English Language Education Concentration 2007-2008

William Kumai, Keizo Asano

1 ELEC Description

This paper will describe the newly established concentration in the English Department of Nanzan Junior College: the English Language Education Concentration (hereafter designated ELEC). First, we will describe the overall program: philosophy, policy, and classes. Second, we will introduce special ELEC activities: level check tests, school visits, overnight retreat, and twice-weekly classes with the seminar teacher. Third, we will examine and analyze the retreat, level checks, and school visits in depth. Fourth, we will introduce our respective seminars. Finally, we will conclude with thoughts about the future directions for ELEC.

1.1 Philosophy

ELEC has at its foundation the idea that one learns when one teaches. Whereas the English Department at Nanzan Junior College stresses communication, ELEC further refines this goal by focusing on the knowledge content of what is being communicated: first, that the
communicator fully understands what she is trying to convey, and second, whether the receiver has understood the content. The key is that one learns a subject deeply in order to teach it; teaching is also learning.

Students in the teacher-training course\(^3\) are all required to enroll in ELEC. However, we have always thought to widen the base of ELEC since the population of teacher training course students varies widely. Requiring all teacher trainees to enroll in ELEC raises the danger of being stereotyped, that ELEC would be exclusively for teacher-training. To counter this, we have emphasized the fact of having opportunities to learn English deeply in order to teach it. As a result, we were able to attract the interest of a large number of students; indeed, the majority of students in ELEC are not in the teacher-training course.

As a concentration, ELEC provides common activities for its students, which will be described more fully in their own sections. The first of these is the overnight retreat\(^4\) held at the Nanzan Gakuen Training Center. Second, periodic English level check tests are given through seminar classes to help students assess their progress in learning English. Third, we try to arrange classroom visits to other schools, to observe English teaching in a variety of settings.

During the discussions leading to the formation of ELEC programs, we realized that human relations are an important factor in pedagogical settings. To reinforce this point, if the scheduling permits, we will request that seminar teachers have at least one other class with their seminar students, so that they may meet with their students at least twice a week. This idea found its origin in the Oral Communication classes that meet twice weekly. In the 2008 academic year, in addition to the seminar classes, we are able to meet our students in Speech and Debate (spring), Theory and Practice of English Education (spring), and Oral Interpretation (fall).
1.2 Classes in ELEC

The classes in ELEC can be divided into two categories. The first category consists of the core classes related to English language education. The second are various classes from other concentrations. Indeed, ELEC is the only concentration that allows students to sample classes in other concentrations. These classes help students in improving their English expression and help them achieve an international mindset.

**Core Classes**

- Research Project: this is the seminar class, lasting three semesters. Each seminar class is described in a later section.
- Theory and Practice of English Education: Students learn the art of lesson planning and give demonstration lessons. Here, students will put into practice the philosophy that teaching is learning.
- Early English Education: Students learn techniques of teaching English to small children. The current trend in Japanese education is to introduce compulsory English in primary school.
- Introduction to Japanese Language Education: Students learn how to teach their own mother tongue to foreigners. By teaching their own language, students will gain insight into the nature of language and also discover principles underlying the English language.

**Other Concentrations**

- Speech and Debate (English Expression Concentration): Students learn and practice the rhetorical and logical structure of English debates and speeches. Differences in rhetoric between high-context, group-oriented Japanese and low-context, individual-oriented English are highlighted.
- Oral Interpretation (English Expression Concentration): Students improve their oral expression through oral reading of English texts. Students learn better enunciation and delivery techniques.
Comparative Cultures (Culture Understanding Concentration): Students gain an understanding of what culture is, and how cultures can be compared. Cultural values lie at the heart of many expressions in a language; thus their study helps shed light when learning a foreign language.

Theory of Multicultural Societies (International Cooperation Concentration): The future in Japan promises to become more, not less, international. Students will learn the issues involved in multicultural societies.

Introduction to International Cooperation (International Cooperation Concentration): Students will learn about international cooperation, especially at the grassroots level. Many NGOs are involved in helping foreigners, and this includes language teaching.

2 ELEC Retreat

From 4:30 p.m. April 25 to 4:30 p.m. April 26, 2008, ELEC held its first retreat for ELEC students at the Nanzan Gakuen Training Center, a 5-minute walk from Nanzan Junior College. The retreat was decided on early in the planning stages of ELEC. Since teaching and language learning are heavily dependent on human relations, especially in the areas of mutual support and respect, we wanted an activity that would help establish these concepts among all the students in ELEC. Furthermore, the seminar professors would be better able to explain their expectations of ELEC students and establish rapport with the students in a more informal setting. 48 students attended, with 45 staying overnight.

One central feature of the retreat was the 100 yen rule: should anyone speak in Japanese rather than English during the entire 24 hours, that person would pay 100 yen for each instance of Japanese. The money collected was to go to a party later, but in fact was used to cover fees because some
students did not stay the entire time, and thus paid less. The rule was implemented to show students that they can indeed converse entirely in English, and give them the opportunity to have intense planning sessions in English to prepare for presentations on Saturday.

2.1 Logistics
The logistics were divided between the teachers and student volunteers. The teachers made contact with the Nanzan Gakuen Training Center (via Nanzan Educational Service), took care of the paperwork, calculated the fees to be divided among the participants, and drew up the schedule of activities. The student volunteers collected the fees, handled room assignments and bath scheduling, confirmed attendance schedules (some students would not stay overnight, some students would leave early the next day), and negotiated with the food services both at the training center (breakfast) and Nanzan Junior College (dinner and lunch). The fees came to around 3000 yen each, with the English Department supplying 1200 yen from the seminar class party budget; thus each person paid 1800 yen (unless the student stayed for less than the entire time). All the activities were centered around the main cafeteria (the auditorium and meeting rooms required additional fees); later, students used their rooms as well as small relaxation spaces scattered around the training center.

2.2 Schedule
The schedule was organized around six 90-minute class periods, with several additional optional activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16:30–16:50</td>
<td>Room assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:50–18:20</td>
<td>First Period: Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:50–17:10</td>
<td>General overview, rules</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:10–17:40</td>
<td>First ice-breaker: Keyword Line-up*</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:40–18:10</td>
<td>Second ice-breaker: Who’s Lying?**</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
18:10–18:20 Dividing into workgroups

18:20–19:30 Dinner

19:30–21:00 Second Period: Research Project Lectures

19:30–20:00 Kumai’s lecture
20:00–20:30 Asano’s lecture
20:30–21:00 Project assignment

06:30–07:00 Neighborhood Walk (optional)

07:00–07:30 Morning Prayer (optional)

07:30–08:30 Breakfast (and packing)

08:40–10:10 Third Period: Preparation

10:20–11:50 Fourth Period: Preparation

11:50–12:50 Lunch (at Nanzan Junior College)

12:50–14:20 Fifth Period: Presentations

14:30–16:00 Sixth Period: Presentations

16:00–16:30 Reflection

*The Keyword Line-up activity is described later.

**Who’s Lying?: In small groups of 3 or 4, students decide on a common topic, such as high school, and decide which of them will be telling the truth, while the others will lying. Then groups pair off, interviewing each other, trying to guess which person is the truth-teller in each group.

2.3 Project

The centerpiece of the retreat was the group project. Students were divided into groups of six at the end of the first period, and these groups had to devise and perform a 10-minute drama about school life. Each drama should have one or more teaching points, modeled after the NHK television drama, Chugakusei Nikki [Junior High School Student Diary] (NHK, n. d.). All scripts had to be proofread for English by the teachers.

The project accomplished several goals. As mentioned earlier, this was an opportunity for students to spend an extended time together in intense
planning and practice sessions, all in English. Cooperation is especially important when communication is hampered by lack of vocabulary. The students had to think about communication with the audience as they arranged the staging of the plays. As for content, with theme being school life, students had to explore various aspects of education: teaching and learning, relations with classmates and teachers, and moral issues. Finally, there is this quote attributed to Gail Godwin, “Good teaching is one-fourth preparation and three-fourths theater.”

2.4 Comments

This retreat had two purposes and they were successfully fulfilled. One was to provide the ELEC students with an occasion where they were not allowed to use Japanese to interact with their peers and us. Both Kumai and Asano had always wished to make “natural” environments that would require our students to interact in English with each other more often and more meaningfully in an actual life setting. While it might be true that this retreat still is “artificial” in that participants deliberately used English to communicate among mostly Japanese speakers, it is highly commendable that everyone actually attempted to speak, listen to, read and write English more meaningfully than in most classrooms in order to complete 24 hours of English.

The other purpose was to let students get familiarized more with those from another Research Project Class, i.e., Asano’s class would know more about the students from Kumai’s, and vice versa. And it was successful for the most part. This might sound a little funny because it was over a year since they had enrolled in this very small college and many of them quite often took classes together as ELEC students. However, some of the students were still unfamiliar with one another and some even confessed in the feedback that they were happy to “meet” each other after about a year. It is one of the characteristics shown by many recent students that they are
very careful when meeting with others so that they might not get hurt from establishing new relationships. In other words, they tend to prefer to stay alone rather than being with others because they would not like to get hurt or hurt others.

### 2.5 Comments from students

Below are the results of a survey (in Japanese) given to students after the retreat (40 respondents). First we will give the results of student ranking on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being highest:

- Activities: Icebreakers ......................... 4.3
- Activities: Talks by teachers ..................... 4.2
- Activities: Preparation by group .................. 4.2
- Activities: Presentations .......................... 4.5
- Activities: Reflection period ....................... 4.2
- Activities: No Japanese rule ...................... 4.3
- Learned about education and language study ...... 4.0
- Facilities at the Center ............................. 4.2
- Food: Dinner ....................................... 3.6
- Food: Breakfast ..................................... 3.8
- Food: Lunch ........................................ 3.9
- Retreat should be a part of official curriculum ...... 3.6

Next are summaries of individual comments.

- Glad to make friends with people from another class.
- Want to do it again in the future.
- Discovered that trying to speak is important.
- Very meaningful and got motivated a lot.
- Wanted to have a longer retreat.
- It was hard to speak English so wanted preparation time prior to
the retreat.
Wished to cook by themselves and at a resort place
Some were motivated but some were not; didn’t like to be with
them in the same group.
It was unfair that many spoke Japanese in the back and didn’t pay
Wanted to sleep longer.
Everyone should participate. Don’t allow some to go home early.
They were less motivated and lied.
Wished to be with those who spoke at the same level. It was
boring with lower level students.
Wished to have it some other time. It is too busy with job hunting.
Couldn’t sleep either.
Didn’t understand the purpose of the retreat.
Teachers may think this is great and they are enthusiastic about
this concentration, but we are too tied up with study, job-
hunting, and part-time jobs.

3 Level Check Tests

One of the common activities for all ELEC students is the level check test. These are administered several times over the course of three semesters, during the seminar classes. After considering various options, we settled on adapting old entrance examinations for test material, especially in the areas of listening, reading, and grammar. Each test has about 30 questions to be answered in 30–45 minutes. The institutional TOEIC test (Educational Testing Service, 2008) given to all first-year students was also considered a level-check test, although it does not have a separate grammar score.

The main reason for implementing the level check tests is to have students notice their own language learning process. Although educational institutions may provide excellent lessons and learning opportunities to
students, ultimately, the students themselves are accountable for their own progress. The level check tests are a tool for students; they are not counted in the students’ grade evaluations.

The students are provided their raw scores on the tests, but more importantly, their ranking within ELEC as a way to directly compare their performance from test to test. The ranking is given for each area, listening, reading, and grammar, separately as well as for their overall score. Appendix A shows the ranking scores of the students, using the first level check test administered on October 1, 2007, as the base. Students who did not take all the level check tests were removed from the list; this accounts for the rankings to be slightly off, as they are based on the number of students who took that particular test. Students are identified by a two-letter designation.

If we take the October 1, 2007 level check test as the base starting point, we can find some simple trends from the data. Looking at the total score, we find around 40% of the students are ranking consistently higher than their original ranking, whereas 33% are consistently lower. That the former is larger than the latter is an encouraging result; students are trying to improve their English. The numbers for listening are similar: 38% are consistently higher in rank, whereas 23% are consistently lower. The reading numbers tell a different story: 44% are consistently higher in rank, whereas 19% are consistently lower. Students are showing a marked improvement in reading. On the other hand, in grammar, 54% rose in the rankings as opposed to 46% who fell; the trend, although positive, is weak. Students need to pay more attention to grammar points.

We can also examine the correlation coefficients between the different areas and the total score. These numbers show that for the first test, good listening and reading scores were good indicators of a good total score. For the second test, listening and grammar are strongly correlated with the total score. For the third test, both listening and reading are about equal. In all the tests, listening is clearly an important factor in predicting the overall score.
School visits were arranged for Yagoto Municipal Elementary School, Nanzan Kokusai High School, and Nanzan Girls’ Junior and Senior High School. Students visited English language classes as observers, to experience different settings of English education. Yagoto Municipal Elementary School had a special English activity week conducted by an early language education specialist; 13 students observed during November 29–30, 2007. Nanzan Kokusai High School is a school specializing in mainstreaming returnee students; 32 ELEC students observed classes as well as a speech contest on February 20, 2008. Between May 26–30, 20 students observed classes at the Nanzan Girls’ Junior and Senior High School (this number includes repeat visits).

Below are a few comments (edited for grammar) made by students about the Nanzan Kokusai High School visit:

In the English classes, it is impressive that the teacher is friendly and students speak freely. It is a cheerful atmosphere. I think it is good to change the content of English class by students’ English levels.

The teachers and the students were very friendly and they enjoyed their classes. I was surprised they wore what they want; some wore the school uniforms but some didn’t.

I got the impression that your students had such good command of English. They were very lively in participating in activities such as discussion,
debate, and speech. I also had the impression that the teachers were teaching with great enthusiasm.

Your school is free. As a result students are lively. The speech contest makes students positive; to speak in front of people needs courage.

In my junior high school almost all of the students do not like English because that was too boring. But in your school most of the students enjoyed taking English class through using movies or doing group work.

5 Asano Seminar

Kenkyu (Research) Project with Asano 2007–8 started off with ELEC students for the first time. In Fall 2007, a total of 54 students were selected by lot out of over 100 who would wish to study with ELEC and they were divided into two classes. One of them was Research Project I, 2007, with Asano. This seminar, including Research Projects II & III, was carefully designed to provide both theory and practice in teaching and its related fields since as many as 13 out of 27 are enrolled in the teacher qualification course.

5.1 What

We read for theory Hajimete no Eigogaku [English Linguistics: An Introduction] (Hasegawa, 2006) as a textbook, to learn facts and get knowledge of the English language and its linguistics in order to form some basis to be a teacher of English in Japan. For the practice part, everyone made a weekly presentation in Japanese (Fall, 2007) and both in English and Japanese (Spring 2008) with a partner or two on selected chapters of the textbook. For example, a group of two presented the class with the contents of the chapter, “History of English” on the week following a lecture by the professor on the same subject.
The topics followed the chapters in the textbook. In Fall 2007, we covered (chapter titles are translated):

- Origin of Language
- Human Languages and Study of Language
- Pronunciation and Spelling
- Diversity of Vocabulary
- Standard English
- Variations of English
- Changes of Language
- Language and Phonetics
- Morphology, Syllables, Accent, Rhythm
- Syntax

Topics covered in Spring 2008:

- English Language Education in Japan
- Principles and Methods
- Ethnography of Communication
- English and Culture
- Language and Society
- Language and Nations

5.2 How

The students had to fulfill three responsibilities. First, they were expected to act as individuals to attend each lecture and learn it successfully. Each lecture included a quiz at the beginning and reflection at the end of the class, both of which were evaluated and considered as part of the final grade of the course. The next responsibility was to act as presenters in collaboration with another student or two. The presentation consisted of two parts: presentation and question & discussion. The presentation part in
Fall 2007 lasted 20 minutes and the discussion 10 minutes, whereas in Spring 2008 it was extended to 40 minutes altogether and the presenting students had the freedom to use the allotted time as they wished. It was requested of the students as presenters to plan their presentation carefully to finish within the given time. The third and last responsibility was to act as audience and evaluators. The audience students evaluated the performances by an evaluation sheet prepared and provided by the professor. The evaluation sheet were given to the presenters at the end of the class, together with the professor’s evaluation and comments that were incorporated into the final grade. In the fall semester 2007 only, all the presentations were videotaped. The presenters watched their own presentations to examine the points given in comments from their peer students before they turned in their feedback to the professor.

6 Kumai Seminar

The main theme of Kumai’s seminar (Research Project) class is the design of foreign language practice activities. The activities can be divided into six different categories: group dynamics, understanding, chaos theory, skills, global education, and expression. The first two are covered in the first semester, the third in the second semester, and the last three in the third semester. In most lessons, first, the students learn the goals and principles of the design behind a certain language practice activity, which they then experience themselves, and finally discuss. The activities presented have been successful in Oral Communication classes in that they generate both high interest and high involvement in L2. Students participating in these activities have found themselves in sustained L2 production, despite being in a monolingual, low-to-moderate motivation environment.

There are three other main features in the Kumai seminar. One involves weekly reflection reports written on index cards. Through these reflections
students can synthesize and integrate their thoughts about the lesson’s activity. Index cards are used to reduce the perceived burden of writing reports because of their smaller size (B6). Students write the report on only one side; the other side is used to rate activities in terms of difficulty, usefulness, and interest. Students also write down new words for vocabulary expansion. Next, every lesson three or four students give one-minute speeches, in English, about any topic they wish. The speeches are ongoing and students may expect to present a one-minute speech four to five times per year. The topics are left up to students; however, they are asked to give high interest talks. The speeches help develop the students’ communication skills, since a reaction from the audience is expected. Finally, at the end of the third semester, students will complete an APA style (American Psychological Association) research paper in English as a graduation thesis (American Psychological Association, 2001). Students choose their own research topic, provided it is related to the area of education.

6.1 Group Dynamics
The set of activities labeled “Group Dynamics” tries to build group cohesion in the class. Having class cohesion and trust is a key point in building an environment that can nurture, not stifle, L2 production (Moskowitz, 1978, p. 30). While students learned techniques about group building, they accomplish an auxiliary goal, that of becoming cohesive themselves.

Partner Profile
The first activity the students participate in is the Partner Profile. Rather than having students give self-introductions, they introduce a classmate. This follows the cooperative learning principle of accountability (Kessler, 1992). Students are responsible for giving a good impression of their partners to their classmates; in fact, they were directed to make their partners look as
interesting as possible. Since the presentation is done in pairs, this lowers the anxiety compared with solo self-introductions. Pairs were formed by randomly distributing related phrases having to do with education, for example, initiative/motivation, purpose/goal, and accuracy/fluency. The format is as follows: (1) explanation of keywords in relation to education (in Japanese); (2) general information, topics of which were gathered during a class brainstorm session; (3) interesting experiences; (4) in-depth topic; and (5) conclusion.

**Johari Windows**

Johari Windows is a standard interaction activity in human relations studies (Moskowitz, 1978, p. 7). Students draw 2 x 2 grids, the side representing themselves, the top representing their partner. The students pair up, and choose a topic such as want, have, know, can, and so on. If the topic were “want,” then the grid would represent “I want/My partner wants,” “I want, My partner doesn’t want,” “I don’t want/My partner wants,” and “I don’t want/My partner doesn’t want.” The pairs then discuss the 2 x 2 grid of their topic. Afterwards, they move on to a new partner. Students reported in their index cards that they were happy to learn new aspects of their classmates. Although a simple device, Johari Windows helped the students interact with each other to increase class cohesion, and further, they interacted in English.

**Keyword Line-up**

Keyword Line-up (Helgesen, et al., 2004b, p. T-11; Kumai, 2005; Moskowitz, 1978) is a simple activity that first has students prepare small cards, with their name in the center, and four keywords or phrases, in each corner. The keywords should be related to the students themselves, as this is a self-introduction activity. The students line up in two lines, and show their cards to the partner next to them. They discuss their cards in English.
for a few minutes; then the lines shift so students will get new partners. This activity is presented early to introduce students to the use of mass interaction in order to sustain an L2 language community; more will be discussed in a later section. As in Johari Windows, the class cohesion is increased.

Class survey
The final activity in the group dynamics section is the Class Survey (Porter & Grant, 1992), where students divided into groups and chose an education-related topic with which they surveyed the class. These topics included preschool, primary school, middle school, and high school education; college education; and after school programs. The groups reported their results to the class in a formal presentation. Through this activity students could learn about the various educational experiences of the classmates, work together to prepare the results, and practice presentation skills.

6.2 Understanding
The activities grouped under “Understanding” are designed to help students understand deeper the concepts behind “education,” while at the same time helping them learn other skills as well. The first week in this section of the seminar introduced students to various principles involved in language education, including the nature of language and approaches to language teaching.

Job Fair
The Job Fair is a simple simulation of the job-hunting experience (Kumai, 2004). During the first class meeting, students in pairs or threes form companies and an accompanying job opening. The restriction is that both be related to education or training. The companies then develop a list of interview questions for job hunters. Then, over the next three class
meetings, one-third of the class are job-hunters and the remaining two-thirds are companies; each student acts as a job-hunter once and a company interviewer twice. The one-third/two-thirds split ensures that there is very little waiting time for job-hunters or companies, that almost all students are engaged in the interview process. The job-hunters proceed to a company and take an interview with them; after a few minutes, the job-hunters move to the next company until the companies have interviewed all job-hunters. Then the companies announce the successful candidates.

The Job Fair accomplishes several goals. One is to practice the art of job interviews; at the time, students are near the end of their first-year and are looking forward towards real job-hunting. As company interviewers, students are told to observe successful techniques of interviewees for their own future use. Another goal is to understand what qualities an educator must have, since all job openings are related to education. Finally, the activity has all students engaged in English conversations, since candidates will fail if they used L1; there will usually be two or three interviewers observing the interviewees in terms of English use.

*School Debate*

School Debate is an informal, free form debate by groups. One group represents the “board of education”; the remaining groups represent an optional school program, such as an additional foreign language, school orchestra, sports clubs, and so on. Due to budget cuts, the board of education must cut one of the programs, so in debate the programs defend themselves and discount the importance of the others. Although fanciful in nature, the debate helps students understand the meaning and importance of general education.

**6.3 Chaos and Complexity Theory**

The second semester of the Kumai seminar is devoted almost entirely
to applications of chaos and complexity theory (Kumai, 1999; Larsen-Freeman, 1997) to language learning activities. From a holistic, rather than a reductionist, view, we consider the students, teacher, and classroom as a complex adaptive system. There are many complex interactions among the various elements of students, teacher, and classroom; the system adapts to change through feedback sensitivity. Adaptation and creativity reach their peak in complex adaptive systems when these systems are poised in a regime between orderly and chaotic behavior; this regime is known as the “edge of chaos” (Kauffman 1995). The following activities are designed to push the complex adaptive system of the classroom toward the edge of chaos, where we find that sustained L2 conversations emerge spontaneously. Although not related to chaos and complexity theory, towards the end of the semester students discuss in English several articles about education they have prepared beforehand.

Textbook-based activities

There are three activities based on textbook conversation and pair-work activities. Line-up was described earlier, with students lining up in two lines, the person next to them being their partner; after a few minutes, the lines shift, giving each student a new partner. In ordinary pair-work, students are always with the same partner; by introducing a partner shift every few minutes, one encounters the “perpetual novelty” characteristic of many complex adaptive systems. This helps break the tendency to fall into L1 once partners get used to each other.

Guided Conversations are conducted in a line-up fashion. Students are given an outline of a textbook conversation learned earlier, but the outline is slightly different, so that students will not simply parrot the textbook. Also, some parts of the outline ask the student to give an opinion or some advice; this reinforces the “perpetual novelty” characteristic stated earlier. Madlibs (Price & Stern, 1974) are a variation of guided conversations,
except that students are given the actual words of conversations, rather than an outline. However, some words are blanked out; before the activity begins, students make lists of words to be used in the blanks. Although the resulting conversations become semi-nonsensical, this adds to the interest of the activity. Students listen to the conversations to see how their words fit in (or not fit in) with the conversation.

*Circle activities*

The following activities take advantage of a classroom with the chairs in a circular arrangement. Fishbowl (Klippel, 1984, p. 9; Kumai, 1999; Kindt, et. al, 1999) has all the chairs in a circle, save four, which are in the middle. Both inner and outer circles face inwards. The rules are three: students in the inner circle may talk; students in the outer circle must remain quiet; and a student in the outer circle may change seats with a student in the inner circle by tapping her shoulder. Because of all the attention focused on the inner circle, the conversations stay in L2. There is high tension in the outer circle as they look for chances to enter the inner circle.

In Human Tape Recorders (Kumai, 2000), half the chairs are in the outer circle, and half are in the inner circle; both circles face each other. Those in the outer circle act as storytellers, telling one line of a story at a time. Those in the inner circle are tape recorders, only recording what the storytellers say or repeat what has been said before. When the storytellers tell one line of a story, the outer circle rotates by one chair, so they get to continue a different story. In essence, the storytellers are creating chain stories, but through the medium of the human tape recorders. The feedback mechanism of the human tape recorders, plus the novelty of the stories as they get longer leads to sustained L2 language use in the activity.

*Origami Marketplace*

The Origami Marketplace (Kumai, 2007; Gagné, 2001) is a simulation in
which students set up stalls to sell their origami creations. The shoppers are given bargaining language to reduce prices, whereas the sellers are given language for persuasion. The shoppers carry slips of paper to simulate money. Shopping is a high interest activity for students and the novelty of bargaining for goods helps keep the language used in L2. The activity is held in two rounds: in the first round, shoppers visit the stalls, listening to the sellers’ sales pitches; in the second, the students carry out the bargaining, buying, and selling. Afterwards, the shoppers and sellers switch roles. Of particular note is that the bargaining must be done in L2 to be acceptable, creating a self-enforcing L2-only rule.

Table games
There are two table games based on chaos and complexity theory: Borrowing Game and Pelmanism. In the Borrowing Game (Helgesen, et al., 2004b, p. 47), students divide up into groups and write ordinary, and perhaps unusual, items on small pieces of paper. These are gathered together and shuffled in the center. One student becomes the “leader” and takes one piece of paper, and announces what the item is. The others in the group then take turns in giving reasons why the item should be lent to them. The leader decides who gave the best answer. Then others in the group take turns to become the leader. Pelmanism (Hill, 1990) is similar to the borrowing game, except all small pieces of paper are laid out in the center. The original Pelmanism has one person in the group choosing two pieces of paper and making a sentence that connects the two items. If the others in the group disapprove of the sentence, the pieces of paper are returned to their original positions. The modified Pelmanism has a leader choosing the two pieces of paper, but then the others in the group take turns making sentences that connect the items. The leader decides who made the best sentence.

In both games the element of competition is strong, and the basis of
the competition is creativity. The judgments are based on L2 sentences uttered by the competitors; hence there is a compelling interest in staying in L2. Furthermore, there is the self-enforcing aspect in that should one competitor use L1, the other competitors may cry foul.

Discussion games

Discussion games represent the last of the major activities addressed in the chaos and complexity section. In Mad Discussion (Klippel, 1984, p. 76), students are divided into groups and write ordinary, and perhaps unusual, items on small pieces of paper. These papers are gathered and shuffled. Two groups choose one piece of paper each, announcing their contents to the class. Then they debate each other, under the topic, which is more important? After a few minutes, they stop and the others in the class vote for the winner. Then other groups take their turns. In Advice Panel, students are divided into groups, which are paired off. One group in a pair becomes the group of advice-givers; the other group becomes the problem-giver/judges. One student in the latter group asks for advice about a problem; in turn, the advice-givers give their advice; then the judges decide who gave the best advice. The roles alternate, and finally, pair-groups are changed.

In Mad Discussion, the flow of the activity is controlled by the novelty of debating two potentially items that are completely unrelated, and giving creative reasons for their importance; further, the debating groups are monitored by the audience, who will ultimately render judgment on which group gave better arguments. In Advice Panel, the underlying mechanism is similar to the table games mentioned previously: a competition based on L2 creativity.

6.4 Skills

The skills section introduces language practice activities aimed at particular skills, vocabulary, description, writing, and listening. These particular
activities were chosen for their simplicity, self-sustainability (the students stay in L2), and scalability (can be adapted to many levels). In the following, we will give one example activity for each different targeted skill, although several other activities are introduced during the same class period. For vocabulary, students tried a variation of the Password television game show (Wikipedia, 2008), where pairs compete against each other to guess words. In each pair, one is the hint-giver, the other is the word-guesser; the hint-givers choose one word from a pile of words on pieces of paper, then give hints to their partner. Whichever pair guesses the word first gets a point, and the game continues with roles reversed. To learn description, the Five Pictures game is introduced (Helgesen, et al., 2004a, p. T–21). In groups, one student, holding five pictures of people, answers yes/no description questions from the others for each picture in sequence; the pictures are mixed and shown; the others guess which was the first, second, and so on, based on the answers to their description questions. For writing, a variation of the human tape recorders activities, Mutual Dictation stories (Deller, 1990, p. 34), is introduced. Students make pairs, sit back-to-back, and create a story; however, the pairs alternate dictating one sentence of the story to the other, so that each student has only one-half of the story, the part dictated by their partner. As for listening, students try the Contradictions activity (Frank, Rinvolucri, & Berer, 1982), where in groups, one student reads aloud a story, but the story is filled with contradictions; the others in the group try to find the contradictions.

6.5 Global Education

In this section, students are introduced to content-based language activities, in particular global education. Unlike many content-based lessons, these activities can be conducted by non-experts in the field.

*Intercultural Communication Game*
The key point of the Intercultural Communication Game is having students create their own cultures while finding ways of navigating new ones. In groups, students decide upon communication rules, in other words, their own culture. These rules can include gestures, items, and so on. Then one student from each group becomes anthropologist and observes a different group’s communication patterns. The anthropologists return and report their observations. Then a visitor from each group is sent out, and based on the anthropologist’s recommendations, tries to join in the conversation of the previously visited group. If successful, visitor will be able to converse in the group; otherwise, the visitor may be subjected to “punishment” or “ostracism” from the group. Through this activity students can learn the importance of observation when dealing with intercultural communication.

Trading Game

The Trading Game is used widely to teach the effects of inequality among nations (Christian Aid, 2008). Six groups, representing rich nations, emerging nations, and poor nations are made, and each type of group is given certain materials. Rich countries have rulers, scissors, pencils, and so on, but only a few sheets of paper. The poor nations mainly have sheets of paper. The emerging nations are in between, with a few implements and some sheets of paper. The paper represents natural resources, whereas the implements represent technology. The goal of the game is to create money, to be cut accurately from the sheets of paper. A banker records the amount of money made by each country, and rejects substandard money (for example, torn vs. cut, not exactly the correct width, and so on). During the game, nations have to trade in order to assemble the resources and tools to create money; the language of trade is, of course, English. Afterwards, the results are announced, and the game is discussed by the class.
6.6 Expression

In the last section of the seminar, students practice expression exercises. These activities are designed to highlight the students’ expressive abilities through the telling of stories. Students are reminded that successful story telling requires the expression of emotions; however, this skill also useful in many teaching situations.

Manga Storytelling

Students in Manga Storytelling (Kumai, 2003) prepare, in advance, two manga-type stories with no words. Those who cannot draw can cut-and-paste comics or other pictures, as long as no words are used. The students are arranged as in a line up, described previously. Taking turns, one student shows her partner her manga story; the partner tries to tell the story just from the pictures. The first student then rates her partner in terms of emotional expression, creativity, and so on. Then the roles are changed. After that, the students change partners and begin again. This activity combines several skills, the most important of which is combining ad-lib remarks with emotion.

Role Plays

Role Plays are done either as a class or in big groups; students are given a list short role plays for pairs (Zelman, 1986), such as one person is getting drunk, and the other is a friend trying to persuade her not drive home. Pairs take turns performing the role plays for a few minutes. Afterwards, the group discusses aspects of language and strategies used in the role plays. Then a new pair chooses a different role play to perform, and so on. Similar to the fishbowl activity described above, students are able to observe the process of conversations. The role plays are taken from every day situations, so students can challenge their language abilities in real-life simulations.
Scriptwriters
Towards the end of three semesters’ worth of classes, the students know each other well. With this background, the class is introduced to the Scriptwriters activity, where students form groups and write a short play for another group, taking care that the characters’ personalities match the actual personalities of the students. The scriptwriting is done over the course of two weeks (to allow time for corrections; the above role play activity is done in the intervening time), and the scripts are given to students on the day of the presentation. Students are allowed to practice for about half an hour, and then the plays are presented. Writing a script for another group whose members are known and getting an unknown script on the day of the performance add to the interest of the activity. During the writing of the plays, students also realize various aspects of conversation and emotional expression.

7 Conclusion
ELEC has begun with several characteristics that differentiate it from other concentrations: a retreat, school visits, and level check tests. These were designed to emphasize language learning and teaching to have ELEC students gain a deeper understanding of English language education. Further, the Research Project classes place great importance on the practical, experiential applications of theoretical topics. ELEC was designed to have a unified and comprehensive approach to its curriculum.

So far, the retreat has been the biggest defining feature of ELEC, and here we will add a few more observations. Since language learning environments where English is to be used for communication are very much limited in Japanese school settings, the second best setting would be English retreats for a certain period of time carefully planned and administered by faculty members, taking into account the strengths and weaknesses of the
students. The retreat was designed as an occasion to study English intensively. From the participating students’ feedback, we may well conclude that the first retreat was a great success.

However, if we take a closer look at the reactions from them, some students found it less meaningful and never wanted to repeat it, while some others were greatly satisfied with it and wished to have it more frequently. Some gave job-hunting as the reason for their negative attitude toward the retreat, and that might be considered if we are to plan it again in the future. Other reasons for not having it again, such as the cost, having more free time and better food, can be better planned and prepared. We expected up to a point to have such extremes, for and against, from the students, but that has proved some students’ motivation of studying English is far lower than that of others, even though all of them study at the English Department. We do not insist this is the best way of learning English but that it is a way that is worth trying even if they are “busy” doing job-hunting or part-time jobs.

We suggest that next ELEC retreat be completely conducted on a voluntary basis, though we explained it was no regular class, or perhaps the next retreat should be part of the curriculum so that interested students can take it for credit.

As far as other recommendations for the future, we would like to see an expanded role for the Theory and Practice of English Education class. One immediate change would be to separate the teacher-training students so that they can have more class presentation time to get ready for their practicums. Another would be to conduct this class over two semesters instead of one. Another suggestion is to have a class similar to the International Cooperation International Fieldwork A class, where students would get credit for volunteer teaching of English (75 hours/2 credits). The reasoning is that not all ELEC students are in the teacher-training program and hence would not have very many chances to experience teaching English.
Notes

1 Japanese: 系列
2 Japanese: 英語教育系列
3 Japanese: 教職
4 Japanese: 合宿
5 Japanese: 研究プロジェクト, 英語教育実践論, 早期英語教育, 日本語教育入門, スピーチとディベート, オーラルインタープリテーション, 比較文化, 多文化共生論, 国際協力入門
## Appendix A

### Level Check Test Rankings

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