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# Using Discourse Analysis to Develop L2 Learning Materials for Hands-on Creative-Tourism Workshops

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Giving verbal instructions for procedures involving the manipulation of physical objects is an essential component in a wide variety of contexts of English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). This includes teaching others how to operate machinery, use tools, handle materials, and do other aspects of hands-on instruction. To better understand how speakers of English as a second or foreign language (L2) cope with such tasks, discourse analysis may be used to unpack spoken texts so that features in the organization, style, and content of an EOP may be identified (Brown, 2016), which in turn may support the development of pedagogically valid teaching approaches and learning materials.

This paper outlines preliminary findings of an ongoing research project, which employs tools based on the rank scale of the Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) analytical framework, to investigate how Japanese practitioners of traditional crafts give technical instructions in L2 for the mediums of ceramics, metalcraft, and textile dyeing. The underlying goal of the study is to develop effective language learning materials to help craft professionals with low-intermediate L2 proficiency give basic instructions in creative workshops targeted at international tourists. With the expected increase in visitors in proximity to the Tokyo Olympic Games in 2020, added-value tourism programs have become more significant elements of planning strategies of Japanese government ministries involved in trade, culture, and tourism. (Japan Ministry of Land, Infrastructure,

Transport and Tourism, 2016).

After describing the project's background, method of data collection, and the analytical framework used in the study, focus shifts to three salient patterns found in four workshops taught in English by Japanese university students majoring in traditional craft. Subsequently, conclusions are offered on how the findings may help develop language learning materials that support the project's objectives.

## **Project Background**

Research was conducted as part of a three-year project, from 2016 to 2019, to support and encourage Japanese practitioners of traditional craftwork (*kogei*) to offer hands-on workshops in English. Such workshops have been integrated in creative-tourism efforts sponsored by public and private initiatives, including the seven Japanese municipalities of the UNSECO Creative Cities Network. The network defines successful workshops as those which not only provide authentic experiences with the unique culture of a place, but also foster positive interpersonal bonds between host and visitor (UNESCO, 2006).

## **Data Collection**

The study's primary source of data was collected at Kanazawa College of Art, which offers courses in a variety of mediums of traditional Japanese craft. Four workshops were organized specifically for the project, each with one student giving instruction to one participant. Adopting Yule's (1997) terms concerning referential communication tasks, the subjects are referred to as the *sender*, who plays the role of workshop instructor, and the *receiver*, who follows the sender's directions.

Four students majoring in a craft were recruited to act as senders. Communicative competence among the four varied slightly, but based on observation the author estimated the spoken proficiency of all senders to be roughly A2 on the CEFR scale (Council of Europe, 2001). Without any preparatory language instruction, senders were asked to plan a one-hour workshop, similar to commercial workshops promoted by the local municipal

government's creative-tourism initiative (Kanazawa City, 2016). Finished products consisted of a lapel pin made from brass, an indigo dyed handkerchief, and ceramic bowls using both hand-build and pottery-wheel techniques. Two individual participants, both American and native-speakers of English, served in the role of receiver. Participants did not meet each other until the actual workshop. Data was collected by two video cameras and a back-up audio recorder.

Additional data was collected at five workshops in various commercial venues in Kyoto, with the author as the receiver. Focusing on the same craft mediums, these workshops were taught by experienced professionals, with slightly higher English proficiency than the Kanazawa students. Although field notes were taken at all workshops, due to privacy and technical issues, audio recordings were only possible at two locations, which prevented a full comparative analysis. The Kyoto workshops, however, provided valuable insight to the genre of creative-tourism workshops.

## Method of Analysis

After transcribing approximately six hours of video from the four Kanazawa workshops, a simplified version of the Francis and Hunston (1992) system of analysis was employed to subjectively categorize elements of the exchange structure. Built on the Sinclair-Coulthard (1975) model, the framework is based on a "rank scale", starting with the lowest rank, *act*, which represents the basic function of a spoken utterance or non-verbal communication (Francis & Hunston, 1992, p. 123). The framework provides 22 classifications of acts, which may stand alone as the head structure or as pre- or post-head elements. The next rank, *move*, is generally classified as either initiating (I), responsive (R), or follow up (F). Dynamic moves that both respond and initiate, such as answering a question with a question for clarification, may be categorized as reply-initiate (R/I) or bound illicit (I<sup>b</sup>). The third rank of *exchange* includes eliciting, informing, directing, clarifying, repeating, and re-initiating.

Although time-consuming, once the framework has been applied to the transcript (Appendix), the categorized elements of the rank-scale can be

sorted, and general patterns of language use emerge. This makes it possible, to some extent, to characterize the nature of the roles participants play in shaping the discourse, by examining the frequency and function of acts, moves, and initiated exchanges. The framework allowed for a rich analysis of the Kanazawa workshops, especially concerning the rank of exchange.

## Research Findings

Initial analysis showed a somewhat predictable picture (Table 1). In 305 total exchanges initiated by senders, informing (56%) and directing (29%) were the most prominent. Moreover, receivers initiated 283 exchanges, most of which were either eliciting (46%) or clarifying (23%). In other words, senders explained and gave commands, and receivers frequently asked questions to make sure they could follow directions.

What proved more useful was further analysis of the less frequently occurring categories of eliciting and clarifying exchanges made by Kanazawa senders, which accounted for only 14% of their total exchanges. After comparing these exchanges to those in the Kyoto workshops, three salient problematic patterns emerged: avoidance of conversational small-talk, infrequent use of temporal conjuncts as cohesive devices (e.g., now, next, then, after that), and a lack of analogy or paraphrasing to overcome gaps in lexical knowledge.

Table 1  
*Total Number of Exchanges Initiated by Participants*

Type of Exchange	Initiated by Sender	Initiated by Receiver
Inform	168	85
Direct	89	1
Elicit	29	129
Clarify	10	66
Repeat	9	2

### **Avoidance of conversational small-talk**

Analysis of eliciting exchanges in the Kyoto workshops revealed that senders attempted to engage receivers by means of small-talk unrelated to instructional tasks, such as, “How long are you staying in Kyoto?” or “Have you tried other craft workshops?”. These conversational exchanges steered discourse towards interpersonal communication, in line with UNESCO’s definition of creative-tourism as previously described. Kyoto senders asked an average of seven small-talk questions per workshop. In contrast, the Kanazawa senders almost completely avoided initiating small-talk and generally were reluctant to communicate even when receivers initiated conversational exchanges.

### **Infrequent use of temporal conjuncts**

A second pattern was found in Kyoto senders’ use of a variety of phrases and temporal conjuncts as cohesive devices, such as “First thing we have to do is...” “Next step is...” “So now we have to...” to signal forthcoming steps of instruction. Kyoto senders also presented the workshop’s scheduled plan before instruction commenced, by using multi-modal elements, such as diagrams, photos, video, and partially completed craft items. This was not the case in Kanazawa; although two of the four senders used “at first” to commence instruction, all subsequent steps were exclusively signaled by “and” as a temporal conjunct. This may have contributed to a sense of the workshop as a single linear task, and it offers an explanation why Kanazawa receivers’ frequently initiated exchanges that began with questions like “What’s next?”, “Should I keep going?”, and “Are we done now?”.

### **Lack of analogy and paraphrasing to overcome gaps in lexical knowledge**

A third pattern emerged from analysis of the types of questions that Kanazawa senders used in eliciting exchanges. The most frequently occurring questions related to vocabulary, especially concerning imperative verbs that require using one’s hands (Hammond, 2017). When faced with gaps in lexical knowledge, senders in Kanazawa chiefly relied on appeals for assistance in Japanese, for example, “How do you say *hasamu* in English?”, and very few attempts were made

to use available lexical items to paraphrase or make analogies. In comparison, Kyoto senders often engaged in metaphorical reasoning by paraphrasing or using analogy as communicative strategies, such as “like a jellyfish” to describe the proper form of clay molding and “same as tea bag” to instruct dipping fabric into dye.

## Implications for learning material development

In summary, the findings of the study may be useful to achieve the project’s goal to develop learning materials in three ways. First, materials should include exercises for learners to improve their ability to initiate and participate in small talk. This may include asking simple conversational questions, as well as prepared anecdotes. Secondly, materials should emphasize the importance of signaling sequence of instruction by focusing on temporal conjuncts to mark procedural steps and raising awareness of multi-modal elements as a device to convey overall plans. Finally, materials should highlight paraphrasing, metaphor, and other devices to strategically overcome lexical deficiencies.

## Acknowledgements

This research was funded by The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (Kaken Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research-C 16K02879).

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Received: September 30, 2017

Accepted: November 11, 2018

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## Appendix

### Sample of the modified Francis and Hunston (1992) framework used in the study

Dialogue	Act	<i>structure</i>	Move	<i>structure</i>	Exchange
S: At first	marker	pre	direct	I	Direct
please decide your design.	direct	head			
R: Ok.	receive	head	acknowledge	R	
S: Cutting you want is ok.	inform	head	inform	I	Inform
Round is very easy.	comment	post			
R: Yeah, maybe a round.	confirm	head	acknowledge	R	
S: Round?	loop	head	elicit	I <sup>b</sup>	Repeat
R: Yeah, I kind of want to/	inform	head	inform	R	
S: Or square is also.	inform	head	inform	I	Inform
R: Well, let's see.	receive	head	acknowledge	R	
S: You want?	neutral proposal	head	elicit	I	Elicit
Or triangle, <i>demo</i> anything is ok.	comment	post			
R: Anything is ok?	return	head	elicit	I <sup>b</sup>	Clarify
S: Sure.	inform	head	inform	R	

*Notes.* S = sender; R = receiver; I = initiate; I<sup>b</sup> = bound initiate; R = response