned for this and was ready with some Active Listening skills. During class, I noticed that Keiko, Heidi, and Oruc were having some difficulties communicating. I tried to be as objective as possible, but I soon realized that Oruc was at the root of the problem. In my conversations with him, he often said “yes” and nodded his head, even though he did not understand. I noticed that Keiko’s frustration level when working with him was escalating. In a private conversation with her, she revealed that she and Heidi had been having problems with Oruc. Every time it seemed they had made a decision about something, they proceeded, only to later encounter Oruc’s confusion about what they were doing and why. Heidi and Keiko had done research on the Internet and shared it with the group, but Oruc said that he could not find anything on the Internet about his portion of the project: Turkish culture. Keiko had to take him into the computer room and show him to type “Turkish culture” in the search engine. Dozens of sites with information on Turkish culture were available. He claimed that he had done that but had not been able to find anything. At this point, Oruc’s language weaknesses were quite evident. Both in listening and reading, he was unable to keep up with Heidi and Keiko. Keiko said she was tired of being the teacher and trying to keep Oruc on track.

In the next class, I introduced Active Listening to the group. I believed that it would give the students the skills that they would need not only for their project but for life in general. We practiced together, and they began to put it to use in their group discussions. I soon witnessed Keiko saying to Oruc, “Okay, repeat that back to me...” After a week, I checked in with Keiko again, and she told me that the Active Listening

was really working for their group and that Oruc was doing much better. It was still labor intensive to work with him, but he was responding better to the demands of the group, and they were happier. The ZPD was alive and well in that group. The active listening took some coaching in the beginning. I would spend time with each group and listen to their discussion, interjecting with, “Jin Li, can you repeat back what Tom just said”, or “Okay Maahir, what did Amy just say?”. It seemed unnatural at first, but the students began to see the benefits of using it in group work.

Scaffolding for presentations

As the groups began preliminary research for their topics, we began to talk about exactly what a presentation entailed. I elicited information from about what factors they considered when giving a presentation. After this discussion, we watched two videos about presentations on youtube.com: “Killer Presentation Skills” by J. Douglas Jeffreys and “How to Give a Good Presentation” by students from The Access Foundation at Kingston College. In the next class, I gave a sample presentation to the class. I had debated on whether to give an example of a good presentation and a bad presentation, or just one presentation with good and bad characteristics. I decided on the latter because I felt that it would require more analytical processing by the students. To assess the presentation, I created a presentation rubric (see Appendix A-5, p. 69). Following the presentation, the students discussed their opinions with a partner, then as a group. For the most part, they all agreed about the more obvious points, like body language and voice volume. It was interesting to realize that Heidi thought the hideous, fluorescent orange poster that I used was a great color choice, while the other students disagreed. This was an important learning moment, and exactly what I had hoped would occur. By assessing

the sample presentation and working through the rubric, the students were learning the standards and what was expected of them.

Way of Council

In addition to selecting topics and determining the standards for presentations, it was important for me to learn about the students' motivation levels before beginning the project. I asked them, on a scale of 1-10 (10 being the highest), how motivated they felt to do their group project. Keiko:8, Oruc:8, Heidi:8, Amy:7, Maahir:7, Jin Li:6, Tom was not there yet. Asking for this information helped me to know who felt anxious or apprehensive, and who felt confident. We often did this at the beginning of class via Way of Council with a talking piece. Each student would speak, while the others listened, and would then pass the talking piece to whomever wanted to speak next.

The Ojai Foundation defines Council as “the practice of speaking and listening from the heart. Through compassionate, heartfelt expression and empathic, non-judgmental listening, Council inspires a non-hierarchical form of deep communication that reveals a group's vision and purpose.” I first encountered the Way of Council in the SMAT program at SIT. I found it to be a powerful and useful method of communication. It gives each participant an opportunity to share information, insights, and feelings with the group, as well as listen to the other members of the group. In my experience, Council made me feel more connected to my classmates, and therefore more responsible in how I communicated my ideas and how I listened to and responded to others. I was excited to try this out with my students, whose cultural notions of communicating often clashed with one another's. My plan was to use the Council approach with the students to

facilitate academic discussions, but also to use it as a means to get to know one another better.

One of my favorite things about Council is that it is done with the participants sitting in a circle. (This actually changed the way I arrange all of my classrooms. Every student can see every face instead of the backs of heads.) The chairs were always placed in a circle, and the students were always eager to talk. After a few weeks, I never had to move the chairs and desks myself, the students did it before I got to the room. For some of the Councils we simply talked about what we had done over the weekend. At other times I asked them to talk about what was going on in their lives, to tell about one good thing, or something that was difficult or causing stress in their lives. We learned that Heidi, who lived with her older aunt, was dreadfully bored after school. We learned that Tom was so busy with after-school commitments, that he rarely got more than five hours of sleep. Keiko shared her stress about trying to be a good student and a good wife. Day in and day out, starting the class with a Council was a way for us to clear the air, forget about other things for the moment, and concentrate on learning. More importantly, it allowed the students to get to know things about each other that they otherwise may not have shared in the casual chit-chat between classes. This level of familiarity definitely helped the students to relax in the class and view our time together as safe and refreshing.

The listening component

As the students had requested more time in class to work with their group, that left less time for structured listening activities. However, we were able to manage and make the most of the time. As a compromise, the students agreed to do some of the listening activities for homework. My goal with using the TED talks was to give the

students an opportunity to hear a variety of native speakers who speak with different speeds, have different accents, and use different terminology and expressions. Many of the listening activities that come with textbooks are short 5-10 minute clips. My students were preparing to sit in lectures of at least 50 minutes. They needed to learn skills that would help them not only survive in, but thrive in a full-length class. I chose TED talks that I thought the students would find interesting and potentially useful regarding the content. I knew that the talks would be challenging, but I had to remember that one of their chief complaints was that they had a hard time understanding native speakers. Years of experience with listening activities that used canned conversations had not prepared them for the real world. Keeping the ZPD in mind, I hoped to improve their listening skills by challenging them just beyond their comfort level. Depending on the length of the talk or clip, we listened up to three times. If we did not have enough time in class, the students took their questions home and answered them independently. An important part of this process was that the students had to use a different color ink to take notes each time they listened. This helped them, and me, to notice how much and what they were understanding. Some of the talks were quite difficult, mostly because of the speaker's speed. However, I reminded the students to focus just on the questions that I had asked them on the worksheets (see Appendices B-2-B-8, pp. 81-88). I did not expect them to understand 100%, and I made that very clear to them. Even, if they only understood 30-40%, the most important thing was to not give up. To prepare for lectures, they had to expand their vocabulary and build their listening stamina. On more than one occasion, Amy tuned out in the middle of the talk and stopped taking notes because she could not understand something. I tried to help her manage her frustration, while trying to also

illustrate the point that tuning out could lead to her missing vital information. We discussed the importance of preparing to listen by reviewing key words and listening for changes in pitch or volume in the speaker's voice that might indicate a transition. Eventually, she and the other students made progress. Some talks were more difficult than the others, but the students persevered, enjoying the challenge and appreciating the exposure to something new and different.

The presentations

As the weeks went by, work on the projects progressed. Each group was responsible for documenting what they accomplished at the end of each day in their Group Project Log (see Appendix A-6, p. 70). The students had asked for more in-class time to work together because it was difficult to meet each other after school. Although this meant that we would not have as much time to devote to the listening component of our class, I agreed because I wanted the students to feel comfortable with their projects, not stressed. I continued to circulate among the three groups, asking questions to guide them. It was critical that the students remained at the center of their projects and use their language skills to express their ideas and make decisions together.

My role in their work that took place during class varied between that of an eavesdropper, a mirror, and an advisor. While the students worked with their groups, my first responsibility was to simply listen to them. Eavesdropping on simultaneous group discussions was a challenge, but one that I grew accustomed to and actually enjoyed. I listened to find out many things such as, what each group member was contributing to their group, how the group members were listening to and responding to ideas, and how they were managing conflict. Based on what I heard, I got a sense of who would need me

to fulfill the other two roles as a mirror or advisor. As a mirror, I basically listened to a group, or an individual, and repeated it back to them. It was a basic active listening technique that I had taught them, and it worked well for those that were generally on-track, but just needed to hear their thoughts from someone else. I stepped in as advisor as a last resort. In the interest of creating a positive, successful experience for the students, I found it necessary at times to guide them. Many times this came in the form of questioning the relevance of a source or advising a group to narrow the scope of their topic. In true experiential fashion, I could have let some of the groups march on to their own demise. Perhaps some lessons would be learned that way, but I wanted my students to leave the class with more than regret and a promise to do better next time.

Finally, presentation week had arrived. In the class prior to presentation day, the groups had prepared for a dress rehearsal. Each group took different corners of the room and went over their presentation with each other, fine tuning the details. I had made it very clear that they were not to read their entire presentation off of note cards. To get them used to using their notes as aids rather than a crutch, we practiced the “Read and Look up” method I had learned from my SIT professor, Bonnie Mennell. I fell in love with this method immediately. With “Read and Look Up”, the students are allowed to look down at their notes, however, they can only speak when they are looking up and making eye contact with their audience. In the beginning it was very challenging for the Level 5 students, but they quickly saw how it helped them retain information and deliver a smoother presentation. They had been practicing it for weeks, sometimes with gentle reminders from me to “look up”. By official rehearsal time, however, they were using the method on their own, challenging themselves and feeling the rewards of their hard work.

When presentation day finally arrived, there was a palpable energy in the air. The students were a little nervous but excited nonetheless. The presentations went well, with one exception. Amy's partner Maahir, was a no-show. During his rehearsal he had said that he was excited and ready for the presentation. He confessed that he had to do a little more work over the weekend, but he felt good about it. He had not contacted Amy or me to tell us that he could not make it. Amy handled the situation like a professional and gave the presentation by herself. Her confidence and enthusiasm about her topic overshadowed Maahir's absence. I was very proud of her. She later wrote in her self-assessment, "He didn't come to give the presentation. At first I shivered but it's ok. I could handle it". When Maahir came to the next class, he told us that he had been sick. To be honest, although I wanted to, I did not believe him. However, I gave him the benefit of the doubt and offered him another opportunity to do the presentation with Amy. He said okay, but then he never did it. When I followed up with him again, he said he just did not have time. I was disappointed and I told him so, then it was time to move on. The other presentations were great. Heidi, Keiko and Oruc acted out role plays to demonstrate cultural difference between Japan and Turkey. They were humorous and very effective. Both their handout and Powerpoint slides were excellent and demonstrated a great deal of thought and attention to detail. Tom and Jin Li's presentation was good, although not quite the same caliber as Heidi, Keiko, and Oruc's.

Student feedback and self-assessment

Immediately following each presentation the students who had just presented were given a Self-Assessment questionnaire (see Appendix A-7, p. 71). The first question asked them to give their immediate thoughts about the presentation. The other students

were given a Presentation Feedback form (see Appendix A-8, p. 72) that asked three questions: What did you learn from this presentation? What did you like about this presentation and why? Do you have any suggestions for improvement? They put their names on their feedback, an important part of “owning” what they say, and gave them to the presenters. For homework, the students were to complete the remainder of the questions on the Self-Assessment form and read the feedback from their classmates.

In the next class, we began with a Council, and I asked them how they felt now that they were done. With the exception of Maahir, all of the students, felt really good. They knew that they had made some mistakes and that their presentations were not perfect, but they felt very proud at having gone through the process and completed it. Heidi’s emphatic words seemed to say it all, “Yes, I did it!”. After the council, I had a private feedback session with each group. First, I asked them to assess the strength and weaknesses of their presentation. Then we watched video footage that I had recorded on my MacBook. The idea of watching themselves made the students a bit squeamish at first. I assured them that I was not doing it to torture them, but rather to affirm the positive aspects of what they had done and raise their awareness of areas that needed improvement. I had already chosen clips to show them, so that reduced their anxiety of having to watch the whole thing. From her classmates feedback, Amy had learned that she speaks too quickly. As she watched the video, she agreed that they were right. It was an awakening for her. Oruc also discovered from feedback and the video that he sometimes does not speak loudly enough. There were many “Ah-ha” moments. Overall, it was very positive experience for them.

Further written feedback from the students revealed many things. First, the group work was in fact a strong motivating factor. Keiko said, “The group work was a really good experience for me. It takes a lot of effort to communicate with each other since we are all still trying to learn English. However, when we have a moment when we understand each other, we feel very excited and the motivates us.” She also added that, “I feel sad when some people don’t take the work serious [sic]. Especially if we have to work as a group. I get really stressed out.” Her stress, as she had intimated before, came from working with Oruc. On the other end of that stress, were Oruc’s comments, “[It] was only me who needed help, so they helped me. I couldn’t help them as much...but I tried...they helped me without refusing.” Heidi wrote that, “Keiko is like, well, some kind of leader”. It became clear that Keiko had been a driving force in the group. She helped to organize things and keep the group on task. Although it had been stressful for Heidi and Keiko at times, Oruc realized this and appreciated what he had learned from them. There was a struggle but the group pulled together to deliver a great final product. Jin Li liked group work; being accountable to another person was a big motivating factor for her. Tom was motivated by the fact that all of his classmates wanted to participate. The energy of all of the groups was, in a sense, contagious. Amy said, “Working by ourselves on our projects with the direction is helping me. That practice lets me know how I can work with other people and if I am ready for college or not.” Amidst the ups and downs of group work, the one consistent complaint was time, or lack thereof. Because of other commitments or lack of transportation, it was almost impossible for the students to get together to work on their projects.

Teacher reflection

Throughout the first module I did my best to reflect in action and for action. Allowing for more in-class time to work on the projects was an adjustment, but I felt that it was the right decision. Judging by the feedback, the students had a positive experience. There were some bumps along the way, and it was not a perfect process, but each one of them, with the exception of Maahir, learned a great deal and stayed motivated throughout the process. In Maahir's feedback, he wrote that I had not given him an example of how to do a presentation, and that he did not know what to do. This was troubling to me, first, because I had in fact given a sample presentation along with a rubric for the students to score my performance. I had intentionally incorporated both negative and positive aspects into my presentation in order to make it a more realistic learning opportunity. Secondly, at no point during the five weeks had he indicated that he did not know what to do. Whenever I had checked in with him and Amy, he seemed to be on track; he did some research, prepared an outline, discussed visual aides. His absence from the final product and reluctance to take advantage of the second chance that I had given him, were disappointing. I do not know what else I could have done to reach out to him. I knew that the group work was challenging for him due to his commitments outside of class, and I hoped that the next Module would be better for him.

Module II – Community Ethnographers

Description

After the completion of the first Module, our class downsized. Keiko had only signed up for a five week term but had been considering staying for another five or ten

weeks. She finally decided to stop taking courses because it was interfering with her marriage. The demands of all of her classes had been taking up too much of her time and her husband felt that she was not spending enough time attending her domestic duties of cooking and cleaning. She attributed some of this to her ambitious personality, saying that when she gets involved in something, she gets completely immersed in it and strives to meet her own high expectations. I was sad to see her go; however, with her native-like English she really did not belong in ESL classes anymore. I suggested that she take some of the informal continuing education classes at the university. Oruc, too, decided to leave. He went to another language school, yet it was not quite clear why. Often students like Oruc bounce from school to school trying to find the fastest track that will get them into a university. Every language school has different arrangements with universities throughout the country, and some students often just want to find a school with the easiest admission requirements. Another reason is that they refuse to accept the level that they have been placed in and, hope that administrators at another school will give a more favorable assessment of their skills.

With five remaining students, we continued on to Module II. In this part of the course the students would independently explore an issue that was somehow related to the community. They would collaborate with their classmates during class to get ideas and ongoing feedback about their inquiry. As mentioned before, students were given the option of continuing with their topic from Module I or choosing a new topic. The new topic had to be something in which they had a strong personal interest. They all decided to choose new topics. Jin Li wanted to know more about Americans and tattoos. To some this may seem like a mundane topic. However, in many Asian countries tattoos are

symbols of gang membership, so for her it was a provocative topic. Amy wanted to know more about Americans and their exercise and dieting habits. Tom, who wanted to pursue a graduate degree in architecture, wanted to know more about interior design and spatial planning. Maahir, who had studied science in Morocco, chose to explore how to become a good scientist. Heidi, an avid music fan, was curious about how rock bands are formed. Research would be gathered by talking to both regular, ordinary people, average “average joes” as we called them, and industry professionals. Although learning something new about their area of interest was important, I wanted the focus to remain on the process and their interaction with native English speakers.

First, though, the students had to determine what they knew about their topic and exactly what they wanted to learn. This was achieved by creating KWL charts. Once they determined what they already knew and wanted to know, the “K” and “W”, students then talked with a classmate to flesh out their ideas. The next step was to brainstorm a list of questions that they would ask the “average joes” and the professionals. The questions that were generated were themselves, a great exercise in grammar and pronunciation. Their natural curiosity caused to them to stretch and attempt to articulate complicated ideas. After the students worked with each other on their questions, I helped each of them to fine tune their questions. I was pleased at the “real world” practicality of this part of the project, and they had yet to talk to anyone! Two of their biggest concerns were that a native speaker would not understand their questions or that they would not understand the speakers’ responses. To get some experience, the students practiced interviewing each other with their lists of questions. The students were instructed to role play the interviewee and give spontaneous “real” answers. This forced both the interviewee and

interviewer to pay careful attention to intonation, pronunciation, and grammar. The students found that using their imaginations to get into their roles was fun too. For additional reinforcement, we listened to interviews from National Public Radio. While listening, we talked about the natural flow of the interview process and allowing room for questions and answers that were not on the official list.

While the students practiced with each other, I took each one aside to practice with me. With this class, I always spoke in my natural voice, not the slower, simplified “teacher voice” I used with the beginning students. I varied my speed as I would in a natural conversation and used all of the idioms and expressions that I normally use. As they were preparing to be in a college classroom, they had to get used to the rapid speech of their teachers and classmates. I encouraged them to stop me at any time if they heard a new word or expression or they just did not understand what I had said. If I felt that they were not asking enough questions, I stopped and used some Comprehension Checking Questions (CCQs) to see if they really understood. Sometimes they were embarrassed to admit that they did not understand something. This, I explained, was something that they would need to overcome. As international students in an American college or university, they would need to shamelessly ask a lot of questions if they wanted to succeed. I shared with them the feedback I had gotten from former students who had gone on to the community college. One former student, Farat, told me that when he got to community college, he had to work hard to make friends, not just for social reasons but for academic reasons. When he could not understand something that had been said in class, he had to rely on his American friends to help him out. I shared this story with the students, and it helped them to understand that knowing what you do *not* know is just as important as

knowing what you *do* know. In fact, it is the former that generates new learning experiences and growth.

In the weeks that followed, the students practiced their interview skills in class and gave progress reports to the class. They engaged in partner discussions, as well as group Councils. Since this project was more independent, they did not need as much class time as they did for the group projects. Unlike, Module I, the goal of Module II was not a formal presentation. The results of their research were to be presented informally, in a discussion group. I thought that this might be a nice way to segue into the third Module.

When it came time for the students to report on their findings, the results were disappointing. Despite my insistence that they interview as many people as possible, they had each only interviewed one or two “average joes” and one professional. Jin Li went to great lengths to talk to a tattoo artist; she went to his shop a few times, waiting patiently for the moment he said he had time to talk. Amy, Heidi, Tom and Maahir, however, made little effort to find a professional person in their field of interest. Amy, Heidi, and Tom were interested in their topics and enjoyed what they *did* do, but they were unable to do more. In the class before they were expected to present their findings, I discovered that Maahir had not interviewed anyone, not even an “average joe”. When I asked him why, he did not have an answer. I told him that he had to interview at least one “average joe” by the next class, and that if he could not find a professional, that he could tell us about his favorite scientist. He agreed. Unfortunately, for his presentation he read information about Albert Einstein and Thomas Edison directly from a piece of paper.

Student feedback

Feedback from the students on Module II was mixed. On the positive side, they liked being able to do the work independently. Heidi and Jin Li were more motivated by group work, while Amy and Tom were more motivated to work on their own. The downside to this particular project was finding people to interview. Even Heidi and Amy, two of the more outgoing students, had a hard time with that aspect of the project. Maahir did not interview anyone.

Teacher reflection

I felt that Module II was a failure. It was too late before I realized that my expectations for the students were too high, and that the task was beyond their capabilities. I pushed them beyond their Zone of Proximal Development. Although we had practiced interviews in the classroom, I had not given them an opportunity to interview a native speaker (other than myself) in a secure setting. At the time, asking them to go out and find someone to interview seemed achievable to me. I assumed that they could, in a sense, become reporters and hunt down leads, but I failed to realize that they were English learners, not reporters. Rather than scaffolding, and helping the students build confidence, I skipped steps, and expected too much too soon. Logistics were also a concern for the students. Lack of resources, time constraints, and lack of transportation limited their abilities to find people to interview and get to them. In hindsight, I have realized that just attempting the project in Module II required far more planning, time, and effort than I was able to give. My students did not succeed because I had not prepared them for success. This was a painful, albeit valuable, lesson for me. As I

went forward into Module III, and mentally prepared for future Module Is and IIs, I drew on this experience and let it guide me.

Module III – Focused Group Discussion

Description

In Module III, the students would expand and hone their discussion skills. In each class we would listen to or watch a video or internet clip and then have a discussion about the topic. As in Modules I and II, the topics would come from them. The students were required to submit their topics to me in advance. I would then search the internet for a compatible listening piece such as a news clip or interview, or a TED talk. In past student discussion groups, I had witnessed awkward silences, dominating monologues, and chaotic free-for-alls. Some students just spouted ideas that had no factual basis. To counter those dreaded disasters, I tried to find informative listening pieces that showed different perspectives. I had seen how things could spiral downward. With this new approach I hoped to keep the spiral moving in an upward trajectory. Since the students had expressed their frustration at being unable to express complicated ideas, I wanted to create a situation where that was exactly what was called for. I wanted to help them overcome their to play it safe and ask only simple questions that required simple answers. Therefore, I introduced the method of using specific roles to generate deeper, richer discussions.

The idea of roles for the speaking class was adapted from the ones used in literature circles. I first learned about literature circles in an article by Harvey Daniels, “A

New Old Idea”. As the title suggests this practice is not a new one, but rather one that is comprised of a new combination of ideas from several fields. In literature circles, students take on certain roles to learn how to connect with and discuss the text in different ways. Although the students in my Level 5 speaking class would not be discussing a shared piece of literature, I thought that the model could work for our purposes.

We began with four roles: The Sage, The Weaver, The Empathizer, and The Prophet. These roles were adapted from Harvey Daniels, with additions by Paul LeVasseur, SIT faculty member, adapted from the work of Richard Beach. A fifth role, The Devil’s Advocate, was added by me.

Role descriptions:

The Sage asks questions that address the facts of the topic. *What is fact? What is opinion? How do we know this?*

The Weaver asks how the issues discussed relate to them personally. *How does this relate to my life? Why should I care? Why should someone else care?*

The Empathizer asks questions to help understand how the people affected by the issue feel. *How would you feel if you were that person in that situation? What would it feel like to be that person? What would that person think/ do and why?*

The Prophet asks about the future of the issue being discussed. *If there is a conflict, will it be resolved? Will this happen again? What can we do to prevent something from happening again or make sure that it does happen again?*

The Devil's Advocate challenges the discussion members to see something from a different perspective. Ex: *(From a discussion about banning smoking) What if a smoker knows the risks and still wants to smoke?*

To introduce the roles, I created visual representations for each one. A big black question mark for The Sage; what looked like pieces of fabric woven together (my art skills are not the best) for The Weaver, a big red heart for The Empathizer; a crystal ball for The Prophet; and a little red devil for The Devil's Advocate. These shapes intrigued the students, and they touched them with child-like curiosity. It is quite possible that they were also marveling at my terrible art work.

Before we began, the students were asked to brainstorm a list of topics that they would be interested in discussing. Each student got to choose the topic for the week. Heidi chose the legal drinking age in the U.S., Jin Li chose smoking, Tom chose cloning, Amy chose cosmetic surgery, and Maahir never chose a topic and did not come to class. Each student was responsible for bringing some kind of information related to their topic to the class. They were also required to inform me of their chosen topic in advance, so I could find an appropriate listening component.

Before each discussion, the students did some pre-discussion work, in which they talked about what they knew or did not know about the topic, and what questions they had. I typically allotted ten to fifteen minutes for this. This was followed by preparation for the listening component. We would take a few minutes to preview the questions together. Sometimes I did not provide questions, but rather asked the students to take notes as if they were attending a lecture. Then we usually listened two to three times.

Depending on the length of the listening piece, that took anywhere from twenty to forty minutes. After the final listening, the students would compare notes and try to help each other clarify main ideas or details. I usually tried to wrap up the listening portion by the break, so we could use the entire second hour of class for discussion.

There were times when one student would have a really hard time with the listening one week, but would do much better the week after. I attributed this to their varying vocabulary levels and exposure to native speakers on certain topics. Using the Zone of Proximal Development was critical during this phase because I had observed that students often lose confidence when they think they can not understand anything in English. Giving them each an opportunity to discuss a topic of their choice, gave them a head start which built confidence.

For the first discussion, I provided a topic. To get the students acquainted with using the roles to generate discussions, we practiced each role together. What kind of questions would The Prophet ask? The Weaver? In the classes that followed, they began to use the roles on their own. I helped them to rephrase their questions and responses to clarify their ideas. I tried not to intrude on the actual dialogue, but serve rather as a conduit. There were times when I told them that I would not be involved at all, and that they would have to work together to keep the discussion going while expressing and clarifying ideas.

The students were encouraged to make connections between their different discussions and the listening pieces. I was pleasantly surprised to see that actually happen one day. In the MSN video segment about cosmetic surgery, “Under the Knife”, the students had learned that the frontal lobe of the brain is not fully developed until the age

of twenty. When the debate about lowering the drinking age to eighteen came up, that little fact about the brain played an important role in the discussion. They had all been strongly in favor of lowering the drinking age in the U.S. to eighteen, until they learned about how alcohol could affect a developing brain. This idea got their wheels turning and led to further discussions of legal ages for other activities such as having sex, having a child, getting married, owning a gun, driving, and enlisting in the military. It was exciting as a teacher to see the students eagerly grab for the question mark or the heart as the conversation became more passionate and engaging.

Student feedback

Module III was much more successful than Module II. The students all felt that the discussions were really helpful and interesting. Choosing their own topics motivated them to participate. It was challenging for them to dig deeper and have more meaningful discussions, but that was exactly what they had wanted to learn. Both Amy and Jin Li said that they felt more confident about speaking English. Tom became more aware of how difficult it was for him to express his ideas because of his poor grammar, and he felt motivated to work harder. In a video taped feedback session, in which I was not present, Tom, expressed his appreciation for my class. He said that he felt more motivated in my class than in the others, mostly because of what I demanded of him, and because I took the time to get to know him and understand him. Heidi, felt more confident as well. Heidi passed the TOEFL and went to community college for the next semester. When she returned to the school for a visit, we talked about her classes and how she was handling the transition. She said that my class had really helped her, especially since the American

students talk so much. The hardest thing, she said, were the chaotic discussions that happened in her classes. She missed the talking pieces.

Teacher reflection

After the disaster that was Module II, Module III came as a relief. Heidi, Amy, Jin Li and Tom all benefited from the discussion group. One of the most difficult things for me was to stay quiet when the inevitable awkward moments of silence brought a discussion to a standstill. It was exciting to see the students grow and stretch. After Keiko left, Heidi took the post as the most advanced student in the class. It was difficult to balance her need to be challenged with Tom's need for patience. Although Tom was not my most improved student in terms of his English skills, I saw a maturity and level of accountability in him that I had not known in him before. He really rose to the occasion, and I was proud of him. Maahir, on the other hand, continued his reticence and never fully got into the course. For their final exam, I chose the discussion topic. (This was the only time I chose the topic.) The story of an American teacher in Saudi Arabia who had allowed the children in her class to name a teddy bear "Mohammed" was all over the news. I thought that it would make for a provocative discussion. All of the students, except for Maahir, thought so too. Rather than engaging in and exploring the topic, he declared that the whole issue and the religious fanatics were 'stupid'. At that point, I felt that there was little I could do to please him. This was disappointing, but I eventually accepted that there were circumstances that were beyond my control. He claimed that, due to his commitments after school, he did not have time to do any work outside of class. He began to resent being assigned work that could not be done in the classroom. I

agreed that my class was not a traditional one. I also explained to him that, in a college level course, a certain amount of independent work was expected of students. He was not an inexperienced teenager, so I found it perplexing that this would be a new concept for him. I asked him a few times how he expected to succeed in an American university, and again, he did not have an answer. He shrugged it off and said it would be okay.

Interestingly enough, throughout the semester we still managed to have a good rapport.

We joked around in class and in the hallways. Still, the fact that I had not had academic success with Maahir bothered me. To maintain my sanity, I thought about the students who had not only enjoyed the class, but had learned from it as well.

Chapter 3 : Curriculum And Community In A Speaking/Listening Course

Course Overview: Spring 2008

Going into the spring semester, I was excited about working with a new group of students and using what I had learned from the fall semester to improve the course. Having made some mistakes and gotten feedback from the students, I felt more comfortable and confident with my vision of the curriculum. In the very first class, we talked about what they wanted out of the course and what I had planned. My intention was to follow the curriculum that I had used in the fall semester, but to also leave room for adjusting to the students' individual needs. Modules I and III stayed roughly the same; small changes were made to account for the number of students in the class. Module II changed completely (see Appendix A-9, p. 73 for syllabus).

From the fall semester, I had learned that getting the students out into the community was just not as feasible as I had hoped. It required a great deal more resources and time, which neither I, nor they were able to provide. However, I wanted to preserve that element of reaching into the community. Hence, the idea for the podcast was born. This time the students would create a weekly Internet podcast. A podcast usually consists of audio or visual material that is available for download from the Internet. The initial segment ideas for the podcast came from me, but I left it up to the students to make any changes. Our primary audience was the other students at the school; however, it was very clear that anyone in the world could listen! Recording was done via the GarageBand program on my Mac. I then created a website, www.superstoop.com, which would serve as the host for the podcasts. Since this was an experiment, I told the students that we

would commit to five weeks of podcasting, and if it was going well, we would continue it through the end of the semester.

Student Profiles

One of the biggest differences between the fall and spring semesters was the number of students and the impact that rolling admissions had on the class. We started the spring semester with three new students, Paco, Min Hee, and Soo Min, but ended with nine. (All names have been changed.)

- Paco is a Mexican man in his late twenties. He is highly motivated and fun and brings great energy to the class. His English fluency is great but his accuracy is poor. He is married to an American woman and hopes to get an MBA.
- Min Hee is a young Korean woman in her early twenties. She has already attended community college for one semester but returned to work on her English. She wants to return to college and study nursing.
- Soo Min a Korean mom in her late 40s. Her husband is in Korea, so she is a single mom, raising her children in a foreign country. She worries a lot, but has a great attitude. Her vocabulary and grammar are excellent. She had been in my writing class in the fall semester.
- John, a smart and witty man from Turkmenistan, is in his early 20s. His English is very good. The other students acknowledge immediately and turn to him for pronunciation and grammar help.
- Won Jin is a Korean man in his mid-late 20s. He had been at the school before and was notorious for his poor attendance and lack of effort. He has a great personality and is liked by the other students. He got into the community college but they

terminated his records. It was unclear whether the termination was due to financial or attendance reasons. He returned to ESL classes to keep his student visa in status.

- Chang Ho is a Korean man in his late 20s-early 30s. He had been at the school before and was known for his lack of attendance and effort. He claimed to be very depressed, and it was known that he drank a lot. Despite his poor English skills, he had managed to get into a university. He had been taking classes there but was terminated for some reason and returned to take ESL classes to keep his student visa in status.
- Soledad is a woman in her mid-30s from Cameroon. She is married and has an infant. She had previously attended medical school in her country, but she switched to nursing. She plans to finish her nursing program in the U.S. Her English is good, although she has some pronunciation problems that interfere with communication.
- Sung Hee is a young Korean woman in her early 20s. She is very intelligent and polite. She was supposed to be in Level 4 but the class was over its limit. She tried Level 3 but did not like it, so she begged to be in Level 5.
- Alberto is a Filipino man in his late 40s-early 50s. His English is very good. He has great energy and enthusiasm.
- Hyun Min is a Korean man in his mid 20s. He enrolled halfway through the semester. He came to two classes and had his eyes closed for most of the time. I moved him to Level 4.

Module I – Individual Presentations

The core objectives of Module I were for the students to learn how to give a formal presentation, improve their language skills, and build their confidence. A critical

component is that all of this is done while exploring a topic of their choice that they are interested in learning about. With only three students, Paco, Soo Min, and Min Hee, I saw two options: one group project or three individual projects. There were pros and cons to each, and we talked about them together. With a group project they would work closely together; however, they would all have to decide on the same topic, and they would lose the benefit of observing another group and giving feedback. With individual presentations they would have to do all of the work on their own, but they could collaborate with each other and share ideas. After a discussion, we decided that individual presentations would be best. They each had different interests, and wanted the opportunity to explore them. They also thought that it would be interesting to learn about each other's topics in addition to their own. The structure of the class during Module I was roughly the same as it had been in the fall. I spent time with the students individually, and they spent time with each other, asking questions and offering advice and feedback.

As soon as the students chose their topics, we got to work on the research process. Soo Min's topic was "Stress Management" Paco's was "Sustainable Energy", and Min Hee's was "Cats". As with the previous group, this group needed some direction in terms of focusing their topics. In the weeks that followed, the students shared their research and ideas with each other as they pieced their projects together. Active Listening was used to facilitate their dialogues with each other. This was a new process for them, and they enjoyed the challenge of tuning into one another. As I had done with the other group, I gave this group a sample presentation so they were clear about what was expected of

them. At the students' request, we also worked on creating and using Power Point presentations.

Although having only three students in the class created some challenges for me, it also meant that I could spend more quality time with them. I felt a sense of intimacy with this group that I had not felt in any other class. We usually began or ended the class with a Council. The time to check in with each other and share what was going on in our lives was precious. Class time often felt like hanging out with friends rather than teaching. The learning was happening in such a natural way that the class always felt refreshing. I felt there was a great deal of mutual respect between the four of us that allowed for an exchange of ideas and trust.

When presentation day finally arrived, the students were nervous and excited. The presentations were great. Soo Min had to overcome her nerves, Min Hee had some technical problems, and Paco completely blanked a few times. I was impressed with how supportive they were of each other. I filmed their presentations using my Mac, and we used the film during our feedback session. I gave them the choice of doing feedback with me individually or as a group. They all decided that they felt comfortable doing it as a group, and they focused on learning from the experience rather than feeling embarrassed. Paco had felt terrible about his presentation, and thought that he had completely blown it. However, after seeing the video, he felt much better. He was able to see the positive parts, such as his great PowerPoint slides and his knowledge of the topic, instead of focusing solely on what had gone wrong. As we took turns with each student and viewed a pre-selected clip, I made sure to give the student an opportunity to reflect on their own clip first. What did he or she like or not like about it? This was a great exercise in

awareness for them. Because they felt so comfortable with each other, the process was very open and honest. They offered gentle pieces of constructive criticism, and there was definitely some laughter!

Student feedback

Feedback from Module I was overwhelmingly positive. Each one of the students enjoyed researching their topic and presenting it to their classmates. They also really enjoyed learning about the other topics. Soo Min had not been a fan of cats prior to Min Hee's presentation, but afterward she admitted that she was very curious about them. Soo Min and Min Hee both learned new information about sustainable energy from Paco. Soo Min's tips for healthy ways to manage stress were helpful throughout the semester. The students also said that the process itself was a learning experience. The Active Listening, and the observation and feedback were all new skills for them. They were grateful that they had the opportunity to learn and use those skills in a safe environment. All three of them said that they were motivated by their own curiosity, their classmates, and my encouragement.

Teacher reflection

As Module I ended, I felt proud of what my students had accomplished. Their academic skills had improved, but I also knew that they had grown as people. Their awareness had been heightened. Initially I had worried that they would miss out on something by not doing a group project. However, seeing their collaborative spirit and support of one another erased that concern for me. Compared to the group from the fall, everyone in this group had had a positive experience. There was no group drama or

disappointment. I had to admit that it felt good to have that kind of outcome. I knew that part of it had to do with the size of the class and, but that part of it had to do with my interaction with the group, and the simple things I had done to create a community with them.

Module II – The Podcast

From the moment I got the idea for the podcast, it seemed to take on a life of its own. First of all, I had no idea how to make a podcast or a website; I am not the least bit tech savvy. However, I had the tools; I just had to learn how to use them. The “how” of doing things was something that I had to learn as it came up. I read Mac tutorials and met with specialists at the Apple store to figure out what I needed to do. The “why” was always very clear to me though. The main objectives of the podcast were: 1) To increase improve and increase students’ awareness of their speaking skills and pronunciation, 2) To create community in the classroom by working on a collaborative project, and 3) To provide a source of entertainment and knowledge for their immediate community. Fortunately, my vision was strong enough for the students to go along with me and trust me. None of them had ever done anything like this, and, naturally, they had some questions and concerns. *How much work would it require? Would it really help them improve their English? Can we really do it?*

Podcast segments

After we talked about the goals of the podcast, the students decided on the following segments:

- 1) Fun Facts – In this segment, the student chooses three to five fun facts taken from the Internet.
- 2) Five Questions with a Teacher – In this segment, a student interviews one of the teachers at the school. The same five questions, which were generated by the students, are asked of each interviewee: What is your favorite restaurant in Austin? How do you spend your free time? What is your most memorable experience? If you were an animal, which animal would you be and why? If you could go anywhere, where would you go?
- 3) Culture Corner –In this segment, a student reports on something interesting about a specific culture.
- 4) Movie/Book/Music Review – In this segment, a student reviews a movie, book, or music.
- 5) This Week in History – In this segment, a student provides historical facts that happened during the week that podcast is broadcast.
- 6) Arts and Entertainment – In this segment, a student provides information of upcoming events and places of interest in Austin.
- 7) Student Interview – In this segment, I interview a student at the school. This was not part of my original plan, but the students insisted that I take part in the podcast too. In the spirit of collaboration, I had to oblige!

The class met on Mondays and Wednesday from 12:10-2:00. I tried to establish a recording schedule that would allow us to practice and record the podcast, as well as do some additional listening activities with a TED talk or Internet video. This was challenging initially because I did not know how long it would take the students to record

their segments. After the first few weeks, Mondays were designated as listening days and Wednesdays were for podcast recording. A schedule was created so that each student knew his or her responsibilities for the podcast. I gave out a chart, Podcast Responsibilities (see Appendix A-10, p. 76) with detailed responsibilities and resources. In addition, they were given Podcast Guidelines, a detailed list of guidelines with sample mini “scripts” to help them prepare (see Appendix A-11, p. 77). Students were expected to write a script for their segments and show them to me on Mondays.

The actual recording of the podcast was both challenging and rewarding. Students’ segments were recorded one at a time. During the recording process, students who were not recording sat silently and worked on their scripts, while I sat with the recording student and worked through their segment, pausing, stopping, correcting. There were many ‘takes’. At first, Paco, Min Hee, and Soo Min were nervous. They made many mistakes. In fact, to get in the spirit of recording, we adopted lingo such as “Quiet on the set!”, “And...Action!”, and “Take One...Take Two....Take Twenty!”. They often applauded each other after a successful take.

Each segment had its own challenges. Initially, the students thought that the Fun Facts segments would be the easiest because it did not require as much preparation and it was shorter than the other segments. They soon learned that big things can come in small packages. Because the Fun Facts often involved numbers, pronunciation and stress were critical. This seemingly small segment, was sometimes the most difficult. Each week, we took the time to review problem areas, such as pronunciation of a certain sound or intonation. To make sure everyone stayed involved, I sometimes had all of the students read part of the script for a particular segment. That way, they could all have the extra

practice. It also took the focus off of a student who was struggling with a particular sound or skill.

Rolling admission had its advantages and its disadvantages for the class. One benefit was that the work was spread out among more students, so the workload became easier. Also, as the new students joined the class, the veterans showed them the way and gave them a lot of encouragement and support. When Soledad was recording her very first segment, she was visibly nervous and stumbled over every word. We had to stop and re-record many times. Min Hee, who just a few weeks earlier had felt shaky and sweaty when she recorded her first segment, offered some reassurance. “I was like that too. Don’t worry, you can do it!”, she said to Soledad. It was a small moment that I will never forget. Their reliance on each other grew as the weeks passed. Whenever a student had a grammar or pronunciation question with their script, I told them to consult another classmate before they consulted me. For me, it was very important to instill in them the idea that they were a learning community. Again and again, I reminded them that at their level, they should be able to find the answers to their questions without me. While I was recording with a student, the others were told to share their scripts and help each other. Of course, it took some time for them to trust themselves and each other. Eventually, I did not have to say, “I don’t know. Why don’t you ask Paco?” or “I think Min Hee might know about that”. They got into the habit of going to each other first. This was helpful for me because it saved time. Because this kind of work was based on the fundamentals of the Zone of Proximal Development, it also enhanced their learning.

The downside to open enrollment was getting students who really had no interest in being there. Alberto, John, Soledad, and Sung Hee had been wonderful additions to the

class. Sung Hee was not quite ready for Level 5 work, and she often had difficulty with listening comprehension and expressing her ideas. However, she worked hard and contributed to the energy in the class. When Hyun Min joined the class, I knew right away that there would be a problem. I put him in Level 4 when it became clear that he was not going to do the work. When Won Jin and Chang Ho appeared on my roster, I had the same feeling. At that point though, Level 4 was full, so I had no choice but to keep them in my class. They had already missed two weeks of class by the time I first spoke with them. I told them what was expected of them in my class. I also expressed my personal concern for them, and we talked about how and why they were back at ESL school. I wanted so much for them to be a part of the class, but I had to be realistic. Knowing that there was a strong possibility that neither of them would show up consistently, I did not want to assign them a core part of the podcast. I told them they could create a new segment: Sports Review. If they did it, great. If not, no harm would be done. Chang Ho came to two classes after that, and we never saw him again. Won Jin came to two classes, and the final class as well. Apparently, he had been sick. Needless to say, the Sports Review never happened.

Student feedback

After the first podcast was put on our website, www.superstoop.com, we sat together and discussed what we liked and did not like and why. Paco was very critical. He thought that he had made many mistakes, and he was very unhappy with his pronunciation. The other students were not quite so critical, but they definitely saw room for improvement. With this new level of awareness came some discomfort. The feedback got more positive as the weeks went by. They could hear small improvements, but more

importantly, they could hear where they needed to do more work. Hearing themselves week after week, and knowing that their classmates and anyone else could hear them, was a huge motivating factor. They wanted to continue with the podcast through the end of the semester.

Teacher reflection

The first few weeks of the podcast project were quite a whirlwind for me. I completely threw myself into it. It became my creative outlet, my baby. It was time-consuming, but because I was so personally vested in it, it did not feel like a burden. The newness and experiential nature of the podcast was such an adventure. I found myself wishing that it was my only class because it was all I wanted to focus on. I knew, too, that my energy and excitement had an effect on the students. I shared my feelings, my concerns, my challenges with them. I showed them all of the technical work that I had to do to put the podcast together once their segments were recorded. There was definitely a feeling of being involved in something together, a camaraderie, rather than the traditional distance between student and teacher.

The actual recording process required a lot of vulnerability on the students' part. When they sat in the hot seat, they were exposed. Everyone could hear their mistakes. Everyone could hear me telling them to do it again. I knew that this was hard for them, and I made sure that the process was positive. Watching the students learn and improve every week was gratifying. Sometimes I would ask them to re-record something, but often they would know that they had made a mistake and ask to do it again, and again, and again. It was a lesson in patience for all of us.

The students knew not to laugh at each other's mistakes. Inevitably though, as they got closer to each other, they felt comfortable enough to laugh at their own mistakes. Then the floodgates opened, and there was little I could do to control it. During one recording, Paco pronounced "sloths" like "sluts", and all decorum was lost. My group of mature adults quickly descended to the level of teenage boys. It was hilarious! My classes were known by students and teachers as a "No Holds Barred" environment and, I must say it was a reputation that I fully embraced.

Module III – Focused Discussion Group/Podcast

Description

With such a fun and energetic class, I looked forward to the discussion groups in Module III. We continued working on the weekly podcast, which was recorded on Wednesdays. Discussion group took place on Mondays. Again, the basic premise was the same: the students would discuss a topic for a specified length of time. This time, I wanted to use a collective approach to topic selection rather than individual student selection. The students brainstormed a list of topics, and I wrote them on the board. We then divided them into two categories, formal and informal:

Formal

American laws about animals
Why is the Euro stronger than the the USD?
US education system (best schools, costs...)
Strategies for studying abroad/How to be successful
Clean energy
Marriage in the U.S.

Informal

Are white lies good or bad?
How to spend free time efficiently
Parking/using rear door at House of Tutors
Vacations in the U.S.
NCAA basketball tournament

Then, as a group, they decided which topics would be both interesting and most useful for them. The final topics were: Success, Marriage, Animals, the Euro, and Clean Energy. As I had done in the previous semester, I searched the Internet to find suitable listening material to complement the topics they had chosen. The two-hour class was organized much the same way as the previous one had been: pre-listening discussion, listening, and discussion.

Although the structure was essentially the same, I did make a few changes for this class. I gave them option of using the discussion roles (Empathizer, Sage, etc...) or using a talking piece. This group seemed to favor the talking piece, in particular a small, bright green, wooden turtle that had been given to my by a SMAT friend. In fact, sometimes, if we started the discussion without the turtle, the students would say, "Hey, where's the turtle? We need the turtle!". They did an excellent job of respecting one another's right to be heard while maintaining the flow of the conversation. In addition to being a larger group, this group was much more diverse and energetic than the former class. As a result, the discussions were always lively and thought-provoking.

One discussion in particular stands out in my mind. After the students listened to the interview with *The Success Principle's* author, Jack Canfield, Jim seemed a bit perturbed. He disagreed that success was a product of hard work. For him, success had more to do with luck, and with where and into what life one was born. The other students conceded that luck did play a role, but that desire and commitment could overcome obstacles. They referenced William Kamkwamba from the TED.com video "How I Built My Family a Windmill". The story of a young teenager from Western Africa who had gone to a library, read a book, and then built a windmill out of bicycle parts to generate enough electricity for his family's lightbulb and radio, had made a big impact on these students. They also brought up the interview they had seen with Dick and Rick Hoyt, the father-son team from Massachusetts that competes in marathons and triathalons all over the world. Rick has been physically disabled since birth, so his father pushes him in a special wheelchair or tows him in a raft while swimming. Paco and Soo Min countered Jim's argument by saying that people like William and the Hoyts choose success, it is a mindset. The conversation went back and forth, with all sides drawing on personal stories as well as the listening materials from class. At times, I asked them to clarify something or repeat it again with better pronunciation. With varying cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds the conversation had the potential to get heated in an ugly sort of way, but I was impressed that the students were able to express their personal opinions while keeping the nature of the conversation objective.

Student feedback

Module III was an overwhelming success for this group. They all really liked each other, and they all really loved to talk. They told me that each class motivated them to

come to the next class. Participating in both the discussions and the podcast helped to keep things fresh. In personal conversations, as well as on the feedback forms, all of the students revealed that the listening and discussion work had given them more confidence to communicate spontaneously.

Teacher reflection

I was so sad to say goodbye to this group. I had genuinely had a great time with these students. To be honest, I preferred to be with them instead of some of my friends and co-workers. They approached everything with energy and a positive attitude. They never stopped wanting to learn, and it was so exciting to be a part of that with them. Although on their feedback forms, they gave me a lot of credit for my energy and motivation, I truly felt that our relationship had been mutually beneficial, and our energies fed off of one another. Paco wrote, “I have been motivated since the very beginning of the semester. And this could not have been possible without the environment of trust that you created in class.” That trust definitely went both ways. With this group, I knew that if I worked hard, they would too, so I did not feel like my efforts were in vain. Teaching them was a reward.

Chapter 4 : Final Reflection

At the end of this journey it was time to reflect on my initial inquiry: Would a modular-based curriculum, the principles of the Zone of Proximal Development, and a strong sense of community in the classroom increase my students' motivation? At the end of each semester in the Course Reflection (see Appendix A-12, p. 80), I asked the students for feedback on what they had learned, what motivated them to do well, and which module motivated them the most. Here are their responses:

- Keiko: “It was interesting to hear my classmates talk about their different lives and cultures. It actually motivated me to come to class.”
- Jin Li: “The group needed me, so that motivated me. My partner can't give the presentation by himself. We need [to] work together, and exchange ideas. I like group work.”
- Oruc: “My partners and teacher motivated me.”
- Maahir: “What [did] motivate me is that you didn't give us more explanation about giving a speech. And also you didn't give a good presentation as good example for us, so I was confused.”
- Tom: “In class, every classmate wants to participate, so they give me motivation to do work in class.”
- Heidi: “The teacher teaches well, and also, for the first 5 weeks, I [didn't] want to be the one that does nothing in the group.”

- Amy: “Working by ourselves on our projects with direction is helping me. That practice lets me know how I can work with other people and if I’m ready for college or not. I like the listening part on TED. It’s very useful.”
- Paco: “I mean, the attitude of the teacher and knowledge in motivation [make] the difference. With a teacher who has the knowledge and the [h]ability of watch what are the characteristics of each student to adapt a good environment for learning. I have been motivated since the very beginning of the semester. And this could not have been possible without the environment of trust that you create in the class. And the three elements were useful.”
- Alberto: “The exciting topics in the discussion part and the podcast reporting motivated me to do well.”
- Won Jin: “I didn’t do well in this class, but if I had one more chance I want to try hard. This class has so [much] fun things. The discussion and podcast looked very fun to me.”
- Soo Min: “Desire to improve my English skills and responsibility motivated me to do well.”
- Soledad: “My motivation in this class was the fact that people will listen to me in the podcast. This helped me to improve my vocabulary, speaking and also pronunciation. The discussion and podcast motivated me.”
- Min Hee: “The enthusiasm of our teacher because she looks [like she] really enjoys teaching. It affects me to concentrate on school work. She makes me excit[ed]. Encouragement from teacher and classmates and responsibilities about my part motivated me”.

I was very pleased with the feedback, but I knew that the issue was more complicated, so I was not completely satisfied. Just how much my students' motivation had increased was very difficult to quantify. There had been so many variables: gender, cultural background, age, purpose, personality, timing. Fortunately, I had the pleasure of seeing Rafe Esquith, Los Angeles elementary school teacher and author of *Teach Like Your Hair is on Fire*, during his visit to an Austin bookstore in January of 2008. His perspective helped me put the pieces together.

Rafe said he has three kinds of students: 1s, 2s, and 3s. He never has to worry about the 1s. They come to school eager to learn, excited about everything, and ready to work hard. The 3s are often beyond his reach. For family reasons or personality reasons, he has found that there is little he can do to help them succeed. The 2s, though, they are the challenge. They are the ones that could go either way. They have the potential to succeed, but perhaps lack direction or purpose. Keiko, Heidi, Paco and Alberto were my 1s, Maahir, Won Jin and Chang Ho my 3s. All of the others were my 2s, my challenges.

Based on their feedback and information I got from other teachers about how they were doing in other classes, I realized that my class had brought out the best in the 2s. The curriculum offered them variety and outlets for creativity that did not always exist in their other classes. It also demanded a lot of them, but not in a traditional way. The course structure created space for the group to grow and learn together. As a result, the students had to be accountable to one another and themselves. In answer to my inquiry then, the 2s confirmed the positive effects of the experimental curriculum, the community, and the ZPD on their motivation and learning.

The feedback from the 1s served as an affirmation that the curriculum had provided an opportunity which maximized their preexisting skills and energy. Students like them would likely go along with whatever a teacher asked of them and do their best. Sometimes, though, those students are motivated by external praise or cultural beliefs that have shaped their perceptions of learning, classroom behavior, or work ethic. However, seeing these students flourish and really enjoy their work told me that they were truly vested in what they were doing. While I certainly can not take credit for their innate characteristics, I feel satisfied that the course did not disappoint them. From this I have learned not to take the 1s for granted. Satiating their appetite for challenge and engagement is just as important as trying to help the 2 or 3 overcome their obstacles.

Accepting the lackluster performances of the 3s was difficult, yet perhaps one of my most important teaching epiphanies. I had invested so much time and effort into the course, and I was genuinely interested in the progress of each student. For students like Chang Ho, Maahir, and Won Jin, though, I learned that there is very little a teacher or curriculum can do to help them. Despite my efforts to engage them, I came to the conclusion that I was no match for their negativity and apathy. With them, it was often quite difficult to know exactly what was going on in their lives or why they behaved the way they did. As adults in a foreign country, they could have been experiencing any number of personal difficulties. Some students open up and let others help them, some do not. What was critical though, was staying open to the possibility of something shifting in their attitudes. At times, I felt frustrated and even personally rejected by their lack of enthusiasm and participation. Conveying to them that the door was always open, and that I would meet them halfway was important not just for them, but for me as well.

Communicating with and accepting these students called on me to embrace their complexities as human beings rather than categorize them blankly as “the students who never do anything and never will”. In addition to helping me clarify the boundaries of my responsibilities as a teacher, this realization freed me, in a sense, from the emotional roller coaster that teaching can become.

Throughout the two semesters, I made it a point to maintain a personal connection with each student, regardless of his or her academic performance. I thought about teachers from my past, what I remembered about them and what I had learned from them. This trip down memory lane showed me that what I remembered most were the “soft” skills, the ones teachers can not put on a resume. Obviously, I learned subject matter, but those things are not impressed in my mind forever. Those people shaped who I am as a person. This made me think about the kind of teacher that I was to my students and the kind of teacher that I want to be. Some teachers do not want to let students into their emotions or do not take the time to really know their students. I can not see it any other way. During the course of this experiment, it was the getting personal, the opening up, the trusting that provided the space for the learning to happen. I felt that regardless of what happened in my class, my students would leave having learned something.

Since the official closure of this inquiry for the purpose of this paper, I have made some changes to the curriculum for this course. Upon reflection, I realized that students were not quite ready to do a big presentation at the beginning of the semester; they needed more scaffolding. Now, in Module I, we focus on group discussion and podcasting. In Module II, students continue with the podcast in addition to giving a brief speech based on an assigned weekly theme. Successful themes so far have been

technology, culture, science, politics, and history. The students begin with a 2-3 minute speech, with the required length increasing each week. By week ten, each student is easily able to deliver a 5-6 minute speech. This is a great segue into their group project in Module III, which requires them to speak for at least 10 minutes. So far, students have responded positively to these changes, and their motivation increases with each week of progress.

Like many things in life, in teaching there is a give and take. While some aspects of learning are relatively simple, motivation in learning can be complex. Each student, brings with him or her a new set of challenges and gifts, which might mean that a student is not a 1 or a 2, but more like a 1.6. Each group has its own dynamic, the roles of leaders and followers fluctuating with changes in confidence levels and enrollment. Each teacher has a different attitude, a different approach. For me, the greatest gift is seeing that moment of heightened awareness, accomplishment, and pride in a student's eyes. The hope that he or she will walk out of my classroom feeling different, better than before, is what motivates me to go back every day. Most importantly, that hope can not come from wishing alone. A plan of action, a commitment to understand, and a willingness to embrace the unexpected enabled me to explore the relationship between teachers, curriculum, students, and motivation. Together, they form a union, which must constantly evolve in order to thrive. If both teachers and students can release themselves from the pressure of preestablished expectations and outcomes in the classroom, the natural joy of discovery can propel them to new places within themselves.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Benjamin, Jane, and Yih-Lan E. Chen. "A Cross-Cultural Study of the Motivation of Students Learning a Second Language." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL, April 21-25, 2003.
- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1990.
- Daniels, Harvey. *Literature circles : voice and choice in the classroom*. Markham, ON: Pembroke Publishers, 1994.
- Esquith, Rafe. *Teach Like Your Hair is on Fire*. New York: Viking Penguin, 2007
- Green, Christopher, Frank. "Categorising Motivational Drives in Second Language Acquisition." *Language, Culture, and Curriculum* 12 (1999): 265-79.
- Hinebauch, Susan. "Coming of Age: Making Connections." *Voices from the Middle* 7 (September 1999): 17-23
- Hussin, Supyan, Maarof, Nooreiny, and J.V. D'Cruz. "Sustaining an Interest in Learning English and Increasing Motivation to Learn English: An Enrichment Program." Paper presented at The Millenium MICELT 2000, 3rd Malaysia International Conference for English Language Teaching, Melaka, Malayasia, May 15-17, 2000.
- LeVasseur, Paul. *Literature Circle Roles*. The Four Skills, Summer 2007.
- Mitchell, Rosamond, and Florence Myles. *Second Language Learning Theories*, 2d ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Nelson, Jo. *The Art of Focused Conversation for Schools*. Canada: New Society Publishers, 2001.
- Ur, Penny. *Discussions That Work: Task Centered Fluency Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

APPENDIX A – COURSE DOCUMENTS

A-1: Level 5 Speaking & Listening Fall 2007 Syllabus

Instructor: Jennifer Jones

Instructor Contact Information

Phone: 512-916-0474

E-mail: jenni_jones75@hotmail.com

Office hours: By appointment

Course Information

Semester, Year: Fall, 2007

Time: M, W 12:10-2:00pm

Meeting Location: Rm H

“ I once asked a teacher to describe how community life supports one’s individual awakening. He told me it is like putting a handful of jagged-edged stones into a gem tumbler and turning on the machine. After a sufficient tumbling the stones emerge polished and sparkling – free of their rough edges. But, he said, one has to realize that the stones become precious gems by rubbing up against one another in a rather intense environment.”

- From *Insight* – Insight Meditation Society, Barre, Massachusetts

Course Description

In this college prep course you will work closely with your classmates as you explore and research issues which interest you. You will explore these issues on a global, community, and personal level, and demonstrate what you have learned through a variety of presentation styles.

Course Goals

By the end of the semester you will be able to:

- Conduct research effectively and efficiently
- Give an academic presentation
- Lead and actively participate in group discussions
- Understand main ideas and detailed information of a lecture or speech by a native English speaker

Required Texts

There is no text for this course. Discussion materials will be provided by the students, and authentic listening materials from the Internet will be provided by the teacher.

Expectations

- Come to class on time every day – this is very important for the group work you will be doing!
- Speak English in class!
- Don’t be shy in class. You were brave enough to come to the U.S. to study English; don’t stop there! Speak up, take chances, make mistakes, learn, and enjoy!

- Practice, practice, practice. When you go home after class, talk to your friends and family in English, watch TV and movies in English, listen to music in English. You can learn everywhere, not just in the classroom!

Assignments

I will assign homework in class. All assignments will be posted on Moodle as well. Students are required to check Moodle (www.houseoftutors.com/elearning) on a daily basis for assignments and course updates.

Policies

Grading

40% Group Projects 40% In-class participation (attendance, participation, and use of English)
10% Peer Assessment 10% Self-Assessment

Cell Phones

Please turn off your cell phone when you are in class.

Plagiarism

What is plagiarism? Plagiarism is the act of taking somebody else's ideas or words and using them as if they were your own. (**plagiarize (verb)** – to take somebody else's ideas or words and use them as if they were your own). This is illegal in the United States! This means you can not copy a few sentences from a book, from the Internet, or even a friend, and claim that you wrote them. The work you do in this course must be your own. It is okay to build on someone else's ideas but you must give that person credit. This is known as citing your source. The work you do in this course must be your own. If you ever have questions about understanding the difference between others' work and your own, ask me and I will give you clear guidance.

Attendance

Coming to class every day is an important part of your learning. When you miss class, you fall behind the other students and it slows the whole class down. This is not fair to you or to your classmates. **If you are sick, however, please do not come to class!** Stay home and rest until you are better. If you miss a class:

- Check our class site on Moodle (www.houseoftutors.com/elearning)
- E-mail me to find out what we did in class and if there is any homework
- Contact one of your classmates to find out what we did in class and if there is any homework

Late assignments, Missed Exams, etc...

All assignments should be turned in on the given due date. Assignments turned in after the due date will lose credit for each day past the due date. If you miss an exam due to illness, you may make it up at a later date. If you know that you will be absent on the day of an exam, you may take the test in advance.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting accommodations, please inform your instructor and your ESL coordinator as soon as possible.

Schedule*

Week 1	Aug. 27th	<u>Module 1: Group Research Projects</u> W: Introduction to course; Listening F: Choose Topics & Groups
Week 2	Sept. 3rd	M: No Class on Monday, September 3rd W: Group Work
Week 3	Sept. 10th	M: Sample Presentations; Group Work W: Listening; Group Work
Week 4	Sept. 17th	M: Group Work; Listening W: Listening; Presentation Practice
Week 5	Sept. 24th	Presentation Week! M: Presentations W: Presentation Feedback, Self-Assessment, Peer-Assessment
Week 6	Oct. 1st	<u>Module 2: Group Community Research Projects</u> M: Introduction to Module W: Group Work
Week 7	Oct. 8th	M: Listening; Group Work W: Group work; Listening
Week 8	Oct. 15th	M: Listening; Group Work W: Group Work; Listening
Week 9	Oct. 22nd	M: Group Work W: Listening; Presentation Practice
Week 10	Oct. 29th	Presentation Week! M: Presentations W: Presentation Feedback, Self-Assessment, Peer-Assessment
Week 11	Nov. 5th	<u>Module 3: Content Theatre</u> M: Introduction to Module W: Group Work; Listening
Week 12	Nov. 12th	M: Listening; Group Work W: Group Work; Listening
Week 13	Nov. 19th	M: Group Work No Class on Wed. 11/21 or Thurs. 11/22
Week 14	Nov. 26th	M: Group Work; Listening W: Listening; Presentation Practice
Week 15	Dec. 3rd	Presentation Week! M: Presentations W: Feedback, Self-Assessment, Peer-Assessment

Be the change you wish to see in the world.

- Gandhi

A-2: Level 5 Listening/Speaking Group Project Requirements

Level 5 Listening/Speaking Group Project Requirements

For this project your group will:

1. Research your chosen topic (Internet, books, magazines, videos, podcasts, news, people...). **You must consult at least 5 different sources.**
2. Prepare a verbal presentation that addresses the issues related to your topic. Provide factual information. Public-opinion, and even your own opinion, may be used as well.
3. Make a handout that:
 - Lists important information (key points) from your presentation
 - Provides 3 resources for further information
 - This can be a link to a website, the name of a book, a documentary etc...
4. Create an informative visual aid
 - This can be a Powerpoint presentation, a poster, a picture, a graph, a map, a collage, a segment of a movie/documentary, etc...
 - Be creative!

**Your group will present your project to the class on:
Monday, December 3rd**

This is a great learning opportunity for you. You can do it!!!

A-3: ORID Method for Content

Objective – What are the facts of the story? How do you know they are facts, not opinions?

Reflective – How do you feel about this story? What does it make you think about? Have you ever experienced something similar?

Interpretive – Why do you think the situation in this story is happening?

Decisional – Can anything be done about it? Do you have any suggestions?

A-4: ORID Method for Group Process

1. What did your group accomplish this week? List at least 3 things that you did. (Objective)
2. What parts of the group project are you satisfied with? What do you think needs improvement? How do you feel about your contribution to the group? (Reflective)
3. What events led to the results that you are happy satisfied with? (*“For example, you did some research and found 3 great articles about your topic that provided the group with a lot of information”*) Why does something need improvement? (*“For example, you or one of your group mates did not do the work they said they would do”*.) (Interpretive)
4. What will the group do next? What will you do next to contribute to the group in a meaningful way? (Decisional)

A-5: Presentation Rubric

√	<u>The Speaker</u>	Comments
	Did the speaker introduce himself or herself?	
	Did the speaker grab your interest at the beginning?	
	Did the speaker clearly state the topic of the presentation?	
	Did the speaker speak with a clear voice that everyone could hear?	
	Did the speaker consistently make eye contact with the audience?	
	Did the speaker pause at the appropriate times?	
	Did the speaker use good body language and hand gestures?	
	Did the speaker conclude with a brief summary or review?	
	<u>The Content</u>	
	Was the content clear and easy to understand?	
	Was the content interesting and effective?	
	<u>The Visual</u>	
	Did the visual aid help your understanding of the content?	
	Did the speaker use the visual aid effectively?	
	Was the visual aid attractive?	

A-7: Project Self-Assessment

1. Write down your immediate thoughts following the presentation here.
2. Describe your contribution to the group. What did you do? How much time did you spend?
3. Describe your group members contributions
4. What worked well with your group? Why? What would you do differently next time? Why?
5. Other comments, thoughts, ideas...

A-8: Presentation Feedback

Names of presenters:

What did you learn from this presentation?

What did you like about this presentation? Why?

Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

A-9: Level 5 Speaking & Listening Spring 2008 Syllabus

Instructor: Jennifer Jones

Instructor Contact Information

Phone: 512-916-0474

E-mail: jenni_jones75@hotmail.com

Office hours: By appointment

Course Information

Semester, Year: Spring, 2008

Time: M, W 12:10-2:00pm

Meeting Location: TBA

“ I once asked a teacher to describe how community life supports one’s individual awakening. He told me it is like putting a handful of jagged-edged stones into a gem tumbler and turning on the machine. After a sufficient tumbling the stones emerge polished and sparkling – free of their rough edges. But, he said, one has to realize that the stones become precious gems by rubbing up against one another in a rather intense environment.”

- From *Insight* – Insight Meditation Society, Barre, Massachusetts

Course Description

In this college prep course you will work closely with your classmates as you explore and research issues which interest you. You will explore these issues on a global, community, and personal level, and demonstrate what you have learned through a variety of presentation styles.

Course Goals

By the end of the semester you will be able to:

- Conduct research effectively and efficiently
- Give an academic presentation
- Lead and actively participate in group discussions
- Understand main ideas and detailed information of a lecture or speech by a native English speaker

Required Texts

There is no text for this course. Discussion materials will be provided by the students, and authentic listening materials from the Internet will be provided by the teacher.

Expectations

- Come to class on time every day – this is very important for the group work you will be doing!
- Speak English in class!
- Don’t be shy in class. You were brave enough to come to the U.S. to study English; don’t stop there! Speak up, take chances, make mistakes, learn, and enjoy!
- Practice, practice, practice. When you go home after class, talk to your friends and family in English, watch TV and movies in English, listen to music in English. You can learn everywhere, not just in the classroom!

Assignments

I will assign homework in class. All assignments will be posted on Moodle as well. Students are required to check Moodle (www.houseoftutors.com/elearning) on a daily basis for assignments and course updates.

Policies

Grading

40% Projects 40% In-class participation (attendance, participation, and use of English)
10% Peer Assessment 10% Self-Assessment

Cell Phones

Please turn off your cell phone when you are in class.

Plagiarism

What is plagiarism? Plagiarism is the act of taking somebody else's ideas or words and using them as if they were your own. (**plagiarize (verb)** – to take somebody else's ideas or words and use them as if they were your own). This is illegal in the United States! This means you can not copy a few sentences from a book, from the Internet, or even a friend, and claim that you wrote them. The work you do in this course must be your own. It is okay to build on someone else's ideas but you must give that person credit. This is known as citing your source. The work you do in this course must be your own. If you ever have questions about understanding the difference between others' work and your own, ask me and I will give you clear guidance.

Attendance

Coming to class every day is an important part of your learning. When you miss class, you fall behind the other students and it slows the whole class down. This is not fair to you or to your classmates. **If you are sick, however, please do not come to class!** Stay home and rest until you are better. If you miss a class:

- Check our class site on Moodle (www.houseoftutors.com/elearning)
- E-mail me to find out what we did in class and if there is any homework
- Contact one of your classmates to find out what we did in class and if there is any homework

Late assignments, Missed Exams, etc...

All assignments should be turned in on the given due date. Assignments turned in after the due date will lose credit for each day past the due date. If you miss an exam due to illness, you may make it up at a later date. If you know that you will be absent on the day of an exam, you may take the test in advance.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting accommodations, please inform your instructor and your ESL coordinator as soon as possible.

Schedule*

Week 1	Jan. 14th	<u>Module 1: Individual Research Projects</u> W: Introduction to course; Listening F: Choose Topics & Groups
Week 2	Jan. 21st	M: No Class on Monday, Jan. 21st W: Group Work
Week 3	Jan. 28th	M: Topic Discussion W: Listening; Group Work
Week 4	Feb. 4th	M: Group Work; Listening W: Listening; Presentation Practice
Week 5	Feb. 18th	M: Presentation Practice W: Listening, Presentation Practice
Week 6	Feb. 25th	Presentation Week! M: Presentations, Feedback and Self-Assessment W: Group Work
Week 7	Mar. 3rd	<u>Module 2: Community Podcast Project</u> M: Introduction to Module W: Group Work
Week 8	Mar. 10th	SPRING BREAK! HAVE FUN! ☺
Week 9	Mar. 17th	M: Group Work W: Listening
Week 10	Mar. 24th	M: Group Work W: Listening
Week 11	Mar. 31st	M: Introduction to Module W: Group Work; Listening
Week 12	Apr. 7th	<u>Module 3: Discussion Group</u> M: Listening; Group Work W: Group Work; Listening
Week 13	Apr. 14th	M: Group Work W: Listening
Week 14	Apr. 21st	M: Group Work; Listening W: Listening
Week 15	Apr. 28th	Discussion Week! M: Listening W: Final Discussion

Be the change you wish to see in the world.

- Gandhi

A-10: Podcast Responsibilities

<u>Segment</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>	<u>Resources*</u>
Fun Facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose 5 fun facts - Make sure they are true! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - www.funfunnyfacts.com - www.guinnessworldrecords.com - We'll make one list and pass it around
5 Qs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practice asking the five questions - Make sure the interviewee knows about the time limitations (3-4 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Just you and the teacher - We choose the questions as a class, and ask the same 5 questions every week!
Culture Corner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose a specific culture to explore OR - Choose a topic or question and find out how a variety of cultures deal with that topic - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your own knowledge! - Other international students - this is probably the best place to start - Google - Ex: Germany culture, cultural information about Germany, German greetings, German gift-giving, etc.. - www.history.com - http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/onthisday.aspx
This Day in History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose 5-10 important historical events for that week (<i>remember our podcast "week" goes from Wednesday to Wednesday</i>) - Keep track of your sources and remember to mention them at the end of your segment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your own knowledge and opinion of the movie/book/album
Review (movie/book/music)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose a movie/book/album and prepare a 3 minute summary and review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Austin Chronicle- www.austinchronicle.com - The Austin American Statesman- www.austin360.com and www.statesman.com - Local radio stations: www.kut.org, www.kgsr.com - Local TV stations: www.kvue.com, www.kxan.com, www.keyetv.com
Arts & Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose at least 3 events in the Austin area and give a lively report with relevant dates, locations, times, prices, and a website for more info. We want variety! Not all museums or all music... offer a little something for everyone 	
Student Interview (Jen)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask a student if he/she would like to be interviewed and arrange a meeting time The interview only takes about 10-20 minutes! 	
<p>Notes: 1)* Remember to keep track of your resources 2) For each of your segments, prepare a list of 3-5 questions that will be posted on our website and answered by our listeners</p>		

A-11: Podcast Guidelines

FunFacts

1. Introduce the segment: “Hi this is _____ with FunFacts”
2. Begin with “Did you know that....?”
3. You are asking a question, so remember to finish with rising intonation

Five Questions

1. Introduce the segment: “Hi, this is _____, and I’m in the studio today with _____. How are you doing today, _____? Thanks for coming in. I have a five questions for you. Are you ready? Okay, first.....”
2. The five questions are
 - a. What is your favorite restaurant in Austin?
 - b. What do you do in your free time?
 - c. What is your most memorable experience?
 - d. If you could be an animal, what animal would you be and why?
 - e. If you could go anywhere, where would you go?
3. Try to be natural. You can comment on their responses and laugh. You can say things like, “wow!, really?, that’s cool!, etc...” just like a normal conversation.
4. Conclude by thanking your guest: “Well, that’s all the questions we have for you today. Thank you again for coming. Have a great day!”

This Week in History

1. Introduce the segment: “Hi, this is _____ with This Week in History”
2. Introduce each historical fact like this, “On September 3rd, 2008,”
3. Pause between each fact
4. Remember to speak slowly, clearly, with a strong voice. Use past tense.
5. Conclude with: “That’s all for This Week in History. This information was provided by the History Channel at www.history.com”

Culture Corner

1. Introduce the segment: “Hi, this is _____ with Culture Corner. This week, we’ll explore/visit/enjoy __ (name of country) _____.
2. If you are giving general information about a country or city
 - a. Give the name of the country/city
 - b. Tell the location (it’s between _____ & _____; it’s north/south of _____)
 - c. What are the most important and interesting things you think people should know about this culture?
3. If you are giving information about a specific food/dance/song/tradition/place, etc.:
 - a. Where and when did it begin?
 - b. Who does it or makes it?
 - c. Why?

4. Conclude with a friendly suggestion or reminder. Examples: “For your next vacation, visit Texas. You’ll be glad you did!” OR “The next time you visit Texas, be sure to learn how to two-step!”

Movie/Book/Music Review

1. Introduce the segment: “Hi, this is _____ with a movie/book/music review for the week”
2. For a movie
 - a. You can begin with a hook, just like an essay. Ex: “Do you like action superhero movies? If you do, then you will love The Dark Knight”. You can also just start with the name of the movie. Ex: “The Dark Knight...”
 - b. Continue with the names of the directors and main actors, and when the movie was released. You can get all of that information at: www.imdb.com. Ex: “The Dark Knight, released in July 2008, was directed by Christopher Nolan. The all-star cast includes Christian Bale as Batman, the late Heath Ledger as The Joker, Michael Caine as Alfred, Maggie Gyllenhall as Rachel Dawes, and Morgan Freeman as Lucius Fox.”
 - c. Continue with a brief summary and your opinion– don’t give away the ending!
 - d. Conclude with information about where or how listeners can see this movie. Ex: The Dark Knight is playing in movie theatres across the country. Get your tickets now!” OR “You can rent _(name of movie)___ at your local video store, public library or netflix.com.”
3. For a book
 - a. Include the name of the book and the author
 - b. What kind of book is it? Fiction (romance, mystery, adventure, poetry?), non-fiction (biography, history politics, etc...)
 - c. Give a brief summary and your opinion
 - d. Conclude with information about where listeners can get this book
4. For music
 - a. Include the name of the band/artist and the album
 - b. What genre is it? Rock, rap, punk, classical, jazz, blues, folk?
 - c. Give your opinion
 - d. Conclude with where listeners can buy the album

Arts and Entertainment

1. Introduce the segment: “Hi this is _____ with Arts and Entertainment.”
2. Remember to sound fun and upbeat; your goal is to get people interested in going out in Austin!
3. Introduce each event with a hook: “If you like fresh fruits and vegetables, come check out the Austin Farmers market at Republic Square Park, on 4th and Guadalupe Street. It’s open every Saturday from 9:00am – 1:00pm. Buy from local organic farmers while listening to live music. It’s a great way to spend a Saturday Morning! For more information on the Austin Farmer’s Market go to ___(website)___...Next, for those of you who like to dance, come to Copa this

Friday, September 5th. Copa is located at 217 Congress Avenue. Salsa lessons start at 9:00 and live music starts at 10:00. The cost is \$5 before 10:00 and \$8 after 10:00. It's free for ladies all night! For more information go to www.copabarandgrill.com. That's c-o-p-a...."

4. Conclude with something fun: "Thanks for listening. Don't sit on the couch this weekend – get out and have some fun!"

IMPORTANT:

You may use resources for any of the segments, but you must summarize the information and put it into your own words. Do **not** print something from the Internet and read it.

APPENDIX B - LISTENING COMPONENT

B-1: Listening Pieces

A Father's Love for His Son – Today Show, Dec 26th – year?
<http://video.msn.com/video.aspx?mkt=en-us&from=MSNHP>

Bolte Taylor, Jill. *My Stroke of Insight*, www.ted.com

Canfield, Jack. *Interview With Jack Canfield*,
<http://www.learnoutloud.com/Free-Audio-Video/Education-and-Professional/Writing/Interview-with-Jack-Canfield/7214>

Clinton, Bill. *Let's Build a Healthcare System in Rwanda*, www.ted.com

Davis, Wade. *Cultures at the Far Edge of the World*, www.ted.com

Gore, Al. *15 Ways to Avoid a Climate Crisis*, www.ted.com

Honore, Carl. *Slowing Down in a World Built for Speed*, www.ted.com

Jeffreys, J. Douglas. *Killer Presentation Skills*, www.youtube.com

Kamkwamba, William. *How I Built My Family a Windmill*, www.ted.com

Life on Campus: Binge Drinking
<http://www.cnn.com/video/#/video/bestoftv/2008/08/20/beck.life.on.campus.drinking.age.cnn?iref=videosearch>

Lower Drinking Age?
<http://www.cnn.com/video/#/video/living/2008/08/20/collins.lower.drinking.age.cnn?iref=videosearch>

Rives. *Is 4am the New Midnight?*, www.ted.com

Robbins, Tony. *Why We Do What We Do and How We Can Do It Better*, www.ted.com

Stem Cell Researchers Clone Monkey Embryo
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=16298417>

Under the Knife
<http://video.msn.com/video.aspx?mkt=en-us&from=MSNHP>

B-2: My Stroke of Insight

– Jill Bolte Taylor
(www.ted.com)

schizophrenia
delusion
micro circuitry
consciousness
pixel
golden retriever
nirvana

- 1) What happened to her brain?
- 2) What does the right hemisphere of the brain do?
- 3) What does the left hemisphere of the brain do?
- 4) How did she first feel when she woke up on the morning of the stroke? What did she do?
- 5) How did she perceive the boundaries of her body?
- 6) How did she feel?
- 7) What happened when she tried to call for help?
- 8) What did she learn from this experience?

B-3: Cultures at the Far Edge of the World
-Wade Davis (www.ted.com)

- 1) What is an ethnosphere?
- 2) How does he define language?
- 3) What is voodoo?
- 4) Who are the most extraordinary people he has ever known?
How do they become priests?
- 5) What is Iowaska?
- 6) Out of 80,000 plants, how does one tribe of Indians (the Kofan) find the specific plants that are needed to make a certain drug?
- 7) What threatens the integrity of the ethnosphere?
- 8) What does he think can change the world?

B-4: 15 Ways to Avert a Climate Crisis
- Al Gore (www.ted.com)

1. Reduce emissions from your home
- 2.
3. Be a green consumer
- 4.
5. Go to the carbon calculator at www.climatecrisis.net
- 6.
7. Integrate climate solutions into all of your innovations
8. Invest sustainably
- 9.
10. Raise awareness by promoting the movie
11. Send someone to Nashville to get trained to give the slideshow
- 12.
13. Support the idea of capping and trading carbon emissions
14. Help change the minds of the American people; help with the mass persuasion campaign
- 15.

B-5: Slowing Down in a World Built for Speed
-Carl Honore (www.ted.com)

- 1) What are common “wake-up calls” for people?
- 2) What was the speaker’s wake-up call?
- 3) What is the “deeper driver, the nub”?
- 4) How does he describe time in the West?
- 5) How are people around the world starting to feel about slowing down?
- 6) Where did the Slow Food Movement start?
- 7) How many people are part of the Slow Food Movement?
- 8) What is the Slow Cities Movement?
- 9) How has our fast-paced culture affected children?
- 10) Why is it so hard to slow down?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

B-6: Killer Presentation Skills

· - J. Douglas Jeffreys (www.youtube.com)

Listen to the speech and take notes on each section.

- Physical Skills: Controlling Anxiety

- Physical Skills: Eye Contact

- The Power of the Pause

- Body Language

- Gestures

- Podiums

- Effective Content

B-7: Is 4am the New Midnight?
- Rives (www.ted.com)

Rives talks about the following people in his speech. What is each person's connection to his 4am theory?

Alberto Giacometti

Homer Simpson

Faron Young

Judy Dench

Wisława Szymborska

Bill Clinton

Franklin D. Roosevelt

B-8: Why We Do What We Do and How We Can Do it Better
– Tony Robbins (www.ted.com)

What are the two invisible forces?

- 1.
- 2.

What are the six needs?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

What is the main idea of this speech?

Other notes, thoughts, ideas.....