

## こども教育宝仙大学の英語教育の特有な展開可能性を十分生かす対策

Fulfilling the Unique Possibilities in the Hosen College of Childhood Education English Programs

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### Abstract

Here we will describe the advantages and disadvantages of 4 textbooks considered or used in the English Communications and Practical English classrooms, and 9 strategies developed or considered for the Communications and Practical English classes to foster the needs outlined below. Finally, we will touch briefly on reference books in English for those who wish to learn more about the cultural, pedagogical, and operational differences between Japanese and overseas preschool programs.

The Hosen College of Childhood Education English Communications and Practical English programs offer the possibilities for unique competence development where students can become English-competent preschool teachers. The first and most immediate need is to learn all the special-purpose preschool vocabulary, for facilities, equipment, and activities. The vocabulary and the ability to handle situational needs will enable the students to meet the future needs in the international and multi-cultural needs that are emerging in childcare. The world is changing and the emerging need for preschool English as even a supplemental means of communication will necessitate the students challenge to some pre-existing attitudes toward English study and accept the need to be competent in the use of English in their workplace and with parents. The second area for transformation is a change in attitude away from passive academic learning for paper test examination English with its “correct” answers, as well as away from using rough student slang to students, parents, or colleagues in professional situations. To achieve this both methods of evaluation and classroom activities need to change. Third and finally, the students need to have self-awareness as childcare educators, to understand aims of the programs, not just understanding the children’s speech but also the aim of helping the children develop the ability to express themselves. They also need to be able to help parents understand the preschool programs which may differ from programs in other countries, as well as work with foreign preschool “helper” colleagues (who may also have different understanding of preschool programs). These factors are not addressed by general English Conversation classes, and without establishing basic professional language skills, even study trips to overseas English-speaking countries will not devote sufficient time to develop the necessary skills. At the same time, native English speakers need to have better understanding of Japanese preschools.

キーワード：保育士英語 教科書評価 指導対策 Preschool ESP 9 Strategies Evaluated

Preschool teaching is not a situation where social elites engage in chit-chat at dinner parties or play academic reference games to demonstrate superiority. Preschool teaching is where small children acquire their view of the world – as one popular book title stated decades ago, “All I Really Need in Life, I Learned in Kindergarten.”

At the beginning of each term, and repeated later when needed, there should be a “pep talk” stressing the vital role of preschool teachers in society. Hosen graduates’ work with preschoolers is of vital importance and can benefit or destroy the lives of individual students in a most formative period of their lives. The impact of good or bad preschool experience can change a person’s life and the life of their communities. Hosen students need to understand that with preschool students and their

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parents, avoiding communication can lead to worst-case scenarios when it comes to health and safety and serious misunderstanding of professional responsibilities, and equally importantly, lead to life-changing disappointment on the part of the children when they are left out of activities because they didn't bring, for example, their swimsuit or box lunch. Mistakes can be questioned and corrected; the important thing is to establish and maintain communications. Even if the student does not plan to be a front-lines preschool teacher for the rest of their lives, the value of what they can learn as individuals in the Hosen course needs to be respected.

The Hosen English program subject matter is covered in several good textbooks published within the past 15

years. 4 textbooks have been examined. The English Communications class used "Speaking of Childcare" and the Practical English class used "Hello English" in 2019.

Each text had advantages and disadvantages. A common disadvantage is the CD dubbing, which tends to "cute" unnatural and at times repulsive excesses in female speech intonation. Happy English for Childcare was used in the first-year classes, and the audio download was not evaluated.

Each text similarly covered basic vocabulary and situations in the first half, and moved into more detailed contents in the second half. In the Practical English class, other materials were added to the Hello, English textbook.

Chart 1 : Textbooks Reviewed

Title	Pgs.		Authors	Publishers	Date	Price
保育の英会話 Childcare English	94	CD	赤松直子 & 久富陽子 (帝京平成大学准教授 & 東京家政大学教授)	萌文書林	2002/2004	2,000
Happy English for Childcare 保育のための基礎英語	75	Audio Down load	土屋麻衣子	金星堂	2015	2,150
Speaking of Childcare 保育学生のための英語コミュニケーション	137	CD	Peter Vincent, 中里菜穂子 (聖徳大学)	南雲堂	2019	2,300
Hello, English-English for Teachers of Children 子どもに教える先生のための英語 —会話から授業まで—	110	CD	相羽千州子, 藤原真知子, Brian Byrd, Jason Barrows	成美堂	2016	2,400

Chart 2 : Textbook Advantages & Disadvantages

Title	Pro	Con
保育の英会話 Childcare English	Thorough. Comprehensive. "Meaty". CD dubbing is the best of those here.	Dense text. Difficult to cover everything
Happy English for Childcare 保育のための基礎英語	Looks light, easy. Audio download is good for students lacking CD players.	A bit simple. Uses closed questions in exercises.
Speaking of Childcare 保育学生のための英語 コミュニケーション	Bright, colorful, not too text-dense Covers affective as well as factual. Review units are useful.	"Easy" appearance is deceptive. Large/heavy book & CD; Teacher's Book does not contain students' text contents
Hello, English 子どもに教える先生 のための英語	Good coverage of different voice Material assumes teaching skills Adapts well to added enrichment units	Target is elementary, not preschool Assumes pedagogical competencies CD dubbing has unnatural female voice

Chart 3 : Textbook Contents

保育の英会話 Childcare English	Happy English for Childcare 保育のための基礎英語	Speaking of Childcare 保育学生のための 英語コミュニケーション	Hello, English 子どもに教える先生のための英語
1. 保育の英会話への第一歩 2. みなと保育園ようこそ！ 3. 時間と数 4. 地図の道案内 5. クラスメイトとの出会い 6. デイヴィーの登園と降園 7. 保育者の仕事 8. 昼食 9. 排泄に関する会 10. けんか 11. けがと病気 12. 電話での対応 13. 遠足 14. 赤ちゃんのケア 15. 卒園	Pre-unit: Please speak more slowly 1. Hi, I'm Yuri Tanaka 2. Where's the Multi-Purpose Room? 3. Good Morning, How Are You Today? 4. What Color Do You Like? 5. There's a Ladybug on the Leaf 6. It's Time to Play Outside 7. She is Allergic to Eggs 8. You Should Go to the Bathroom 9. We Made Masks Today 10. If it Rains, What Happens? 11. What Shall We Do Today? 12. I Feel Feverish 13. This is Yuri from Cosmos Day Care Center 14. Thank You Very Much for Everything	1. What's your name? 2. Where are you from? 3. Good Morning! 4. Are you OK? 5. What are you doing? 6. How are you feeling? 7. What's she like? 8. Do's & Don'ts Review 1-8 9. Let's eat lunch! 10. What do you want to do? 11. What do you have to do? 12. I need to go potty 13. Good job! 14. Injuries and emergencies 15. We're going to go outside Review 9-15	Hello, English 子どもに教える先生のための英語  <b>Part 1 : 出会いから授業スタートまで + 知っておきたい基礎知識</b> 1. ALT の南小学校の初訪問 2. ALT とのコミュニケーション 3. 学校給食 4. 休み時間 <b>Part 2 : 授業の実際+</b> 5. 最初の授業* Lesson Plans 6. 授業のスタート (数字を教える 1) 7. 授業の展開 (数字を教える 2) 8. 授業を終える (振り返り) 9. 幼稚園でのアクティビティ <b>Part 3 : 他教科を取り入れた英語学習 (CILC)</b> 10. 生物学・理科を取り入れて 11. 家庭科を取り入れて 12. 社会科を取り入れて <b>Part 4 : 学校行事の場面+</b> 13. 日本の文化の紹介 14. 避難訓練 15. 卒業+

## English Communications Classes

The first half of the 15-Unit course text establishes the basic vocabulary. At the end of the first term, the teachers should be able to engage in activities with students and enter daily descriptions in the Communications Notebook. The second term deals with specific preschool events and accidents or emergencies. But mastery of the best textbook in the world will be of no use unless the teacher can actively use English when needed. Situations in real life are almost by definition open-ended and never have subtitles running along the ground to be read by the speaker.

Using textbooks that rely on fill-in-the-blank and multiple-choice questions with correct and incorrect answers can be good practice, but do not prepare students for the decisions of "what to say" in real life. Students must be able to stand and look at the person they are speaking to when they speak English, not limited to reading from a prepared text. Presenting skits in class gives practice in self-reliance in situations where they will not have a textbook in hand but letting go of the textbook can be difficult for some. Let us next look at the strategies employed to achieve those goals of active production and self-reliance in generating English.

Six strategies were employed in the English Communications class, five of which aimed to encourage the use of preschool situational English in class. One additional strategy, a form of pair practice, was held in reserve for control purposes. Two additional strategies were employed for the Practical English elective course. Teacher workload was also considered. In the final semester, to alleviate a classroom disciplinary problem, one additional strategy was considered.

"Points added" grading rewards production over strict accuracy and is easier to grade because analysis and corrections focused on "correct answers" are not engaged; sentences need only to have subject and verb and a recognizable message that communicates clearly, which is in line with the aims of the course in "English Communication". "Bravery points" meant that students who were willing to act out a situation in front of the class did not need to be skilled and fluent to earn some extra credit toward their final grade, and at the same time inspired classmates with the thought "I could do THAT" when the acting or accuracy of English was poor but delivered clearly and communicated the point, with resulting positive evaluation.

Using a preschool communications notebook for end-of-class essays gave a familiar format (turned on its side)

and removed the tension of a blank sheet of paper or composition notebook. Hints for the most basic things to write could be given, but usually the topics started as totally free. Because these were not seen by their classmates, students with weak skills could write very basic 3-4 word sentences relating strictly to the class, and those with much higher fluency could demonstrate that ability with complex sentences on a variety of contents. If this exercise at the end of each class were marked traditionally with mistakes identified and corrected, the teacher's burden would be considerable. Using the above-mentioned points-added system made

the marking far more simple: count the number of sentences, and record that number. Limiting the amount of time, or number of pages, can serve to curb student enthusiasm for extreme length.

Vocabulary and lesson content questions using graphics copy/pasted from the textbook had the advantages of clarity as well as resemblance to actual life situations, which do not present multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank options.

The use of gestures can start with the instructor

Chart 4 : Strategies Evaluated

Strategy	Points of Care	Advantages	Cautions
1. Communications Notebook entries	Only sentences count. Points added for communication, not perfection Later, other bonus points can be introduced.	Familiar format, and as teachers they will use these in actual situations. Start with an open format so students write more freely. Advanced students can write complex text in private. Later, assignments can be added	Mark down copying by 50% ~70%. Leaving mistakes uncorrected promotes communications. <b>After</b> the first half of the course, introduce extra points for content, grammar, as well as specific assignments.
2. Points-added grading	Communications notebooks AND Test grading No set "correct" answer	No need to correct text. Easy to add up sentences. Graphic cue closer to situation, textbook graphic contents are clear.	No points for non-sentences (fragments/vocabulary) Graphic copy/paste from textbook is the most accurate cue format.
3. Open-ended Questions/Visual cues instead of written questions	Closer to real-life language needs. Can develop student confidence in their own thoughts	Get away from "the correct answer" fallibility Move into visual cues to handle vocabulary & situation requirements.	Answers may be unexpected. Teacher needs flexibility. Students may not like the uncertainty of open-endedness. Best reflection of 'real life'
4. Use of Gestures	Can be of use in real-life communications Points for good use.	Start with fingers showing numbers, work up to expressing surprise, disappointment, sadness & other emotions	Not something familiar; use bus guide /traffic cop examples & expand, teach by modelling more than specific instruction.
5. Bravery Points	Extra point motivate those students who do poorly on written tests.	Helps grades of communicative students with poor academic skills; develops self-initiative.	Note that <b>ALL</b> must participate, but those volunteering early-on get extra credit.
6. Pre-test Testing	2 copies of each test; one as pre-test, next as final. (can compare)	Tests initiative & situational language competence desired	Volume sufficient to match contemporary testing grades is needed.
7. Strategic Paired Practice + pep talk	Assign students of different groups to signed-off pair practice (May include pep talk)	Seating changes, Role play & Dictation for class credit; job skill of working well with others also practiced.	Disruptive students need to discover skills that will enable better habits to use in the workforce later in life.
8. Story-Book Reading: Oxford series	Focus on vocabulary development and 'reading' the pictures	Text is easy & humorous. Teacher's guides give questions to ask. Intonation developed. Activity is Fun.	Requires awareness of rationale: Lesson plans not yet taught in main course. Teachers need good vocabulary, intonation skills.
9. Show& Tell / CLIC	Gateway to CILC, models student practice	May be new to students, can be confused with content lessons.	Requires awareness of the students' lack & need to develop vocabulary.

modelling the page numbers with their fingers when telling the students to “Turn to page XX”. From this gateway, coaching the students’ body language and tone of voice in presentation skits is good practice. Reading the expressions of emotion in the text and in the skits is the next challenge, and at some point the idea that English communication is not purely words will take root.

Vocabulary ‘short tests’ and final tests are drawn up in at least 2 versions, with approximately 80% identical content at each occasion. The focus is ‘what to say’ in specific situations. One version of the test is administered as a ‘practice test’ on the next-to-the-last class, collected, and then discussed. It is not returned that day. The other version is administered as the final exam on the last day. Usually the students perform better on the second test, but there are those who experience tests as trauma and do far more poorly on the second test. In that case, the communications notebook entries and bravery points are taken into consideration, along with the performance on the first ‘practice test’.

### **Practical English** (*points 8 and 9 in the above chart*)

Practical English (points 8 and 9 in the above chart)

Practical English is an elective course, and the class size is small. The textbook chosen is one geared more toward elementary school experience but is valuable in developing a higher level of student self-awareness as teachers. The text introduces the concepts of using a variety of tools and techniques to teach students and speaking to a variety of persons. There needs to be explicit modelling of speaking to children, administrators, and fellow colleagues. The difference between the teacher’s class schedule and their lesson plans needs to be clear. The Hosen students gave no indication of any awareness of lesson planning, however other instructors were very aware of that need. This aspect could not be stressed, but it could be mentioned, and only some slight modelling was covered.

To lighten the tone of the class, and reward student interest, two outside aides were used: reading story books (from the Oxford series of no-word, two-word, and simple sentences booklets, each series of which includes

CDs and teaching hints in Japanese) and show-and-tell including games as well as objects, along the lines of the common practice of Show - and - Tell in U.S. kindergartens. This seemed to achieve the aims of the course, and in addition to vocabulary and final exams on the same model as the English Communications tests, a composition section for the types of situation in the picture-book reading or show-and-tell presentation were added, and weight given to these factors in the final grades.

### **Differences in Preschool Programs**

Each instructor has a mental outline of what constitutes a preschool program based on their own experience. The preschool this writer attended for 1 year in rural New York State as a child was very different from the preschool my two children attended over a total of 4 years in the Kawasaki suburbs. Later, in my 9 years work in the relocations industry in the greater Tokyo area, I had a chance to conduct tours of local and international preschools with parents looking for the best education for their children while living in Japan. It was clear that there was great variety among the programs – on one extreme the programs that very strictly controlled activities and stressed academic preparation, and at the other extreme the programs that did not seem to be programs, only daylong free play with extremely little control or intervention by teachers. No one model could be said to be “the way all Japanese preschools are”.

Native speakers without experience in Japanese preschool practices would do well to read *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited: China, Japan, and the United States* (Joseph Tobin, 2009, University of Chicago) and *Contested Childhood: Diversity and Change in Japanese Preschools* (Susan Holloway, 2000, Routledge) as an orientation to the workplaces that Hosen graduates will be entering. *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* presents an updated view of a very good comparison between Japan, China, and the U.S. This book makes the very good point that there is more variety among Japanese preschools than between Japan and the U.S. Including the practices in Chinese preschools is useful for dealing with parents who may not grasp the cultural differences between China and

Japan. (The Hosen library has a copy of this book in English).

Contested Childhood explores more deeply the situation in Japanese preschools as they relate to Japanese society and culture, disproving several stereotypes commonly believed overseas, and exploring the issues faced in the preschools.

Yeh Hsueh, Mayumi Karasawa, 2009, University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London)

Contested Childhood: Diversity and change in Japanese preschools (ISBN 0-415-92458-8, Susan Holloway, 2000, Routledge New York & London)

## In Conclusion

Using the available textbooks for the specialized vocabulary used and situations faced by preschool teachers will create good passive competence in the English needed by the students. By adding writing in communications notebooks and other open-ended work and using a “points added” grading system that encourages output, writing skills that will be useful with English-speaking parents can be developed.

Active presentation of textbook situations without a textbook in hand will provide practice in speaking to an actual person “while standing”. Coaching on the use of gestures can be of good help. Further, giving extra “bravery points” for the early volunteers can encourage students to speak up. Because the course is “Communications”, the focus on correcting any and all grammatical mistakes regardless of lack of effect on the message can be safely removed for those who struggle to express themselves in English, while grades can still reward students with greater vocabularies and fluency language skills.

These combined strategic approaches can enable the instructor to fulfill the unique possibilities in the Childhood Education Hosen University English programs. For those not familiar with Japanese preschools, there are two recommended books below.

### Books for Reference

All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten (ISBN: 978-0394571027, Robert Fulghum, 1990, HarperCollins Publishers Ltd)

人生に必要な知恵はすべて幼稚園の砂場で学んだ (ISBN: 978-4309464213, ロバート・フルガム (著), 池央耿 (翻訳) 2016 河出書房新社)

Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited: China, Japan, and the United States (ISBN 0-226-80503-4, Joseph Tobin,