

Learnability and Performance: Concepts for Rapid and Effective Language Teaching and Learning

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Video

- How long have these students been learning Chinese?
(contact hours @ 1 x 1.5 hour class per week)



Background

- Wondering ... how to get Japanese learners (in Taiwan, 1998) to enjoy my class
- Started with - Mandarin, **a large language** (Tsukuba Japan 2000-4, Imperial College and high schools UK, Ochanomizu University, 2009-)
- Applied to - Hokkien, a **less commonly taught language** (Tokyo 2002-4, SOAS 2005-7)
- Applied to - Karaim, an **endangered language** (Lithuania 2005, 2007)
- Now - Mandarin, MA pedagogy course



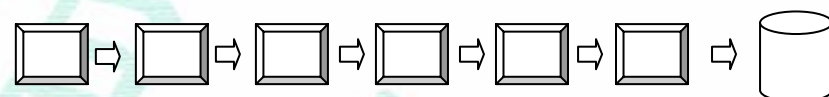
A performance approach

- Two steps of learning
 - Effective and learnable, practical materials
 - ‘Spiral of learning’ [5](#)
 - The classroom becomes a kind of stage
 - Drama creation and performance: to further extend learning outcomes.

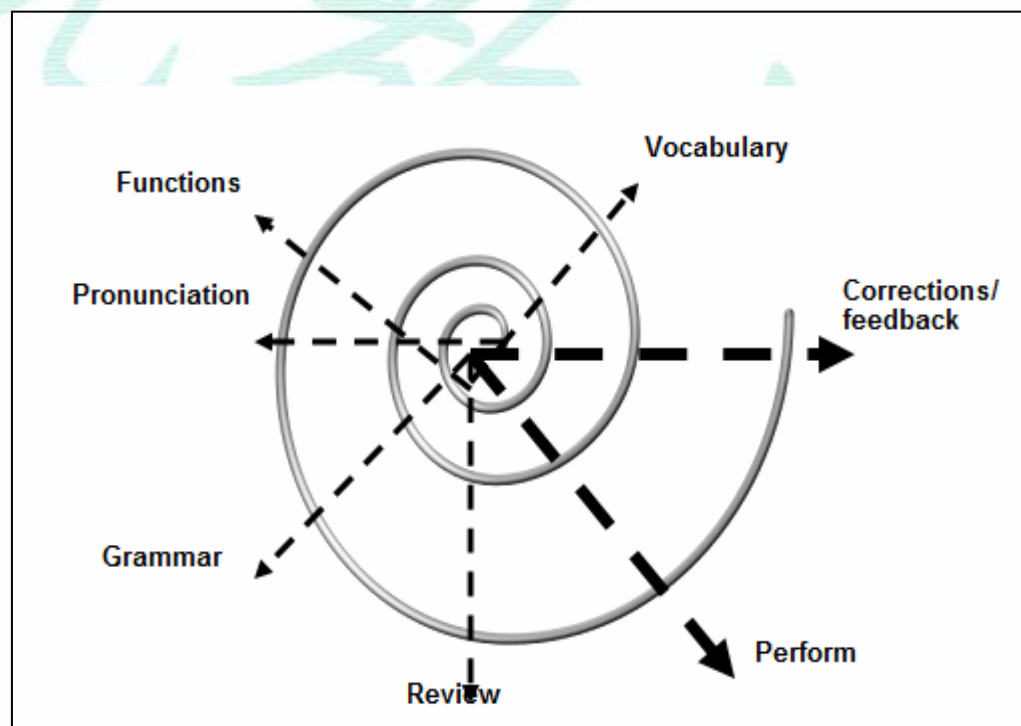


Spiral of learning

- Typical teaching - 'bank savings'



- Performance Approach - 'spiral'



PA design

- Course design
 - hours, classes, teachers
 - learners' motivations, learning styles, goals
- Teaching materials design
 - textbook, other materials (worksheets, songs, games etc)
- Activity design
 - listening, Q & A, conversation, find out ...
 - drama
- Evaluation and feedback design
 - evaluation / assessment; continuous and varied
 - drama (self/group/teacher feedback)
 - create resources for future learners



Textbook

- Learnable
- Sequence
- Each lesson builds on next
- Controlled vocabulary and structures
- Topics and dialogues relevant and useful
- Predictable learning
- Give mileposts and confidence to learners



Drama in the classroom

- Group based activity – real interactions: “a genuine purpose for communication ... a reason to use language” – Miccoli 2003
- Learning “through the eyes of the characters”, not as interchangeable learners – Cunico 2005
- Include culture, language functions e.g. emotion
- Groups create their own characters and story - more connection to identity and social setting; they remember the *story*, not the *lines*
- Classroom becomes a ‘theatre’ setting where interactions are more authentic



Videos : SOAS Hokkien

- Video 1: SOAS (2007), during a half-year Hokkien MA course. This video was part of a funded project to document language learning using drama.
- Video 2: Tsukuba University (2004)
- Video 3: Karaim Summer Schools (2005, 2007)



The value of drama

- Expand learning outcomes
- Resource creation for LCTL and ELs
- What learners do is valued
- Holistic learning and assessment
- Connect with culture, daily life, emotions
- Yet drama is neglected and “largely absent” from textbooks and curricula - Cunico 2005



Drama steps

- Establish parameters
- Set up story topics
- Formulate and present story
- Script writing, presentation, translation, correction
[example](#)
- Record voices
- Prepare for performance
- Performance; video
- Distribute useful resource



Learning across cultures

- Language learning is exploring the relationship between the learners' own culture and the target culture
- Different combinations:
 - Chinese FL2 - many learners have high affective motivations but equally high cultural distance
 - Japanese learners – may assume closer cultural links
 - Karaim - inside the culture, but little language



Cultural responses to drama

- Learners may bring their own cultural assumptions and conventions to drama activities
 - Japanese use a Kabuki staging
 - Karaim - used to stage performance (e.g. dancing) and more creative/fantasy stories
 - English - concerned about privacy on video
 - Saami (Norway) - “performance” is a religious taboo!



Conclusions – PA + Drama-based learning

- Complex, valuable and effective
(it is not *traditional method + skits*)
- Holistic (not separating listening, pronunciation, vocabulary, writing, translation, cultural aspects)
- Exploring other cultures – of target language, and of multicultural classroom
- Effective for rapid, predictable, measurable, accountable, usable learning of real language
- PA can bring the effective outcomes.



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・ END

・ Thank you!

