

A Four Strands Approach to Content-Based Instruction in an EFL Context

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要旨

本論文において、筆者は、EFL 中級レベル学生向け教育における内容中心授業法（CBI; Content Based Instruction）単元に対する、言語主導型アプローチ法について論述する。このアプローチ法は、Paul Nation の「言語学習の4重螺旋」(Four Strands) に基づく教育枠組みに基礎を置くものである。教材は、各種のテーマに基づくものであり、1960年代の出来事、問題点、大衆文化を重点的に取り扱っている。意味重視の入力を提供する、実際に使用された言語に基づく教材と、意味重視の出力のための機会を提供するコミュニケーション活動を利用することを通して、CBI 教材とアプローチ法は、広範囲にわたる言語スキルを開発し、学習の刺激となる内容により学生を動機付けるようデザインされている。

Abstract

In this paper, I will describe a language-driven approach to a Content Based Instruction (CBI) course for intermediate-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students enrolled in an intensive English program (EPIC). The approach is based on Nation's four strands pedagogical framework. The content materials are theme-based and focus on events, issues, and popular culture in the 1960s. Through the use of authentic materials that provide meaning-focused input, and communicative activities that provide opportunities for meaning-focused output, the CBI materials and approach are designed to develop a wide range of language skills and motivate students with stimulating content.

Introduction

Courses that feature English as a medium for instruction have become increasingly common at the university level in many foreign language contexts around the world. Such courses range in spectrum from the English-in-English communicative language teaching that is part of more standard foreign language curriculums, to courses which negotiate language and content aims according to student needs, to more content-driven approaches which strongly emphasize specific course content aims, such as specialized subject matter, but with sensitivity to the English language needs of learners. The latter two are examples of Content Based Instruction (CBI)¹, which as it relates to English language teaching is more widely known in ESL (English

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¹ In this paper, I use the term Content Based Instruction (CBI), but it is also commonly referred to as Content Based Language Teaching (CBLT). In Europe, a similar approach called Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is commonly used, but CLIL differs in terms of aims, emphasis on content, and curricular subject matter.

as a *Second Language*) contexts though it is recently gaining traction as an increasingly common approach in EFL contexts too. Indeed, as CBI is strongly rooted in communicative language teaching with its student-centered focus, such an approach seems a natural progression for EFL pedagogy. In a context like Japan where communicative approaches are often neglected at the high school level, the student-centered focus featured in CBI classrooms offers new ways for students to process the target language in meaningful ways. Within this one approach, however, the emphasis on content or language varies greatly. While many instructional contexts prioritize content, the approach to CBI presented in this paper aims to maximize language learning through content. In this paper, I describe how Nation's (2007) four strands were used as a pedagogical framework to develop a CBI course module based on the 1960s and how this influenced the development of materials and teaching methods. Due to the motivational advantages of using 'real' language resources and cultural content, the use of authentic materials has been given the highest priority. The four strands framework upon which the materials and approach are based provides a balance of input, output, fluency, and language instruction that is considered essential to any comprehensive language course of study.

Content Based Instruction, or Content Based Language Teaching, generally refers to approaches of teaching academic content, or other target material, in a language that students are in the process of learning. Lightbown (2014) observes that, "what sets CBLT apart from other kinds of instruction is the expectation that students can learn - and teachers can teach - both academic subject matter content and a new language at the same time" (p. 6). According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), "Content-Based Instruction refers to an approach to second language teaching in which teaching is organized around the content or information that students will acquire, rather than around a linguistic or other type of syllabus" (p. 204). Snow (2001) takes this notion even further when she states: "Content... is the use of subject matter for second/foreign language teaching purposes. Subject matter may consist of topics or themes based on interest or need in an adult EFL setting, or it may be very specific, such as the subjects that students are currently studying in their elementary school classes" (p. 303).

Yet within CBI there exists a further range of approaches that lie along a continuum (see Figure 1). At one end of this continuum lies the content-driven approach, which places a strong emphasis on learning content. While the acquisition of language skills is of value in this stronger approach, it is considered secondary to the content instructional aims. An example of this type of instruction is immersion education which began in Quebec, Canada in the 1960s and has since been the model for other immersion programs in Australia (de Courcy, 2002), and the U.S. (Fortune, Tedick, & Walker, 2008). The Canadian immersion programs have been conducted with considerable success, with students achieving equally in subject matter and L1 learning, as well as developing near-native L2 proficiency in the receptive skills of reading and listening (Wesche, 1993). Similar positive results have also been reported from late-immersion programs in which French immersion instruction begins in the sixth or seventh grade (Wesche, 1993). 'Sheltered' courses are another form of content-driven instruction where content is taught in the students' second language using methods that are sensitive to the non-native abilities of the learners. Modifications in pedagogical techniques are made in order to make the content more accessible to students. Such techniques may involve more repetition or demonstrations than would usually be applied to a class of native speakers (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2012).

The common example of this content-driven approach is the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model. It should be emphasized here, however, that teachers of sheltered courses are usually content specialists with little or no training in language teaching. Teachers need to learn how to adapt to the special needs of L2 students. Such courses are often taught to assist minority language students in their efforts to progress both academically and linguistically.

To the middle of the continuum are courses that place more equal importance on both language and content. The adjunct model, where content and language teachers work in collaboration is an example of this shared approach. As described by Brinton, Snow and Wesche, (1989) the adjunct model is where “students are enrolled concurrently in two linked courses - a language course and a content course - with the idea being that the two courses share the content base and complement each other in terms of mutually coordinated assignments. Second language learners are sheltered in the language course and integrated in the content course, where both native English and nonnative English-speaking students attend the same lecture” (p. 16). Rosenkjar (2002) provides another example of adjunct-model CBI courses for the Intellectual Heritage courses conducted at Temple University Japan. Although the EFL adjunct courses were initially established as noncredit-bearing, through a process of quantitative and qualitative evaluation they ultimately became credit bearing parts of the undergraduate program when paired with content undergraduate courses. Some of the perceived disadvantages of this approach, however, are that opportunities to focus on language features when motivation to learn is at its highest may be lost due to the separation of content and language learning (Lightbown, 1998), and that knowledge learned in one class may not be transferable to another where there is a differing context and cognitive process (Lightbown, 2014).

← Content-driven		Language-driven →		
Immersion (total/partial)	Content/Subject courses	Content/Subject courses + language instruction	Language classes with thematic units	Language classes based on content for language practice
Canadian French Immersion Programs	SIOP	Adjunct Models Sheltered instruction English- medium lectures	Critical CBI pedagogy	Counterbalanced CBI instruction in EFL settings

Figure 1. Continuum of CBI/CBLT with examples (adapted from Lyster & Ballinger, 2011)

The other end of the CBI spectrum is based on the idea that language study can be enhanced, or stimulated, through presentation of content or theme-based course material. There are relatively few studies reporting CBI instructional results in foreign language contexts, but research has slowly started to emerge. At university level, Lingley (2006) has reported how a task-based approach to CBLT was used to deal with

comparative culture content focused on a Canadian studies course, and Kautz (2016) has observed positive developments as a result of teaching an environmental and sustainability issues CBI course to intermediate German language students at university level, noting from student evaluations higher levels of interest and understanding of content. Such courses highlight how content and language learning in the EFL context can be combined. Studies on how CBI is being integrated in various secondary school FL contexts are increasingly common as well (see Lyster & Ballinger, 2011; Kong and Hoare, 2011; Cumming and Lyster, 2016). Whether at the university or the secondary school level, CBI at this end of the spectrum often implies the notion of “counterbalanced instruction” (Cumming and Lyster, 2016, pp. 77-78). In many foreign language settings like Japan, students have focused primarily on form in their language learning. The meaning-oriented focus of CBI helps, at least somewhat, to address this imbalance by giving form-oriented students the chance to interact with meaning-focused materials.

In this paper, I will describe a language-driven approach to CBI in an EFL university context. My CBI approach builds upon work being done in FL contexts. As noted, student-centered meaning-oriented communicative language learning is largely under-emphasized in Japan’s education system. The materials/approach presented in this paper is an attempt to “counterbalance” this contextual factor. My CBI approach and material aims to develop the language skills of the learners through the study of a theme-based course and entails no particular assessment of the thematic content. Although the focus of the course is on activities that incorporate language practice for a comprehensive range of skills, the content is selected mainly to motivate the students and encourage critical thinking, as well as to provide opportunities to reflect on what has been learned.

The Benefits and Advantages of CBI

Empirical evidence supports CBI as an effective approach to second language acquisition. Language-driven CBI courses, have many practical features that assist the learner in developing their language skills. What Lightbown (2008b) terms “transfer-appropriate processing” is one such feature. Transfer-appropriate processing is based on the idea that retaining what is learnt is easier when in a situation similar to the one where that information was originally learnt. As an example, the application of grammar in a discussion may be more difficult if that grammar was studied in a traditional grammar lesson. Good scores could be expected, however, if sitting a grammar test with similar exercises (Lightbown, 2014). The contextualized nature of the CBI classroom does, on the other hand, lend itself to providing students with learning opportunities where transfer appropriate knowledge can be utilized. For example, vocabulary studied in preparation for a mini lecture, then used in a discussion following the lecture, is more likely to be transfer-appropriate and therefore retained, than if it were studied in a separate class.

Grabe and Stoller (1997) also observe many benefits in their overview of research into CBI. Among these are the increased motivation of students in the CBI classroom. Challenging activities and student awareness of gains in knowledge serve to heighten motivation. The flexibility of the CBI classroom also allows for adjustments in the curriculum to suit the interests of both teacher and student. Another advantage is that

student-centered activities are a feature of the CBI classroom, lending itself to a more communicative approach to learning. It is widely acknowledged that Japanese EFL students need more chances to activate both previously learned forms in addition to the aforementioned immediacy of transfer-appropriate processing.

There are still more advantages for students in the CBI classroom. Kubota (2016), in a description of her advanced Japanese language course on “Memories of War” in a Canadian university setting, notes the potential to not only provide content that is of interest to learners, but also that can develop students’ critical thinking abilities through critical pedagogy. Kubota refers to this as “Critical CBI” and notes that the value of this approach can be a transformative educational process: “Although teachers may select topics and content of interest to learners, they may also consider how the topic, content and delivery of instruction can encourage learners to think critically about the content and develop critical awareness of language and texts” (p. 192). While the content materials and pedagogic approach that I use for EPIC cannot be classified as “Critical CBI”, the selection of material and course content has been purposeful with respect to what students can get from them in terms of better understanding a formative period in world history.

The Aims of the EPIC CBI Course Module: The 1960s

The aim of the theme-based CBI module presented in this paper is to provide a communicative approach to language learning with a focus on the use of stimulating authentic content. Whilst English education in Japan has changed over the years to make communicative competence more important, progress has been slow due to a number of factors and Japanese high school students still receive insufficient exposure to communicative activities in the classroom. Due to a lack of teacher training in, and resistance to, communicative approaches and the university entrance exam focus on reading and grammar, students at secondary school are still more likely to experience the traditional grammar-oriented method of instruction (see Nishino and Watanabe, 2008; Nishimuro & Borg, 2013). To partially compensate for, and counterbalance against this, it was hoped that stimulating content framed within Nation’s (2007) four strands would provide a unique classroom experience.

Although language acquisition was the main consideration when developing the course, choosing the study of a period in history as the content was a very deliberate decision. Building upon Kubota (2016), the study of CBI historical resources offers a window through which we can see how society functions and how culture is shaped. It is also extremely relevant to contemporary society in that an understanding of past events leads to a better understanding of current world events. With the course material being centered around events in Western society, it could be assumed that cultural insights would be a by-product of the learning in this module.

For students who were born in the final years of the 1990s, the 1960s must appear to be a distant time that conjures up very few images. Little or no knowledge of the events and issues of the period can be assumed. What students know is limited to some popular culture references such as The Beatles and their songs. Historical figures from this period such as Martin Luther King are usually also well known. Therefore, at the

beginning of the course it is essential to provide some background to the decade about to be studied with a short overview. This is done in the form of a mini lecture. Showing video footage of important events is also necessary to more vividly recreate a period that the students have never experienced. As Lightbown (2014) notes, “The comprehensibility of language input is affected by both contextual cues (for example, illustrations or gestures) and prior knowledge of a topic” (p.42). Admittedly, the study of a complete decade can be a little too expansive. Indeed, whole history courses at the university level have been dedicated to studying the content of periods such as the 1960s. For the purpose of this module, however, which was to be taught over a six-week time frame involving a total of 12 lessons, I found it necessary to focus on four particular years. Rather than attempting to cover too much material at only a surface level, by focusing on the four selected years of 1961, 1963, 1965 and 1968 I was better able to employ a variety of activities and delve deeper into the issues studied².

Course Context

The CBI unit described in this paper was one part of the EPIC Program taught to a class of intermediate students at Kochi University in Japan. The course involves six 90-minute classes per week, taught by three native English speakers for one 16-week semester. The maximum size of the class is 24 students but EPIC classes usually range from 10-15 students. The course is available to second, third, and fourth year students from all faculties but most are second-year students from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, specifically the International Studies Course. Acceptance into the course is determined by both oral and written tests to ensure students’ level of language competence matches the EPIC Program intended curricular outcomes. Due to a higher level of English and the fact that the course is self-selected, motivation in the class is generally high.

Pedagogical Framework: Nation's Four Strands

For the purposes of this CBI course module I have adopted Nation’s four strands. Although the four strands were developed to more effectively improve vocabulary learning skills, they are also appropriate for general instruction in second or foreign language teaching contexts. Lightbown (2014) states that, “Nation’s four strands provide a way of organizing a lesson or a curriculum plan to include a range of contexts and activity types that learners need to ensure that their language development progresses as they learn academic content appropriate to their age and their L2 proficiency” (pp. 65-66). The four strands are Meaning-based Input, Meaning-based Output, Language-focused Learning, and Fluency Development. Nation (2007) makes the point that all four strands are equally important and that all four are necessary for language acquisition. In a well-balanced course, equal time should be devoted to all of the four strands. Therefore, when deciding upon whether or not an activity is appropriate for the course, one must consider how much time is already devoted to each strand. As Nation and Yamamoto (2012) note, “If we apply the principle of the four strands

² The idea to present 1960s content in one-year segments was inspired by Elvin (2010). His language teaching materials and activities related to this period provide a rich resource for any teacher designing a course around this theme. Though out of print, the Elvin text can be downloaded for free.

to evaluating the worth of an activity, we need to work out what strand that activity fits into and what other activities it is competing with for time within this strand” (p. 171).

Below (Table 1) is a list of the activities for each strand as operationalized in my CBI module for the EPIC Program. Although it is difficult to be exact about assigning 25% equally to each strand, a concerted effort has been made to contribute an equal portion of time to activities of each strand. It must also be noted that during any one activity students may be fulfilling learning objectives from different strands. Depending on previous learning circumstances, students may also require additional work in one strand more than another.

Table 1. Four Strands and Corresponding Language Activities for EPIC CBI Module

Strand	Activity
Meaning-focused input	Mini-lectures Listening to peer presentations Reading preparation for presentations Dictogloss Listening activities Pair and group work Extensive reading (self-access)
Meaning-focused output	Presentation work Dictogloss Mini-lecture note taking Pair and group work Journal writing
Language-focused learning	Pre-mini-lecture vocabulary instruction Dictogloss Shadowing Pronunciation drills Journal feedback Explicit vocabulary teaching (song lyrics)
Fluency development	4/3/2 Presentation 'stations' Listening activities Journal writing Extensive reading (timed)

Meaning-Focused Input

Meaning-focused input refers to using language receptively through reading or listening to the target language. According to Nation (2007), for an activity to be meaning-focused input, the focus should not only be on comprehension of meaning but also on enjoyment and gaining knowledge from the input. He lists five conditions which need to be met for the strand to exist. These are 1.) familiarity with what is being read or listened to 2.) interest in the content of the input 3.) only a small percentage of unfamiliar language features 4.) context clues or background knowledge that can assist with understanding unknown language items and 5.) large amounts of input (p. 3). Krashen (1989) acknowledges the importance of such input in his

comprehensible input hypothesis. He states that comprehensible input, both new, and input that the learner already understands, is vital for the incidental learning of language. Lightbown (2014) likewise observes that “Language acquisition researchers have confirmed that the human mind will indeed acquire a considerable amount of language while the listener/reader’s focus is on meaning” (p. 41).

Meaning-Focused Input Activities

Despite the image of the lecture format as a highly teacher-centered activity with no place in a learner-centered classroom, mini-lectures are an effective method of providing students with necessary content, and, if care is taken to use level-appropriate language, can be a good example of meaning-focused input. Nunn and Lingley (2004) note that because the lecture is not restricted to the fixed input of a recording or text book, the speed, grammar and lexis can all be adjusted to a level appropriate for the class. It should also be noted that while the listening aspect of a lecture is passive in nature for the students, activities following the lecture can involve greater interaction based on the lecture material and hence provide an opportunity for students to use meaning-focused output.

For each year of the 1960s studied, a mini-lecture on a famous person/famous people that featured prominently in that year is presented. An example of this is in the first year studied, 1961, where students listen to a lecture on John F. Kennedy, as it is the year he became president. Students are required to take notes on a note-taking print provided for them. The lecture format provides an excellent opportunity to incorporate realia into the classroom, as ample video footage exists of the president, from his inauguration to his assassination. This provides contextual clues for students to assist in comprehension. Pre-lecture preparation in the form of provision of required vocabulary and getting students to anticipate the lecture content through scaffolding exercises, also assist in the likelihood of greater comprehension.

Meaning-Focused Output

As opposed to the receptive skills of listening and reading, meaning-focused output requires the learner to use the productive skills of speaking and writing. In researching the limitations of the Canadian immersion programs, Swain (1993) put forward the output hypothesis, which argues the necessity of providing attention to speaking and writing skills in order to successfully achieve higher proficiency. Despite considerable L2 French input and gains in the receptive skills, Swain argues that the productive abilities of students in the Canadian French immersion programs were limited, and errors in the areas of writing and speaking were numerous. The implications for the output hypothesis on language teaching, Swain posits, speak to “the absolute necessity of providing learners with considerable in-class opportunities for speaking and writing” (p. 160). Within this is the notion of ‘pushed output’ both from the teacher and from peers. Meaning-focused output requires students to actively convey meaning in either oral or written form, and in doing so retrieve language that is not frequently used (Lightbown 2014).

As with meaning-focused input, Nation (2007) has developed five conditions that apply to meaning-focused

output. These are 1.) familiarity with what is being spoken or written about 2.) the learner's main purpose is to communicate with someone else 3.) language used should mostly be familiar to the student 4.) communication strategies, dictionaries or prior input can be used when necessary and 5.) there should be plenty of opportunities to produce language (p. 4). In an earlier article on the four strands, Nation (1996) observes that meaning-focused output provides the learner with an opportunity to recall previously learnt language and use it in ways that may be new to the user. It also serves to increase a student's awareness of how important certain grammatical features are in the production of language.

Meaning-Focused Output Activities

Purely productive activities are an important feature of this EPIC CBI course that has been thematically based on the 1960s. One such activity is journal writing. Students are required to record their thoughts on a particular year of study in a journal that is to be handed in just before the end of the unit. The focus is less on form and more on providing meaning-focused output in writing. As a guide, students are provided with questions to stimulate thoughts for journal entries. Examples of these questions are: 1.) What did you learn about this year that you didn't know before? 2.) What did you already know? 3.) What surprised you? 4.) Are the events of this year connected to current events? 5.) Have we learnt from these past events? Ten minutes of class time is set aside at the end of each of the four years studied for this activity. By setting a time limit for the exercise it becomes not only a meaning-focused output exercise, but also a fluency development exercise, according to Nation's definition, as there is encouragement to perform the task faster.

Whilst it is convenient to think of the strands individually, many activities that are features of the CBI classroom combine elements of both input and output. An example of one such activity is the mini-lecture mentioned above. While listening to the lecture involves meaning-focused input from the learners, note taking during the lecture and the collaborative oral comparison of notes in groups after the lecture, are all examples of meaning-focused output, requiring both speaking and writing output. Also, although researching material for short presentations on Internet sites provides students with sources of reading (meaning-focused input), the accompanying oral presentation activity requires productive language output from the student presenting, and receptive listening skills (meaning-focused input) from the audience.

Language-Focused Learning

As the name suggests, this third strand requires activities that revolve around features of language, whether this involves profiling language forms, explicitly teaching vocabulary, or working on pronunciation exercises. There appears to be no consensus, however, on the benefits of such language-focused learning. Various studies into explicit and implicit lexical learning have resulted in opposing conclusions (Choo et.al, 2012). With respect to vocabulary learning from extensive reading, Laufer (2005) suggests that such activities result in minimal gains and that word-focused tasks are more likely to result in lexical acquisition. Nation (2005) is also of the opinion that conscious efforts to promote vocabulary learning need to be made. The conditions for language-focused learning, as noted by Nation (2007) are 1.) attention must be given deliberately to language

features 2.) the language features should be processed deeply and thoughtfully 3.) chances to give repeated attention to the same features should be given 4.) features should be simple and should not depend on knowledge the students don't have 5.) features studied in the language-focused learning strand should often appear in the other strands (pp. 6-7).

Language-Focused Learning Activities

Although graded readers of famous 1960s novels are available for extensive reading activities outside of class and are a beneficial addition for the fluency strand, the short time frame for this CBI course module lends itself better to more deliberate language learning when studying vocabulary. Therefore, in line with Laufer and Nation, relevant vocabulary is taught explicitly. At the very beginning of each unit's study, preparatory vocabulary building exercises are conducted such as gap fills and definition matching. To reinforce correct pronunciation, vocabulary is then drilled together as a class. These exercises serve not only to familiarize students with language necessary to more efficiently interact with the content of the mini-lecture, listening, and dictogloss activities, but also to stimulate interest and gain the learner's attention. Shadowing of texts used for dictogloss and listening activities is another method of reinforcing target vocabulary and correct pronunciation and intonation patterns. Shadowing is also a technique that students are increasingly familiar with as it now commonly used in high school and university EFL classes (Hamada, 2014).

Fluency Development

The aim of this fourth strand is to promote speed and fluency, not only in oral production, but also within reading, listening and writing. As Lightbown (2014) observes, due to the necessity of repetition to achieve fluency, it is often the strand that is most neglected. Yet "the final goal of language is to be able to use language automatically, freeing attention for focus on meaning or on new language features" (p. 67). According to Nation (1989), activities that encourage fluency are less about language form and more about conveying a message. Therefore, accuracy may suffer when efforts to improve fluency are made. Nation is clear here: "Such activities are essential to language learning if the learner is to be able to use the language" (p. 378). Nation (2007) notes that listening, speaking, reading and writing should all be features of the fluency strand and that students should be making the most of what they already know. The conditions for the fluency development strand are 1.) language, content and discourse features should be familiar to the learner 2.) the focus for the learner should be on receiving and communicating a message 3.) there is encouragement to speak, listen, write or read faster than usual 4.) the quantity of input and output is large (p. 7).

Fluency Development Activities

For encouraging oral fluency, a modified version of the standard class presentation format where one student presents in front of the whole class can be employed. Rather than have only one student presenting at a time, a number of students present simultaneously at 'stations' to smaller groups of listeners. Speakers are given five minutes within which to complete their presentation. Those listening to the presentations then move to a new

'station' when finished, thus requiring the presenter to present the same material numerous times to different audiences. In this way, students progressively build fluency, motivation, and therefore confidence. Another similar activity that requires both listening and oral repetition and promotes fluency is the 4/3/2 technique. This involves a student preparing a short talk on a relevant topic, in this case on a famous person or event in the 1960s. The student pairs with another student, the listener, and gives the talk in four minutes. When this is completed the student then pairs with another student, giving the talk this time in three minutes, then again with another partner in two minutes. According to Nation (1989), because of the repetition, reduction in time, and the change in audience, improvements in both accuracy and fluency occur. Control of content and a reduction in hesitations and false starts also appeared to be a result of the technique.

Combining the Strands

The dictogloss activity is an example of how the strands can overlap within a single activity. Authentic texts for this purpose have been chosen from 1960s newspaper articles and news bulletins and are usually used without alteration. Lingley (2006) describes how such an activity can be employed in his description of a content-based Canadian studies course. The passage is read by the teacher three times, the first two times slowly, then at natural speed. Students individually write down as much of the passage as possible. After the third reading, students work in collaboration to reconstruct the text, taking note to communicate orally rather than visually while comparing texts. One group then writes the passage on the board. The teacher may then highlight target vocabulary and grammar features while using the text to provide a more detailed explanation of the content. The exercise initially begins with listening (meaning-focused input) and writing (meaning-focused output) then moves to a stage requiring students to interact orally and aurally (meaning-focused input and output). The teacher's final explanation of vocabulary and form is an example of the fourth strand, language-focused learning. For further examples of how different strands are combined in one activity see Table 1. For an example of a text used for the dictogloss exercise see Appendix 3. The text was taken from a 1960s newspaper and has had only one word altered.

The Use of Music and Lyrics

The beginning of each year to be studied begins with a gap-fill exercise using a number of songs from the year. The reasons for this are twofold. The first reason is to awaken the students' interest in the year about to be studied and provide students with aural and visual input by watching YouTube clips of the artists' performances. The second reason is to study popular lyrics of the 1960s through a listening exercise and to make observations about these lyrics and the artists of the period. Although the students are unfamiliar with the majority of the songs studied, this is an important opportunity to show through music how radically society, fashion and pop culture changed in this brief ten-year period.

Students are first given a print with a segment of each song to be studied and the songs are played a number of times. After providing students with the answers to the gap-fill, visual images of the artists, either from concerts or television performances, are shown to the class. Students are then put into groups and asked

for their observations of both the lyrics and artist performances, asking each other, for example how they compare to the present. As each group reports their observations to the class, it is a good opportunity for the teacher to contribute their knowledge of the lyrics, both meaning and context. (“Yeah” in “She loves you yeah yeah yeah” was considered inappropriate language at the time, rhyming is an important feature of English songs, lyric content progresses from love in the early 1960s, to protest or reflection later in the decade). This serves to ‘set the scene’ for the year to be studied.

Using Authentic Materials

Although not specifically a feature of Nation’s four strands, due to the rich resources available to the teacher of a course on the 1960s, I have chosen to, wherever possible, use authentic materials in this CBI module. According to Guariento and Morley, (2001) the use of authentic materials is of great benefit to student motivation. Such materials “give the learner the feeling that he or she is learning the ‘real’ language; that they are in touch with a living entity, the target language as it is used by the community which speaks it” (p. 347). Indeed Nunan, (2004) in citing Brinton’s five principles for CBI, states that authenticity is an essential element when selecting texts and tasks. In the context of an EFL setting, however, some care must be taken when selecting materials so as not to overwhelm students with unnecessarily long and lexically difficult texts. Moore (2017) observes that this may lead to students spending too long on complex grammar and cultural references, resulting in decreased confidence and motivation, and less time spent on working with the resources in ways that CBI requires. To avoid this situation, it may be necessary to make slight modifications to texts. Guariento and Morley are of the view that simplification of a text is acceptable as long as that simplification is done in such a way that retains its authentic features (p. 348).

Authentic texts in this CBI course take on a variety of different forms. Reading texts have been taken from 1960s newspaper articles. Listening and dictation activities have been devised using transcriptions of news broadcasts from the period and short documentaries. Lyrics and footage of performances are also authentic materials from the decade being studied. Although such materials are scripted and therefore lack the spontaneity of ‘real’ conversation, they are still examples of language that is directed at native speakers and are full of cultural references. There are many definitions and permutations of authenticity but at its core, an authentic text is one that is “created to fulfil some social purpose in the language community in which it was produced” (Little et al. 1988, p. 27, as cited in Guariento and Morley, p. 347). By this definition these materials could therefore be considered authentic.

Newspaper articles and transcriptions of news broadcasts may be challenging for upper-intermediate students. However, the tasks that are required are designed to be simpler so as not to be discouraging. In this way, the difficulty of authentic texts can be regulated by what is required from the accompanying task. Moore (2017) notes “the simpler the input, the more challenging the task can be and, conversely, the more challenging the input, the simpler the task” (p. 5). An example of such a ‘difficult text/manageable task’ is a listening activity using a 1964 news broadcast of the Tokyo Olympics opening ceremony (see Appendix 1). Although complete comprehension of the broadcast may be too challenging for students, focusing on certain numbers in the

broadcast provides a task that is achievable and builds students' confidence in their own listening abilities. The broadcast, taken from footage of the opening ceremony, can also be shown after the listening exercise to visually connect the event. Finally, discussion of the broadcast's content can be stimulated by providing the transcription to the students with discussion questions (see Appendix 2). Meaning-focused input takes the form of both reading and listening, and, meaning-focused output is achieved through the discussion component.

Another activity using a transcript from a news broadcast and one from a short documentary, requires students to dictate a passage to each other. Using this method, the students provide the input (listening) and output (speaking and writing) themselves. However, as the text is an authentic text from the period and an authentic documentary text, explicit instruction on vocabulary is necessary to prepare students. Because of this necessity, the initial stages of the lesson call for more language-focused activities as students learn appropriate vocabulary and focus on form during the dictation. The need to use the correct pronunciation to accurately convey form is also language-focused. Some asking and answering of questions for clarification of spelling or form may also be necessary. The students work in groups of four with each pair dictating a different text, one pair on an anti-war demonstration, the other on a civil rights demonstration (see Appendix 4 and Appendix 5). Upon completion of the task, each pair then consolidates the information from their completed text and prepares to convey the meaning of the text to the other pair. At this later stage in the lesson, the activity requires meaning-focused output, but the teacher, in monitoring the activity, may still need to attend to more language issues related to form. Finally, as there is historical footage accompanying the news broadcast and documentary, the class can view the materials to reinforce the level of authenticity.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have outlined how a theme-based CBI module is undertaken as part of the Kochi University EPIC Program, an intensive intermediate to upper-intermediate EFL course for Japanese learners. My incarnation or representation of this theme-based language-driven CBI module is based on the selective use of authentic materials related to the historical and cultural events of the 1960s, and is situated within Nation's four strands pedagogical framework. This EPIC CBI module is strongly influenced by the language needs of Japanese students who have had limited opportunity to meaningfully interact with the target language in an English-medium classroom setting. In a language-driven CBI module designed for such students, based on the equal integration of each of Nation's four strands, a varied and comprehensive approach to dealing with the needs of language learners can be accomplished. At the same time, such an approach provides an opportunity to study stimulating cultural content while focusing heavily on language. Meaning-focused input activities develop receptive reading and listening skills while meaning-focused output activities help productive speaking and writing skills. Explicit language-focused learning more efficiently tackles issues of vocabulary and form while fluency development activities ensure the needed practice for greater speed and ease of delivery.

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Appendix 1: Questions for Listening Exercise

Listening Questions

How many people are attending the opening ceremony?

How many countries are participating?

How many people are in the United states contingent (team)?

How many people are there in the whole Olympic games?

How much was spent on the Olympic games?

Appendix 2: Transcription of Listening Exercise and discussion Questions

1960s Listening Transcription: The Tokyo Olympics

Tokyo is dressed in her holiday best for the opening of the 18th modern Olympics, the first to be held in the far east. At the national stadium there is a capacity crowd of 75,000 present for the opening ceremonies that precede twenty different sports events, among athletes from ninety four nations. The United States contingent of three hundred and thirty men and girls is warmly applauded and the male members are singled out by their jaunty Western hats. The Russians follow the US team, their arch rivals in Olympic competition. There are five thousand five hundred and forty-one entrants in this year's games, a near record. As the host nation, the Japanese enter last. The Japanese have spent two billion dollars to welcome their guests and not a tax payer has complained....out loud.

Discussion Questions:

Is there any language here that would be considered sexist today?

Are there any comments that reflect the political climate?

What do you think "jaunty" means?

Appendix 3: Dictogloss Text

Dictogloss Text: Kennedy Assassinated

The world was shocked last night by the news that America's President John F. Kennedy was dead - shot down by a hidden assassin.

Mr. Kennedy, only forty-six and the leader of the West, was riding in an open car with his wife Jackie in Dallas, Texas.

A bullet ripped through his head. He fell forward and his 34-year-old wife cradled his head in her arms.

As the car raced to a nearby hospital Jackie kept crying "Oh no!" Her clothes were spattered with blood.

Mr. Kennedy lived only twenty-five minutes after he was hit. In hospital, surgeons opened his throat to relieve breathing and to give him blood.

But he died at about 1 p.m. local time, 7p.m. British time. And shocked millions throughout the world heard the announcement soon afterwards.

