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研究会へようこそ

タスク重視の活動と学習者のモチベーション

L2モチベーション理論を用いたタスク重視のアプローチ

授業プラン：「ストレスについて語ろう」

授業プラン：「視覚を用いて物語を要約してみよう」

授業プラン：「My life so far」

投稿要領について
日本のJALT task-based teaching and learning special interest (TBL研究会)を中心としたジャーナル「OnTask」を創刊することができ、大変嬉しく思っております。日本ではtask-based learning(TBL)が注目され続けています。教師、研究者、学習者が共に考え、日本更にはEFL環境にある国々のTBLに関わる問題を議論できる雑誌にしていくたいと考えています。

TBLの様々な理論や実践に関わる文献が数多く発行されていますが、日本の環境において書かれたものが少ないように思います。そのアンバランスな問題を追及していくのが、私達の目的です。日本においてTBLアプローチの実践の重要性を言及した皆様からの投稿（英語・日本語）を心からお待ちしております。

ジャーナル「OnTask」は、年2回発行予定です。国際的に著名な専門家のみならず、国内の教師、研究者等からのTBLに基づいた論文や授業プランを掲載していきます。

この創刊号ではTBLとモチベーションについての論文を扱っています。これらの分野は応用言語学において、多数の研究成果が報告されています。しかし両者の学際的研究は比較的少なかったように思われます。モチベーションの研究者は、教授そのものではなく、学習者の社会的な背景から個人的差異と学習行動・潜在的な学习能力との関連性などに焦点を当てています。一方、TBLは認知的なプロセスと短期間の言語学習における成果に着目しています。OnTaskではこの現状を再検討していきたいと思います。

まず始めに、TBLの研究で世界的に有名なDave Willis、Jane Willis両氏によって、日本で行われてきた教師主導の授業形態よりもTasked basedアプローチの方が、よりモチベーションに有効的に働くことが指摘されています。さらに日本のEFL環境下で成功に導く実践的アイデアも提案しています。

二つ目は、Julian Pigott氏の論文でTBLアプローチが広範囲に渡るL2モチベーションの研究においてどの様に扱われているかを紹介しています。

今月の両方の論文は異なった見識に
It is our pleasure to launch the inaugural issue of OnTask, the journal of the JALT task-based teaching and learning special interest group (TBL SIG). As TBL continues to be adopted in Japan, we thought it beneficial to create a forum through which teachers, researchers and learners interested in the approach can come together to discuss, debate and share various issues related to TBL in Japan and in the wider EFL context.

While there is a great deal of published literature focused on various aspects of TBL theory and practice, only a slim amount of this is written with the Japanese context in mind. Therefore, it is the aim of this publication to address that imbalance and we welcome contributions from our readers (in English or Japanese) emphasising the important role that the Japanese context plays on the use of a task-based approach.

OnTask will be issued biannually and will include feature articles and TBL-based lesson plans both from teachers and researchers based in Japan as well as internationally renowned experts based elsewhere.

In this first issue the articles address TBL and motivation. These fields comprise two of the more voluminous bodies of research in applied linguistics. Yet they draw comparatively little on each other. Motivation researchers have tended to concentrate on a broad spectrum of relevant motivational factors, from social setting to links between individual difference variables and learning behaviour/proficiency gains without endorsing particular approaches to teaching. TBL research has traditionally emphasized cognitive processes and linguistic and learning outcomes of tasks over short time-scales. The papers in this edition of OnTask seek to redress the situation.

In our feature article, internationally renowned TBL experts Dave and Jane Willis justify a task-based approach in terms of the motivational advantages it holds over more traditional, teacher-centred approaches and they provide practical ideas for its successful implementation in Japanese EFL classrooms.

In the second article, Julian Pigott offers some suggestions as to how a TBL approach can be informed by more conscious attention to the extensive L2 motivation literature.

Thus, both of our articles in this edition attempt to build bridges between the two fields from different standpoints.

We also include three lesson plans for our first issue. Shaun Gates introduces an activity focussing on stress in students’ lives. Sandra Healy supports student creativity with a story summarising task. Finally, Brent Cotsworth outlines a fun activity focussing on events in each student’s “life so far”.

Thank you for your support and we hope you enjoy the read!
Enhancing motivation – the global community

Reports from teachers, not only in Japan but worldwide, suggest that students have difficulty in maintaining motivation throughout their lives as language learners, with many students leaving school unable to communicate confidently in the language they have been learning. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) writing on the situation in Japan, report: “A fairly consistent finding in longitudinal research on student motivation is evidence of some decline in levels of motivation, typically as students progress through the upper years of schooling and face increasing curricular, cognitive and linguistic demands and pressures” (p. 67). This research is borne out by Carpenter et al (2008).

One reason for this decline in motivation is that Japanese learners don’t hear much English in the world around them and after a few years, many begin to wonder why they need English at all. English becomes a subject that is needed to pass examinations or to put on their CVs. Dörnyei (2005) suggests that motivation drops because learners simply do not develop a positive image of themselves as future successful users of English. McClelland (2000) suggests that learners in Japan rarely seek assimilation with native-speakers and argues that a better long term goal would be English for integration within the global community. The pursuit of this goal needs to be tackled initially at the level of curriculum design and syllabus planning. Schools and colleges need to open up opportunities for learners to experience English in use and relate their English to use in the global community.

Institutions could, for example,

- Forge an electronic link with a similar institution in another country - not necessarily an English speaking country - but using English as their common international language.
- Use their web-site to host English ‘Home Pages’ for each class, to which groups or individuals could contribute in English.
• Find links to curriculum related web-sites with accessible topics that learners will both enjoy and find useful (for example <www.cilt.org.uk>).
• Create an ongoing resource list of interactive web-sites relating to learners’ own hobbies and interests, or blogs of popular personalities in the sports or music worlds, including Japanese people who use English in their professions.
• Hold regular ‘International English Days’, planned and run by students, to which native and non-native English speakers living or working locally are invited; students could display and present project posters or art work, or plan to tell and ask guests about a specific aspect of their lives. (see Coulson 2005)

These are all ideas for integrating learners into a wider community of English users which have already been successfully carried out in Japan. You may well think of other ways of doing this and we suggest that readers write in to the TBL SIG journal with their own more detailed ideas. Learners involved in such projects are more likely to have a positive image of themselves as users of English within a global community.

Problems of motivation in the classroom

These curriculum issues are certainly very important, but we need also to think about what can be done on a daily basis to make lessons more likely to encourage learners to participate in classroom activities. Most learners begin their first foreign language in primary school or the first years of Junior High School full of hope and optimism. They are happy to participate and will work hard to do what is expected of them both in the classroom and at home. But this enthusiasm is often short-lived. After two or three years they often become more reluctant to participate. Their aim is not to make a positive contribution to the classroom discourse, but to avoid error. They will try to play safe, keeping their contribution to a minimum.

There are all kinds of possible reasons for this. We would like to look at two. The first possibility is that, in spite of their best efforts, learners are likely to have a sense of failure. The aim of many lessons is mastery of a specified grammatical feature: do-questions, or the past simple tense or the first conditional for example. In a typical lesson teachers highlight and present the target item, carefully contextualising it to make the meaning and form as clear as possible. Then they go through a controlled practice stage in which learners become familiar with the targeted form. Finally there is an activity in which learners have the opportunity to use the new form.

Put yourself in the position of a learner. Imagine the aim of the lesson is to learn to produce do-questions, items like Where do you live? What do you think? and so on. If you are a capable and attentive student you will probably be able, by the end of the lesson, to produce forms like this under careful control. But as soon as you try to produce them spontaneously you have problems. Either you try to speak easily and fluently and make mistakes with your do-questions, (risking public correction by the teacher) or you concentrate on producing accurate question forms and so are unable to achieve any measure of fluency. The other alternative, and one to which all too many students resort, is to give a minimal response or say nothing at all. If we place the emphasis in language learning on accuracy and the avoidance of error, a feeling of failure is almost inevitable, resulting in a loss of self-esteem which is bound to be demotivating.

The second reason for a feeling of failure is that what happens in the language classroom often contradicts the students’ notion of what it means to learn a language. We all have a very clear idea of
what it is to know a language, because all of us know at least one language. We know that a language is a practical tool. We use it to exchange information and instructions, to make friends, to participate in social activities, both face to face and on the internet. We know that the real measure of our knowledge of a language is what we can do with it. So the beginners we talked about in the opening section of this article have a clear idea of what they want to achieve in learning a new language. They want to be able to do things with it. Success is measured not in terms of the ability to produce accurate sentences in the language but in terms of the ability to do things with the language.

Unfortunately what happens in the classroom too often contradicts this notion of language. Language is seen as residing in the ability to make correct sentences rather than in the ability to do things. If we are to avoid this, we need to give learners real opportunities to do things with the language. We need to afford them the opportunity to feel that they have succeeded in putting the language to use, even if the language they have produced has not always been entirely accurate.

A task-based lesson – putting the language to use

The basic principle behind task-based language teaching is that learners begin a teaching sequence by making the best use they can of the language they already have in order to achieve the goals of the task. There is no attempt to focus on the accurate production of new language until the end of the teaching sequence. This means that the primary aim of a sequence is fluency and language use, and that accuracy is subordinated to this.

Let us start by looking at the basic task cycle: task > planning > report (see Willis and Willis 2007 pp. 169-70). Here is a task on the topic of travel plans which you might set for a group of learners at the early intermediate level. You might like to do this task yourself before you read on.

Janet’s friend begins a conversation by saying:

Janet, I hear you’re planning a trip to Africa.

Work in groups and think of four questions you might ask Janet to find out more about her holiday. Try to think of one question which none of the other groups will ask.

Learners might be given the task in class or they might be asked to draft four possible questions for homework. Once they get into their groups they will begin to say things like: What airline you are going? Where will you go? and so on. The task is intended to stretch learners linguistically. The last part of the task asks for a question none of the other groups will ask. This is intended to stretch learners both linguistically and imaginatively. When we have asked learners to do this task they have come up with things like Will you take your cat? and Is your grandmother going with you?

In deciding on their questions, learners will use the language that comes readily to them. The discussion will be informal, with lots of false starts and rephrasing and repetition. Formal accuracy will not be a priority.

After learners have had time to decide on their questions the teacher will ask them to move to the next stage of the task cycle: planning. They need to plan because in a few minutes one member of the group, the ‘reporter’, will be asked to tell the whole class the questions the group has decided on. The reporter is not allowed simply to write down the questions and read them out, but is allowed to take up to twelve words of notes to work from. So the group will begin to prepare the reporter for the coming report. The reporter will naturally want to do this well and the group will want to help achieve this. So at this stage there will be more concern with accuracy. They have time to think about the form of their
questions and will try to prepare the reporter as well as they can. But the emphasis is still on meaning, on saying what they want to say. At this planning stage the teacher can go round and help.

Next comes the Report stage where the teacher will call on the reporters for three or four groups to give some of their questions. As they do so the teacher will write up a list of their questions on the board making brief corrections where necessary. Finally the class will listen to the discussion between Janet and her friend or read a transcript of their conversation, checking to see how many of their own questions have been answered, and how many of the ones listed on the board.

B: Janet, I hear you’re planning a trip to Africa.
J: Yes it’s very exciting. Going in September to see my son who’s doing volunteer work in Zambia. So I’m going to fly to Lusaka and he’ll meet me there and we’ll do a bit of travelling round. I think we’re going to be staying most of the time in Monze, where he’s working. It’s about a hundred miles south of Lusaka. But we’re planning all sorts of exciting things. We’re going to go on safari…
B: How long are you actually going for.
J: Oh, six weeks. Quite a long time so we can do quite a lot. I think we’re going to one of the big game parks – Luangwa – a game park – for a few days.
B: Right.
J: Probably going on down to see the Victoria Falls. And we’re actually going to Zimbabwe as well.
B: Matter of interest. What airline are you planning to fly by?
B: Air Zambia.
J: I’ve had to do it as cheaply as I could and I looked online and got this flight. I mean it’s a regular flight. It’s not a charter or anything.
B: Yes, yes.
J: But it’s er … I think it’ll be okay… I don’t know.

After feeding back on the questions that were or were not answered, we can begin to use the text for language analysis and study. The text is very rich in useful language. There are any number of words and phrases learners could be asked to identify and underline:

- phrases containing part of the verb GO
- phrases containing the word TO
- phrases with words ending in -ing
- ways of referring to the future
- expressions of time
- expressions of place

You could, for example, ask the students to read the transcripts and find phrases with words ending in -ing. This would yield sixteen phrases:

- you’re planning a trip
- it’s very exciting.
- Going in September
- who’s doing volunteer work
- I’m going to fly to Lusaka
- we’ll do a bit of travelling round
- we’re going to be staying most of the time in Monze
- in Monze where he’s working
- we’re planning all sorts of exciting things.
- We’re going to go on safari…
- How long are you actually going for.
- Probably going on down to see the Victoria Falls
- we’re actually going to Zimbabwe as well.
- What airline are you planning to fly by?
- It’s not a charter or anything.

Since this is a large number it might be as well to split the text into two parts and ask some groups to work on the first six lines and the other groups on the rest.

Next ask the groups to say how many of their phrases refer to the future. There are at least nine (3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14). Learners may also pick out 1, 9 and 15, since the word planning implies future action. What do these examples tell us about the way English talks about the future? Well, both the present continuous and the phrase going to are often used for things that have been planned or arranged. And the word plan is one of a number (want, would like, intend, need, hope, expect etc.) which have implications about the future.
These are things which learners can identify for themselves. They focus sharply on the use of the present continuous and going to, providing either an introduction to or a review of the way these forms are used. By this time, learners will have already repeated the phrases several times in the context of the analysis activity, and to consolidate, the teacher can select some for pronunciation practice.

Initially, learners tend to discuss language largely in L1, but does this really matter? They will be using a lot of English during the Task – Planning – Report cycle, and teachers using TBL regularly have found that learners do gradually use more and more English to talk about language.

You may move on from the analysis stage to ask learners to list three things each that they plan to do next week. You could review some of these with the class as a whole, hearing a variety of forms. You might follow this with a memory game in which six members of the class come to the front and each describe two of their plans, after which the rest of the class work in groups to see how many they can remember.

**Four principles of Task-based Learning**

The task-based lesson differs from a lesson which emphasises accuracy in four important ways:

- There is not simply a focus on one single form. In the first part of the lesson learners have been using question forms. At the planning stage they will have worked on question forms in preparing the reporter. In the language study phase they have looked at the use of the present continuous and going to, in particular the way they are used to refer to the future. Their attention has also been drawn to an important set of verbs which have future reference. In this detailed reading of the text they will almost certainly notice other useful phrases, like do a bit of …ing, all sorts of..., as cheaply as I could and learn some new words.
- Success is not judged primarily in terms of formal accuracy. Learners will feel they have succeeded by playing their part in the task cycle (task – planning – report), and in the language analysis. There will be some focus on accuracy in the final stage of the lesson, when learners strive to remember and use the forms they have just encountered within the contexts of their own lives, but it comes after language use and is subordinate to it.
- There has been a lot of autonomous language use. In the task cycle and the initial part of the analysis stage learners work independently of the teacher. Even in the teacher-led discussion learners play an active part. They are not simply responding to the teacher, but making their own contribution - which helps to boost their self-esteem.
- It encourages learners to think about language for themselves. They work directly with the text to find ways of referring to the future. They discover this is not a straightforward task. There is one use of the present continuous (8) which has present reference. And the uses of planning have present reference, since they are talking about planning which is underway at the time of the conversation, but they also have future reference. The process of engaging in language study in this way is enlightening and empowering.

**Learners exploring language**

We suggested in sections 1 and 2 some possible reasons why learners’ motivation declines. The first related to their image of themselves as potential English language users and needs to be tackled at the level of curriculum design. The second reason is that the focus on formal accuracy leads
inevitably to failure. Task-based learning makes the focus on form a subsidiary aim rather than the main rationale for the lesson, which helps to remove this feeling of failure. Learners’ contributions to the lesson are valued even if they are not 100% accurate. The third de-motivating factor is that learners do not have enough opportunity to use the language in the classroom, so they do not realise that their language is growing in range and fluency. These are exacerbated by the fact that they do not see themselves as potential L2 users outside the classroom. In the lesson described above the primary focus is on meaning and understanding. Learners mean what they say throughout the task, planning and report cycle. The questions they come up with have a genuine purpose. They are not composed simply to demonstrate that they have control of a given form. Learners have a reason to listen to the contributions of other groups and to the teacher’s evaluation of contributions.

We would like here to highlight a fourth factor which is likely to enhance motivation. In the lesson described above learners are encouraged to explore language and to analyse it for themselves. This does not mean there is no teacher guidance, but it does mean that learners work independently and in groups, and that the teacher responds to learner insights rather than controlling and initiating. Learners begin to recognise that they can process language for themselves. They can work with their reading and listening texts to refine and expand their language resources. They are more likely to develop as autonomous learners, noticing words, phrases and patterns in the language they see and hear outside the classroom, on the web or interacting with a global community.

Exploring language is actually a necessary part of language learning. Teachers can guide and encourage, but they cannot offer anything like a complete description of the language. Unless learners work at it for themselves they will never develop anything but a rudimentary grammar. It is also a very rewarding part of language learning. The recognition that they are active creative participants is liberating and stimulating.

Of course no approach can guarantee learner motivation, or that learners will want to play an active part in the lesson. Teachers still need to work hard at this. They need to:

- select topics and texts which they believe will engage learners’ interest.
- aim for a level of difficulty which will challenge learners, but will be attainable.
- make instructions very specific and the goals really clear so learners feel confident and secure.
- allow learners freedom to do the task themselves, so they perceive a sense of control over their own task process.
- offer all the encouragement they can and try to highlight learner achievement as far as possible – a feeling of success fuels motivation.

“Exploring language is actually a necessary part of language learning. Teachers can guide and encourage, but they cannot offer anything like a complete description of the language”
and raises self esteem.

- do all they can to maintain a cheerful and positive atmosphere in the classroom, not focusing on what learners cannot do, but what they CAN do.

For more advice on how to make TBL work for you, see the tips from teachers in Willis and Willis (2007, p. 228-229.) The chances of success are vastly increased if the framework is right – if the primary aims of the lesson are truly achievable, if what happens in the lesson relates clearly to the way language is used in the real world and if learners are enabled and encouraged to discover language for themselves.

Note: sample TBL lesson plans are available in Willis and Willis (2007) Appendices 1 and 2, and at www.willis-elt.co.uk

About the authors

Dave and Jane Willis, authors of well known books on Task-based Learning, have worked with many TESOL Masters distance learning participants in Japan, and attended several JALT Conferences. Read more about them on www.willis-elt.co.uk. JLongman / Pearson book A Framework for Task-based Learning is about to be re-launched at IATEFL as an e-book.

References


Introduction
To the best of my knowledge there has been no systematic attempt to justify or inform Task-based learning (TBL) theory and practice with insights from the L2 motivation field. The term motivation does not appear once in the indices of two well-known guides to TBL (Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2004); In a third (Willis & Willis, 2007), suggestions for motivating students appear to derive from the authors' extensive teaching experience rather than the L2 motivation literature. If the ultimate aim of both fields is to improve the success with which languages are taught and learnt, it follows that L2 motivation theory might usefully inform TBL practice, particularly in contexts such as the compulsory Japanese English classroom, which has been described - evocatively if pessimistically - as a "motivational wasteland" (Berwick & Ross, 1989). In such a context some students may be engaged principally in "coping with the 'imposition' of having to study a foreign language" (Lantolf, 2000, p. 12). In my opinion this state of affairs is insufficiently addressed by Western pedagogical EFL literature, and I ask the reader to bear it in mind as he/she reads on.

Trends in L2 motivation theory
In recent years researchers have been expressing growing dissatisfaction with reductionist models that give only a partial 'snapshot' account of complex phenomena such as language learning motivation. Larsen-Freeman & Cameron (2008) note that correlation measures rarely explain more than 16% of variance of dependent variables because no phenomenon can be attributed to a single cause. Dörnyei (2009a), a long-time practitioner of correlation-based research, comes to a similar conclusion, stating that such statistically-based approaches "have by and large failed" (p.1). In contrast to statistically derived models, there is seen to be a need for "a dynamic conception of the notion of motivation that integrates the various factors related to the learner, the learning task and the learning environment into one complex system." (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 89). In the following paper I derive selected pedagogical implications from two such conceptions of motivation (Ushioda, 2009; Dörnyei, 2009b), in such a way as to be of utility to teachers using a TBL approach. I have limited my conception of TBL to that of the individual task (see Willis & Willis, this issue) and its principled balance between focus on meaning and language form, but it will become apparent that my arguments hold implications for syllabus design too.

A person-in-context relational view of motivation
In her Person-in-context relational view of motivation, Ushioda (2009) suggests adopting the person(s)-in-context, rather than context-independent, abstract 'variables', as a basic unit of understanding.

However, it should be acknowledged that these suggestions are fully in line with the L2 motivation literature, speaking to the power of common-sense teacher advice, and supporting the contention that L2 motivation theory proceeds, rather than precedes, practice.
for teachers and researchers. A key aspect of Ushioda’s perspective is that students should be viewed as “real persons, rather than ... theoretical abstractions” (p. 220). Space precludes a more detailed introduction to Ushioda’s theoretical stance but perhaps it can be illustrated, at least from a methodological perspective, by a quote from an unexpected source. Wallace Lambert, one of the initiators of large-scale statistically-based L2 motivation studies, was once overheard in conversation remarking that the best way to find out about an individual’s integrative motivation was probably “to sit quietly and chat with him over a bottle of wine for an evening.” (Spolsky, 2000, p. 160). A person-in-context approach to motivation necessitates a holistic view of the relationship between learner, task, and outcomes. If such an approach became formalised, its underlying principles would probably share much in common with humanistic approaches which value the whole person, and the uniqueness of each individual (Maslow, 1962). Indeed, it could be argued that a person-in-context approach characterises what teachers who tend to be ‘in-tune’ with, and are well-liked by their students, do anyway.

What pedagogical implications can we derive from a person-in-context approach? Presumably it would preclude a focus solely on the linguistic outcomes of a task-based approach, instead appraising tasks in terms of how they enter into relationship with the whole student in motivational, affective, social, contextual and temporal, as well as linguistic terms. As an example, let us consider a task in which low-level students exchange information and personal opinion in their L1 about stereotyping and racism across cultures. From a standard task-based perspective, this would not be considered much of a task at all, resulting in no immediate L2 progress. But the long term positive effect on linguistic improvement may be (relatively) considerable if students’ eyes are ‘opened’ to a world outside the tidy and at times facile portrayal of foreign culture by textbooks and the media, resulting in increased interest in the real world, warts and all.

I would like to suggest that we can approach task design and implementation through a person-in-context approach by conceptualising the learner as being situated simultaneously in three contexts: (i) Conceptualising the learner as an individual entails considering the unique needs and learning styles of individual students; (ii) Conceptualising the learner as a class-member entails understanding the importance of group dynamics and interaction in learning (Vygotsky, 1978); (iii) Conceptualising the learner as a member of society entails an awareness of the institutional, social and cultural context of learning. From this year, children entering Japanese elementary school and continuing to university will experience nine years of compulsory English education whether they like it or not; throughout those nine years many of them, quite possibly a majority, will have little or no opportunity to use English outside the classroom in their day to day lives. If TBL depends on “using
language for real-life purposes” (Brandon, 2006, p. 15) then what are we to do if that real-life purpose does not exist? One obvious answer is to stop forcing Japanese students to study English, for example by making high school classes elective, but in the absence of such policy decisions, teachers have to adapt as best they can. Here are some selective recommendations for informing TBL practice with a person-in-context approach seen through these three heuristic levels of abstraction:

The learner as individual

- Prioritising task-types that individual students profess to find motivating. In my own informal and more formal (Pigott 2009) surveys of student opinion, for example, pair and group work activities involving the exchange of personal information tend to score highly, and might therefore make up a substantial amount of class time in comparable circumstances. This is of course fully in-line with a task-based approach.
- Adjusting the fluency/form balance in tasks to meets individual students’ current needs. The contention that a task cycle should always have a principled focus on form requires critical examination in the EFL context: In addition to having few opportunities outside the classroom for fluency practice, students in compulsory education spend an inordinate amount of time focusing on form in exam-oriented classes. Furthermore, many learners may be aiming for a modest level of proficiency in English. Such circumstances may well support less time spent on form and more on fluency practice.

The learner as class-member

- The use of group ordering and sorting tasks (Willis & Willis, 2007) that encourage the adoption of cooperative roles such as discussion leader, coordinator etc.
- The use of cooperative tasks that cultivate group cohesiveness by encouraging member-contributions to group goals.
- The use of information exchange tasks that involve interaction with many different students in the class to promote class unity and prevent the formation of cliques.
- The use of projects, which offer an opportunity for most if not all of the above suggestions to be implemented organically.

Student as member-of-society

- Broadening the scope of our lessons for those students who are learning English primarily as members of an institutionalised process. This can be done by using tasks that focus on the (potentially missing) fundamentals of an interest in and desire to learn a foreign language, namely an interest in the world and foreign culture, not to mention an interest in learning in general.
- Judicious use of the L1 by teachers and students that allow even low level students to enjoy interesting lessons on real-world, serious topics under the empathetic guidance of the teacher. This could be done in elementary classes with Japanese teachers with low proficiency, and would, I believe, be far more motivating than the “Do you like bananas?”-type questions that typify the Eigo Note textbook being introduced into elementary school this year (see www.mext.go.jp).

Motivational Conglomerates

SLA researchers have recently begun to apply concepts from complexity theory and dynamical systems theory (hereafter referred to by the umbrella term Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST)) to the study of second language acquisition (Ellis
& Larsen-Freeman, 2009; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). The justification for doing so rests on the observation that social phenomena, like complex physical phenomena, can usefully be characterised - heuristically, at least - as systems "in which there are multiple interactions between many different components" (Rind, 1999: 105). Likewise, the behaviour of social systems appears to exhibit characteristics analogous to physical systems, namely change, emergence (sudden system-wide change), phase shifts (sudden shifts in behaviour) and non-linearity (i.e. everything affects everything else rather than "A causes B"). Space precludes a discussion of this intriguing new theoretical arena. Suffice to say, it is gaining in popularity, and one prominent advocate, Ellis (2007), argues that a complexity approach "marks the coming of age of SLA research." (p. 23). In the context of this paper, perhaps the single most important thing to understand is that a CDST view of psychological and social processes rejects reductionist thinking and, with it, the idea that a task can be a self-contained, or context-independent unit.

Dörnyei (2009c) uses complexity theory to outline a primarily cognitive, less holistic view of motivation than Ushioda, but one which consequently lends itself more straightforwardly to systematic application to task-design. Based on their phenomenological distinctiveness, he suggests the use of four non-mutually exclusive motivational conglomerates to conceptualise motivation: (i) Interest, or "the individual's inherent curiosity and desire to know more about himself or herself and the environment" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 50), has long been a component of models of motivation (Keller, 1983; Gardner, 1985; Dörnyei, 2001; Deci & Ryan, 1985); (ii) Motivational Flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) is: "[a] state of intensive involvement in and focused concentration on a task that feels so absorbing that people often compare it to being outside everyday reality ... the optimal task experience." (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 94); (iii) Motivational Task Engagement is the conglomerate that would appear to connect most saliently with the purpose of this paper. Dörnyei (2008) suggests that learner perceptions of learning goals, incentives to successful completion of the task, and appropriate skills are key concepts in determining the level of task engagement, all of which can be influenced by teachers; (iv) Future Self Guides are seen as guiding motivated behaviour in part as a consequence of the psychological need to reduce the discrepancy between the Ideal L2 Self - the personal image that learners have of their future as language users - and their actual selves. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) claim that, due to its blending of imagery, emotions, and cognitive plans and regulatory practices: "this motivation-cognition-emotion amalgam can be seen as the ultimate motivational conglomerate." (p. 97). Work on how tasks can be used to stimulate positive and motivating 'visions' of ideal selves is ongoing (see Dörnyei and Kubaniova, in press): Here I endeavour to give a few suggestions of my own.

Interest

- Whetting students' appetite for the task (Dörnyei, 2001). An example of this would be to say "Later, we are going to do an exciting task, but I am not going to tell you what it is yet. Let's see if you can guess from the warm-up activities."
- Using storytelling to build interest in tasks, for example by introducing the task with "I'm going to tell you a story..." (of course one then needs to 'deliver the goods').
- Placing priority on content over language. L2 motivation research and everyday experience tells us that most of us tend to be more interested by
what we can do using language than in language *per se*. Ways for teachers to prioritise content effectively include: asking students the kind of things they are interested in; keeping a record of past tasks and the extent to which students appear interested in the topic; choosing content which the teacher finds interesting and then communicating this interest through enthusiasm.

- Extending the scope of the post-task to focus on non-linguistic features. In a task ranking the importance of various clean-energy sources, for example, the post-task could be a discussion of what will happen if global warming continues unabated. Another option would be to discuss the cultural elements that emerge from tasks. This would be a particularly effective technique for non-native teachers using the L1 to generate interest in foreign language and culture.

**Motivational flow**

- Keeping an eye out for tasks that appear to pass quickly, or lessons in which students get particularly engaged in tasks for future reference.
- Ensuring that tasks have a ‘hook’ that will encourage students to get involved: something that gives them opportunities to concentrate on a problem or question. To my mind, riddles or problem solving tasks offer potential in this regard, especially for higher level students.

**Motivational task engagement (taken from Dörnyei, 2001).**

- Making task content attractive by including novel, intriguing, exotic, humorous, competitive, or fantasy elements.
- Selecting tasks that yield tangible, finished products.
- Focus on the motivational flow rather than the informational flow in class.
- Providing appropriate strategies to carry out the task.

**Motivational self-guides**

- Stimulating the efficacy of self-guides by incorporating into tasks topics that encourage students to visualise attractive future versions of themselves, such as the medium and long-term futures of students, their friends, families, schools, countries and the world.
- Exploring culture through tasks. By learning about foreign culture through projects or information sharing tasks, students can gain a wider outlook on the world and the place that English may play in the future.
- Using tasks that employ the use of role models who have experience working or living overseas (especially successful Japanese English speakers) may be particularly inspiring for students.
- Using brainstorming tasks which involve a discussion of common stereotypes and prejudices about the L2 speakers. (Dörnyei & Murphey 2003).
- Using ‘show and tell’-style tasks that involve bringing into class and presenting various cultural products. (Ibid).

**Discussion**

Recent conceptualisations of motivation recognise that L2 motivation is a complicated, multi-faceted conundrum that can be conceptualised across multiple levels of abstraction. Applying L2 motivation theory to TBL is potentially problematic, because the strengths of TBL theory often derive from laboratory-based studies and a focus on the task as a principal unit of learning. The idea of the task as a self-contained unit sits uneasily with new conceptualisations of motivation.
the implications of which are that teachers and researchers should always be a critical appraisal of how task and course design interact with socio-cultural context. In doing so, the danger is that TBL will be re-conceptualised into something that it was never intended to be (see, for example, my suggestion that a post task could focus on something other than language-focused work in the L1), namely a principled, effective framework within which to approach language instruction and learning. Nonetheless, reality dictates that tasks do not exist in a vacuum, and TBL practice can surely only benefit from increased empirical scrutiny at a level of abstraction above the task.

In figure 1, I contrast six principles that Nunan (2004) suggests have been strengthened by a TBL approach with my own, personal take on what principles might epitomise a motivation-based perspective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TBL principles (Nunan, 2004)</th>
<th>L2 Motivation theory principles-based perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Needs-based approach</td>
<td>Many students in compulsory education have no clear and present need for English. A humanistic, whole-person approach that takes into account more than linguistic outcomes of learning is therefore preferable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating through interaction in the L2</td>
<td>Communicating in L2 if motivation, proficiency, and other conditions allow. If not, judicious mix of L1 and L2 in interesting tasks aimed at cultivating motivation in language learning is preferable to so-simple-they're-boring L2-only tasks, especially with low-level learners in compulsory classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of authentic texts</td>
<td>Use of texts that students find motivating, authentic or otherwise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for learners to focus not only on the language but also on the learning process.</td>
<td>Opportunities for learners to focus on the learning process as long as it is contextually relevant (i.e. taking into account what they are doing in their other classes at school), and not at the cost of motivation, interest etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.</td>
<td>Personal experiences are important, but so are imagination, future dreams, fantasy, creativity and role-play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The linking of classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom.</td>
<td>A realistic and honest reflection of the role that English may play in students’ lives now and in the future. No presumption that students should be using English outside of class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I hope that teachers may find it productive to explore, through thinking or practice, some of the middle ground which exists between the six sets of contrasting positions. Should they do so, I suspect that they will find that a TBL approach and insights from L2 motivation theory can happily complement each other.

**Conclusion**

Making sense of motivation entails paying attention simultaneously to unconscious motivation, affect and cognition, the self concept, the sociocultural context, and more besides. Trying to understand the interaction of such diverse elements in the reductionist sense is impossible due to the ever-changing interplay between motivation, learner and context. What is important is to find a middle way - the right level of focus for a holistic understanding - perhaps, as Ushioda suggests, centered on the person-in-context. As teachers it is always important to keep our eye on the 'big picture' in trying to understand how students approach learning. By incorporating insights from the L2 motivation field, TBL can become a more powerful and relevant force in the Japanese EFL context. In my opinion, this can only be a good thing.

**About the author**

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**References.**


Introduction

Who suffers more stress, the CEO of a large company or an unemployed single parent? How do you measure stress and make comparisons between individuals? Two psychologists, Holmes and Rahe, quantified the stress level for various life events using the concept of Life Change Units (LCU). The death of a spouse, the most stressful life event, is given 100 LCUs. In contrast, going on holiday attracts 13 LCUs. You can find Holmes and Rahe’s list at the end of this paper.

Despite its rather negative image, stress supplies a rich source of material for discussion. We often talk about our stress with family and friends and seek their advice. At times, it can be stressful to learn a foreign language too, and our students also worry about relationships, club activities, finding work and so forth. The following tasks give students a chance to unburden some of their worries, while at the same time improving their command of English.

Preparation

Step 1: Prepare a pair of information-gap worksheets based on the Holmes and Rahe scale. Choose 10 to 12 minor life events and their corresponding LCU’s. A sample pair is given below.
Life's stresses (worksheet A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Event</th>
<th>LCU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starting or ending school</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trouble with boss</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Life's stresses (Worksheet B)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Event</th>
<th>LCU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changes in living conditions</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in work hours, conditions</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 2: Now select eight to ten major life events and make another worksheet like the example below. Or, if you prefer, just write this up on the board. Here is an example.

Ranking exercise

(Holmes and Rahe's actual ranking scores are shown in parentheses for teacher reference. The version given to the students should be blank.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Event</th>
<th>LCU</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>(40)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>(73)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being fired from work</td>
<td>(47)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>(45)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prison sentence</td>
<td>(63)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>(50)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of close family member</td>
<td>(63)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal injury</td>
<td>(53)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 3: Finally make a list of some ways to reduce stress. If you are making a worksheet for the major life events in Step 2, you can add this list below. Or again, if you prefer, just put the list up on the board when you need it. Here are some suggestions.

Stress Solutions

- Clean the house
- Watch aquarium fish
- Take a walk with a friend
- Sing along to music
- Read a book
- Punch a cushion
- Take a long, hot bath
- Walk your dog
- Yoga
- Draw a picture
- Watch a boring movie
- Eat a lot of chocolate
- Surf the web
- Dance to music
- Do some gardening
- Do a puzzle
- Cook something delicious
- Take a nap
**Pre-task**

Step 1: On the blackboard write up some ‘occupational pairs’ - for example, CEO /unemployed individual, actor/director, wild animal/caged animal - and ask the students to discuss with their partner who has the most stress and why. [Feedback as class?]

Step 2: Explain how psychologists can quantify stressful events using Life Change Units, perhaps using the examples given in the introduction. Give out the information-gap worksheets and ask the pairs to complete it by asking each other for the missing information.

Step 3: When they finish ask for their opinions on the official ratings. Is such a scale useful?

**Task 1**

Step 1: Arrange the students in small groups and set up the task about major life events, either giving them a handout or using the blackboard. In this task, students examine the list and try to reach agreement on the ranking of major life events and estimate their associated LCU’s. Encourage them to put forward reasons for their choices.

Step 2: Ask groups to compare their answers before you announce the rankings and scores.

**Task 2**

Step 1: This is a role-play for pairs. Remind students about what they said about stress in their lives, and then ask them how they cope with it. You can incorporate their suggestions into the list of stress solutions either on the worksheet or on the blackboard.

Step 2: Nominate one student as a counsellor, the other plays him/herself – a student who suffers a range of stresses. The counselor seeks out the causes of stress and recommends solutions from the list. The student listens and replies as they see fit. They might ask for more detail or give reasons why a suggestion is not suitable.

**Report**

Step 3: Class report. On the blackboard, each pair writes up one of the stresses they discussed and a good solution to resolve it. When all the comments are written up, ask the class to give their opinions.

**Language focus**

1. English has a rich vocabulary for describing stressful states: agitated, anxiety, at one’s wit’s end, bundle of nerves, butterflies, crack up, despair, distracted, fazed, flustered, frantic, frazzled, hysteric, jangled, jitters, manic, neurotic, on pins and needles, on tenterhooks, perturbed, rattled, shaken, turmoil, worked up. To help your students learn the meanings and distinctions, get them to classify the words into broad divisions; for example, serious/trivial; formal/informal; adjectives/nouns.

2. The advice we offer others on how to deal with problems is another vocabulary set worth considering: tackle, confront, reassure, get in perspective, ignore, overcome, get to grips with, face up to, make light of etc.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holmes_and_Rahe_stress_scale](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holmes_and_Rahe_stress_scale) This Wiki web page gives more information on the Holmes and Rahe stress scale. It also includes a non-adult list of stressful events, which might be more appropriate for classes of younger students. A final point which really doesn’t need stating: use your discretion when selecting items from the list.
Lesson Plan 2
Summarising a story using visuals

Sandra Healy
Kansai University

- Key words: Summarising; consensus building; visuals; storyboard.
- Level: All
- Age: All
- Preparation time: Up to one hour
- Activity time: Up to two classes
- Materials: a story or text; digital/Polaroid camera; printer; A3 paper; colour pens; scissors; glue

Introduction
In this creative task, students design and make posters or visual representations of stories using photographs they have taken of themselves. In order to do this they need to read a story or text, understand it, discuss it with other students and choose what they think are the most important points of the story. They then make a storyboard to use as a guideline for when they take their photographs. After they are happy with their storyboard they pose for photographs which they use to create a poster.

I have found this task particularly successful for lower level students, as the story is repeated several times in different ways allowing them to get a thorough understanding. In addition, the students practice summarising and critical thinking skills. It is effective in creating a good class atmosphere and a spirit of cooperation among the students, and it also provides an opportunity for quieter students or students who are visually orientated to shine. This activity is flexible, and can be done as part of a content-based course, or as an additional activity for almost any class. It is also an effective way to review material.

Preparation
Prepare a large storyboard template for each group of 3-4 students. The storyboard template may contain as many sections as the teacher thinks is appropriate (in the example below there are eight).
(Class 1) Pre-task

Put the students into groups. The students are given a story to read either within each group or as a whole class. This can be done as homework for a previous class. Sample stories can be found on the internet (for example <http://www.eslfast.com/>) but I encourage teachers to find interesting stories of their own.

Task

**Step 1:** Students have to come a consensus regarding the plan for a storyboard. Each group is given a storyboard template. Explain that a storyboard is a sequence of still pictures to represent the events in a story, and an accompanying text, often a simplified or altered version of the original story. In groups the students discuss the story, and decide what are the most important points. They draw pictures of each of the points as if they are photographs or stills from a movie. The drawings do not need to be very artistic - stick figures are fine - but they should provide a guide for when they take their photographs. This step requires the students to think carefully about the story and its meaning to produce a visual image of it. Clearly state the amount of time students should take with this step, as it can take a long time. Here is an example of a storyboard for Romeo and Juliet:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Montagues and the Capulets fought.</th>
<th>Who is that beautiful girl?</th>
<th>Kiss me!</th>
<th>I love you.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romeo and Juliet get married.</td>
<td>Tybalt kills Mercutio, and Romeo kills Tybalt.</td>
<td>Romeo and Juliet kill themselves.</td>
<td>The Montague and the Capulet family are sorry and end their quarrel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 2:** Each group takes photos of themselves posing using the scenes they created for the storyboard. The amount of time will vary with class size, number of groups and number of cameras available. Your institution may have several cameras you can use, if not, it is possible to do it with one camera, however, it will need to be organised carefully. Perhaps the most effective
solution is for the students to use their mobile phones, and e-mail the photographs to you. I have used this method several times and it is very effective as students are relaxed using their own phones.

**Before the next class:** Print out the photographs either at your institution or at home. If the students use their own mobile phones they can print them out themselves, but it is usually easier to do it yourself.

(Class 2) Task (continued)

**Step 3:** Bring the photographs, large paper, colour pens, glue and scissors to class. Distribute them to the students and set them to work creating their posters. The students discuss how the poster should look and may use the storyboard as a guideline. However, at this stage the students often become very creative and should be allowed to express themselves freely while keeping the story in mind. A certain amount of time should be allotted for this activity as again it can take a long time.

**Planning and report**

When the students finish, have them display their work around the classroom. The students should explain their posters and stories to the other members of the class. Encourage the students to interact with each other and ask questions. Finally, they can vote on their favourites or the ones they consider the most original, giving reasons for their choices. This task can be followed up by written reports if the teacher feels it is appropriate.

**Language focus**

The teacher focuses on specific language features that have arisen from the task and provides feedback. During this consciousness raising process the teacher should highlight some good examples of language use, and some bad examples and the class can work together to make suggestions for correct usage. The students should reflect on how they performed the task and the language they used and write down any language they wish to remember.

This task is ideal for focusing on narrative forms and the past tense, but also organisational language for arranging the groups when taking the photographs, for example, "You stand here, and hold your arm up." and the cooperative language necessary for creating the posters such as making suggestions, and agreeing or disagreeing with others.

**Follow up**

Keep either the originals or a digital copy of the students’ work to show future classes as examples. They really enjoy seeing other students’ work, and it inspires them. You can also use the images as the basis for other classes and get students to write stories based on them, and then see if they match the original stories.

**About the author**

Sandra Healy has taught for many years in Japan, and is currently teaching at Kansai University. She is co-programme chair for GALE. Her research interests include using visuals and drama to motivate students in the classroom, extensive reading and the impact of gender and culture on language and identity.
Lesson Plan 3
My life so far

Brent Cotsworth
Kansai University

Key words: storyboard; visual aids; summarising; interviewing
Level: beginner to pre-intermediate.
Age: all
Preparation time: 15-30 minutes
Activity time: 60-90 minutes
Materials: a story sheet, colour markers, pencils.

Introduction
This is a task adapted from an activity I first encountered at Osaka Shoin Women’s university. In this task, students share five or more personal past experiences from their lives with their partner as a stimulus for further discussion. In my experience the students enjoy preparing their story sheets and using them to share personal information, making it an effective way of focussing on the past tense.
Preparation
Use an A3 piece of paper to make the story template (see below). The template I use has five sections but it can be adjusted to as many as the teacher sees fit. Prepare colour markers or pencils for the students to use. Prepare one model based on your own life to show the class (for future classes you can use student work instead).

Procedure
Pre-task
Show the students your 'life story' poster and tell them about the five important events in your life. Encourage the students to ask follow up questions relating to the story. For example, if one of your pictures is about meeting your best friend for the first time, they might ask “Do you still see this friend now?” or “How often do you see this friend?” etc. After having explained and modelled the task the students are then given their own template and start writing the events. The teacher monitors and assists as necessary. The time required to complete this depends on the level of students but I usually find it takes about 30 minutes for low-level students to write the five events and finish the pictures. I normally let the students choose whatever event they like and say that they can write about anything from their first memory up until today but it also works well if the teacher wants to give specific directions such as “Only one school event” etc. In my experiences certain events, such as high school graduation, tend to be included by default, so the teacher may wish to encourage students to focus on more unusual or unexpected events in order to stimulate more interesting discussion. Here is an example of one of my own student’s work:

Task
After the students have finished their story board, they present it to their partner discussing each life event. Their partner then asks a minimum of three follow up questions for each event and takes down notes. I find that the students are usually able to expand the conversations and ask more than three follow up questions so I usually set a time limit of 15 minutes (depending on the level of class) for each student to present their own story. I find that including one or two false events adds a bit of fun as the students listening to the presenter can try to guess which event it is. If there is a false event in the story, the student can try to guess which story is false and why.
Planning and report
Each pair then joins another pair to make a group of four. Each student now reports his/her original partner’s story to the group. For example, if Mari and Jun are pairs and Akihiro and Ryusuke are the other pair then Mari would present Jun’s story to Akihiro and Ryusuke (with Jun standing by to support and answer any questions). Each student takes a turn. After the students have finished in their groups of four, they then assemble all their stories on the tables where all the students can see them. Students stand up, walk around, and vote on their favourite story. I usually encourage the students to participate at this stage by asking the students which story they like and why, as they can be very shy during this stage.

Language focus
The predominating grammar focus in this story is the past tense as it is a story from their events in the past so the teacher will model this in the pre-task. The teacher will also provide feedback on the language used and correct when needed throughout the task. As a follow-up activity the teacher can play the following team game. The teacher divides the students into two groups. He/she then asks the class to call out the verbs they used. The teacher then writes these verbs on the board in the present tense. The teacher then calls out a randomly selected word and the first student to put up their hand and spell that verb correctly in the past tense gets a point for their team. Extra points can be awarded if the students can answer if the verb is regular or irregular.

Further ideas
After the class is finished collect the posters and copy them for future reference and then write a few encouraging comments on the original stories returning them to the students the following week. Keep the copies to show to future classes. It is also possible to do a future version of the same lesson as a follow up activity or as a separate lesson focusing on future events (i.e. My future life as opposed to My Life so Far).

About the author
Brent Cotsworth has been teaching EFL in Japan since 1998. His area of interest regarding research is in motivation, especially Self-Efficacy in EFL. He is currently teaching at Kansai
Guidelines for contributions

OnTask welcomes submissions of articles concerning TBL, particularly with reference to the Japanese context.

Contributors are asked to follow the guidelines set in the sixth edition of American Psychological Association (APA).

Research or theory-based articles should be 3000 words or less. Lesson/activity plans should be 1000 or less. The editors reserve the right to edit articles for length, style, and clarity.

Email submissions along with biodata (50 words or less) to: julianpigott@gmail.com.

Deadlines for submission are as follows:


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