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Exploring the learning potential of peer-assessed dictation in the Chinese context

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Abstract

Students play an important role in using assessment for learning. Their perceptions and involvement directly impact on the learning potential of assessment. This paper investigated students’ views on peer-assessed dictation in two Chinese high schools through a qualitative study. Students recognized both benefits and constraints of peer-assessed dictation. They perceived more benefits when they got actively engaged. This paper contributes to the understanding of assessment and learning relationship from student perspectives. It also offers implications for using assessment more productively in the Asian classrooms and a wider context.

Key words: formative assessment, peer assessment, dictation, student learning

Introduction

In recent years, more attention has been paid to the role that assessment plays in promoting learning in language classrooms. Recent research on teacher classroom assessment has contributed to the formative assessment theory, including but not limited to formative assessment strategies, process and cycle for gap closure, and variations in formative assessment (e.g. Rea-Dickins and Gardner, 2000). Whilst teacher perspectives are important, increasingly attention is called for student perspectives, as their perceptions and beliefs directly impact on their learning (Cowie, 2009). Involving students in assessment is necessary and there are opportunities for students to become active learners rather than passive recipients of knowledge. Peer assessment is such a strategy to get students involved. It involves students actively by encouraging them to support each other and reflect on their own work, and to get engaged with criteria and standards (Carless, 2011).

This paper focuses on students’ responses to English dictation in their everyday classrooms. Dictation is a commonly used technique in language classrooms particularly in the Chinese context. Although it has been considered as an old-fashion technique in Anglo-American context, dictation is still used popularly in the Chinese primary and secondary schools. In the English classrooms, memorizing words and assessing the mastery of vocabulary through dictation is a common feature. Carless (2011) interprets this as being related to the practice and memorization of the forms of the
Chinese characters. Dictation is not frequently discussed in existing literature, probably because it is associated with the old grammar translation method. However, dictation can take a variety of forms rather than writing down what is being read. An action research in a Hong Kong school shows that secondary school teachers attempt to involve students in more meaningful ways by focusing on more than spellings and involving students actively (e.g. Chiang, 2002).

This study investigated students’ perceptions of peer-assessed dictation in two high schools in China. This paper was drawn from a larger study which explored students’ responses to English assessment. Peer-assessed dictation turned out to be a major theme and it was frequently used in three classes. Through collecting data from classroom observations and interviews, this study intends to find out how Chinese high school students perceive peer-assessed dictation and to what extent it contributes to English learning. It is hoped that this study offers implications for teachers in both China and a wider educational context.

**Literature Review**

Black and Wiliam’s (1998) foundational review article collects rich and extensive evidence on the role that assessment had in improving learning, which raises wide interest on the learning potential of formative assessment in the following 20 years. Unlike external tests where students tend to have a more passive role, students are strongly recommended to be actively involved in the whole assessment process in formative assessment (Broadfoot et al., 1999). Drawing on their comprehensive review, Black and Wiliam (1998) point out that it is important to develop students’ own capacity to evaluate. If students are unable to plan and carry out remedial learning, they are less likely to make good use of feedback. Through working with English as additional language pupils in England, Rea-Dickins (2001) suggests that teachers need to focus on students’ learning and involve them actively in the whole assessment process, including motivating learners to engage in interaction, developing their skills for reflection, focusing on learners’ difficulties, and providing opportunities for learners to express their own understanding. Classroom discourse demonstrates how learners are active participants themselves, and how teachers could facilitate this process through classroom interaction.

Peer assessment is such a strategy to get students involved. Peer assessment contributes to students’ learning through social interaction, in the process of which students stimulate others to think and act, hence developing their thinking in collaborative ways (Carless, 2011). Peers also provide scaffolding, so that students can recognize how others have done the job and how they can complete it (Lam, 2011). Students may accept peer feedback more easily. Cowie (2009) considers that peer feedback is straightforward and contains less technical words. Peers who share similar learning experiences provide support and assistance to their classmates in an easily accessible way.
In spite of the recent launch of the new curriculum in China that emphasizes students’ active participation, there is still a gap between the intended curriculum and classroom practices. While pair and group work is observed in the language classrooms, some students believe that there are more chances to learn from teachers rather than peers (Jin & Cortazzi, 2008), indicating that peer assessment is a contextualized phenomenon. In a study in a wider Chinese context in Hong Kong, secondary school students recognize the benefits of peer assessment in terms of enhancing thinking and reflection, and setting future learning target in English learning, but they also feel concerned about the effectiveness of assessment forms and their own academic capabilities (Mok, 2011). Another strategy to get students involved is by asking them to design assessment questions and administer assessments to other students. This strategy has been identified by Black et al. (2003), but there is a lack of elaborated studies on this.

This paper hence focuses on the peer assessment in the Chinese school context through examining students’ responses to dictation. As mentioned earlier, dictation is frequently used in the Chinese classrooms, although it is considered to be an old fashion activity and is associated with the grammar translation method of language learning (Stansfield, 1985). Dictation is considered both as a teaching technique and an assessment technique. From the perspective of teaching technique, Kidd (1992) recommends teachers to use meaningful and interesting methods, instead of merely focusing on spelling and stress. Dictation could involve a variety of possibilities, such as dictating words, and asking students to write down connections between words or suitable connotations, or asking students to draw pictures (Davis & Rinvolucri, 1988). Dictation is also regard as a way of assessing English-language skills (Oller, 1971). However, some researchers criticized that dictation is a reduced form of assessment, as the performance elicited is not part of everyday language use (Brown & Hudson, 1998). As dictation plays a dual role as both teaching and assessment technique, it is reasonable to examine dictation from an assessment perspective. This paper intends explore if and in what way peer-involved dictation contributes to learning. It might be interesting to examine how this technique is used in the Chinese context, and in what way dictation could be more productive than it was considered to be. This study offers implications for more productive use of dictation in the Chinese context, and peer participation in other forms of classroom assessments.

This study examined the perception of students in Chinese high schools towards peer-assessed dictation.

**Method of study**

This study was conducted in two high schools in China. School A was a provincial key high school in a major city in Hubei province; it admitted the
top 20 per cent students in the municipal high school exams. School B was a foreign language school in Zhejiang province. The school adopted a junior-senior consistent secondary system and selected top students from primary schools. Therefore, the students in the two schools were comparatively high-achieving learners. School A was chosen because of the researcher’s familiarity with the context and it was a typical high school in China. School B was chosen for its constant good practices in language teaching and good assessment practices. Both schools seemed to be information-rich cases, which were likely to provide insights into issues that of central importance to the research (Patton, 1990, p. 169). This paper reported the findings from one class in school A (AC1, C stands for class) and two classes in school B (BC1 and BC2) where peer-assessed dictation was observed to be a constant practice. This purposeful sampling intended to get more insights into peer-assessed dictation. The two schools were chosen not for comparison purpose, but to maximize the perspectives obtained.

The data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. Altogether 60 classroom observations were conducted in three classes, including 21 observations in AC1, 25 in BC1 and 14 in BC2. Fewer classroom observations were conducted in BC2, as it was included in the study at a later stage. Among all observations, peer-assessed dictation was observed four times in AC1, once in BC1 and twice in BC2; interview responses indicated that dictation was conducted regularly at the end of each unit. Student participants were also invited to individual or group interviews, depending on students’ preferences. Altogether 32 interviews were conducted; each individual interview lasted for about 40 minutes and each group interview lasted for one and a half hours. The interviews were conducted in the students’ mother tongue-Chinese and were translated into English after coding. The interviews focused on students’ responses to various assessments in their English classes. This paper focused only on their responses to dictation, whilst the other findings were reported elsewhere.

In analysing the data, each interview participant was assigned a code. For example, AC1-S1 refers to student one in class one at school A, whilst BC2-S3 refers to student three in class two at school B. Accordingly, AC1-T refers to the English teacher in class one at school A, whilst BC2-T refers to the English teacher in class two at school B. The transcripts of all the participants were coded on the original transcripts in Chinese. Drawing on the recommendations of Merriam (2009), the data analysis adopted an iterative approach, and it went simultaneously with data collection and the writing-up of report (Creswell, 2007). After initial codes were generated from the transcripts in one class, they were tried out with transcripts from other classes. Codes were reduced and merged to develop a new list of codes. Previous coded transcripts were checked accordingly. The codes were then categorized into categories and themes. The relevant quotations were translated from Chinese to English after coding.
Results

In two schools, students participated in different ways in dictation. I describe below how peer-assessed dictation was conducted and how students responded to it in the two schools.

Peer assessment in school A: Teacher-designed with peer feedback

In School A, dictation was conducted at the end of each unit and lasted for 45 minutes. Dictation assessed the usage of words, phrases and sentences. In term one, AC1-T provided English meanings of words for students to write down words, and asked students to translate sentences from Chinese to English. In term two, the dictation turned into a blank filling exercise (Appendix 1). Students needed to fill in the blanks with the suitable forms of words in suitable tenses and voices, with the Chinese translation of sentences provided. AC1-T chose to provide English explanations, as it urged students to understand the words rather than memorizing Chinese translations. She switched to the blank filling exercise later, as this method assessed students’ abilities to use new words rather than merely recognizing and spelling them. I also noted that the format of blank filling was similar to how vocabulary was assessed in exams. After dictation, students checked their desk-mates’ work and wrote feedback; they also wrote reflection on their own work.

As most students reported they never experienced peer assessment before, AC1-T explained benefits of peer feedback and how to write feedback to students; she also demonstrated what good feedback looked like from students’ own work. AC1-T strongly believed the benefits of peer assessment and articulated the benefits in three aspects: checking peers’ work provided a chance for re-memorization and re-learning; peer feedback was more accurate, approachable and easily accessible; the easy comparison of their peer’s performance and their own performance motivated them to learn.

Affective impact

When asked about what they thought of the peer assessment, students mentioned the affective impact. Peer feedback was considered emotionally supportive. AC1-S3 commented that peers were more considerate and caring than teachers, as the feedback showed an understanding of the difficulties she had, which was not appreciated by the teacher. AC1-S2 reported that peer feedback helped with emotional communication and they wrote supportive words for each other.

Students also addressed the relationship between peer assessment and the efforts they would make: they felt more motivated to study in order to present a good work in front of peers. Below is an excerpt:

Peer assessment inspires me. I have to memorize harder and better next time. I do not want my peer to write so many again. (AC1-S7)
AC1-S7 stressed that emotional inspiration was of vital importance, which made her determined to do better in the next dictation. According to students, working harder to outperform their peers came from their intention to establish a good “image” in peers’ eyes and to avoid embarrassment. An interpretation made here is that in the context of competitive examinations, the motivation triggered by peer assessment may come from the intention to outperform others.

**Peer assessment and learning**

Three aspects emerged when students responded to whether peer assessment helped with learning. First, students articulated the opportunities to learn from peers’ strengths and weaknesses through checking peers’ work. AC1-S4 was impressed by desk-mate’s capabilities in answering difficult questions; therefore, he asked his desk-mate for reviewing strategies. Both AC1-S3 and AC1-S7 reported that they noticed peers’ mistakes and tried to avoid them in the future, although some other students pointed out that it was hard to learn from trivial mistakes.

The second aspect lay in the chances to reflect on peers’ and their own work. AC1-S3, drawing on what the teacher has taught in class and how her desk-mate performed, concluded that her desk-mate did not pay sufficient attention in class. She also reflected on her own vocabulary memorization strategies:

I used to memorize words by reading English words and Chinese meanings interchangeably; now I begin to think the word meanings lively in my mind, like a picture, as suggested by AC1-T, it is easier to do so with Nouns and Verbs; but much harder for Adjectives. (AC1-S3)

AC1-S2 commented that the dictation was different from previous ones she had experienced, as students became assessors, rather than the teacher as the sole assessor. The involvement offered more chances for reflection. She elaborated that she had always examined beyond the superficial phenomenon (i.e. poor performance) and identified the reasons for poor performance, for example, laziness and poor attitudes, or lack of efforts, or incorrect understanding.

The last aspect fell on whether comments provided by peers helped with learning. Students who were in favour of peer feedback provided examples of effective comments they received. AC1-S3 received a suggestion that memorization of new words should start with reading a sentence containing the word, instead of directly checking meanings. She found this enhanced the understanding through getting access to the context. AC1-S4 responded with another suggestion:

My desk-mate asked me to read out words while writing them down, so I have a deeper impression of the spellings; for example, whether [ei] spells
as an “A” or “E”. I got much less wrong this time so I decide to keep doing it. I hated reading while writing before; but now I found it helpful. (AC1-S4)

In addition to suggestions on specific difficulties, peers also proposed cooperative learning activities, such as finding out key phrases in the texts together and checking each other before dictation. However, they admitted that cooperative learning was time-consuming and difficult to stick to under the heavy school workload. AC1-S7 noted she once worked with her desk-mate and circled out what they considered important. They reviewed these notes; it turned out that most of the words and phrases occurred in dictation. However, this action stopped after one or two trials.

Unsurprisingly, students complained about peer feedback. The most prominent ones included feedback was template-like and feedback was not insightful. AC1-S5 illustrated in the quotation below typical comments he observed:

There is not much to write. They are: “you were not careful”; “you did not have a solid foundation”; “you did not listen attentively in class”; “a slip of the pen”. It’s boring, if I have to write those for two years. (AC1-S5)

The quotation above was from an interview which took place a couple of weeks after peer assessment has been implemented. This view remained similar when I interviewed students again after eight months. Both AC1-S5 and AC1-S8 reported that they regarded writing feedback as a required task to complete. AC1-S8 elaborated that he thought suggestions, such as “paying more attention to details” and “developing the abilities to grasp key points”, were too vague to implement. AC1-S7 pointed out that students’ opinions were not as sharp as teachers’. She illustrated that students told her she could not spell because she did not memorize, which contradicted her efforts in memorization; she believed that the problem lay in the lack of strategies in memorization and understanding, which could not be seen by peers.

Another constraint was the time-consuming nature of dictation. AC1-S4 and AC1-S9 described writing feedback as “a waste of time”. Both preferred spending time learning new content rather than writing feedback.

These responses demonstrate the multi-faceted nature of students’ perceptions towards peer-assessed dictation. Peer-assessed dictation exerted affective impact and was related to student learning. The reported benefits show that peer-assessed dictation was easily accessible, enabled students to notice strengths and weaknesses, encouraged reflection and generated helpful feedback. For students who perceived benefits in dictation, their active involvement in checking and reflection seemed to be an important contributing factor. They seemed to engage in reflection and cooperative work with peers. They seemed to take more responsibilities over assessment when they became assessors. Complaints such as “template-like feedback” and “lack of insights” were probably related to the nature of assessment tasks. For dictation focusing
on the surface feature of language use, it is comprehensible that not too much insightful feedback could be provided.

Peer assessment in school B: student-designed dictation

School B conducted dictation on a weekly basis. Students took turns in pair to organize dictation for the rest of the students. There was no fixed requirement on how to conduct dictation, as long as they used words, phrases, or sentences learned in the current unit. The observation shows that usually dictation items included “blanks filling according to the initial letter”, “blanks filling according to the Chinese meanings”, “selecting appropriate phrases” and “sentences translation”, etc. (See Appendix 2 for a sample dictation). The pair then marked peers’ dictation and checked their corrections after students handed them back. They were not required to write feedback, although I observed one or two students writing a few words for peers. The teacher involvement came both before dictation through checking the questions designed and afterwards through checking if all students completed tasks. Students commented that peer assessment was part of the routine in English classes.

Both English teachers BC1-T and BC2-T considered peer assessment to be an effective way of getting students involved. They felt that it released teachers’ burden and empowered students by asking them to take responsibility. Students had more chances to review and learn vocabulary, as they must have a good understanding of the vocabulary meanings and memorize spellings clearly before they could check others’ work. Regarding the format of dictation, BC2-T believed that using vocabulary exercises was beneficial for both assessors and assessed. To complete the dictation, students needed to understand the words rather than merely memorize the spellings. Designing dictation also required assessors to have a deep understanding of words. They would check the dictionary and surf the internet, all contributing to the understanding of words. BC2-T believed students could gradually become autonomous learned by providing them with opportunities to assess.

Peer assessment and learning

Without addressing affective impact, students in school B mainly articulated the relationship between peer assessment and learning. After observing the peer-assessed dictation organized by BC2-S1 and BC2-S2, I interviewed them for their perceptions. BC2-S1 commented that the ones who benefited the most were those organising dictation but each pair only had one chance to organize dictation in a semester. BC2-S2 elaborated that:

If I only took dictation, I merely spent time answering questions and found out if I know the words or not. But when we organized, in addition to reviewing all words as everyone did, we spent hours studying usage of the word, looking up dictionary and checking the grammar book.
BC1-S1 also emphasized that she benefited most through organizing dictation as she knew clearly where each language point came from and had deep impression of the words she selected. When designing dictation, she read through surrounding text and thought about which words to choose and why.

These responses indicate that students were actively engaged in designing dictation. When asked to elaborate on how they designed dictation, BC2-S5 explained that he and his partner split the task into two parts, with each being responsible for one section. For example, one worked on vocabulary and another one on sentences. They then checked each other’s questions and made relevant revisions. After this, they handed the questions to the teacher for a check. BC2-S5 exemplified how he chose words for dictation:

I prefer to choose phrases that are easily used in the wrong way. Last time I chose two phrases, “take a stroll” and “break out”, as the two show different paces of moving. I also tried to make up sentences using the recent news. It is like a practice for me. (BC2-S5)

BC2-S6 noted that quiz questions such as “filling the blanks according to the initial letter” required him to create sentences that provided sufficient context to enable classmates to think of the word, and at mean time each should allow no more than one correct answers.

Another benefit lay in the chances for noticing the common mistakes through checking the work of the whole class, which made students more careful in their own learning. Although in school B teachers did not require students to write feedback, I noticed from reading students’ work that BC2-S9 wrote encouraging comments and detailed usages of words for her peers. When asked to elaborate, BC2-S9 commented that she hoped her classmates took dictation as a chance to learn, rather than a task to complete. Therefore, she gave encouragement if someone did a poor job and supplemented with word usages to help them to learn.

However, as commented by most students, the process of purely doing the dictation designed by other students was not different from answering dictation designed by teachers, both triggering insufficient chances for learning. The learning opportunities were restricted, as students always did the review at the last minute rather than regularly (BC2-S4, BC2-S6). Regarding other constraints, BC2-S7 pointed out that they felt nervous of doing dictation, which was test-like and they felt depressed if they got a poor grade. BC2-S3 regarded it time-consuming, which occupied BC2-T’s teaching time.

Students articulated mainly two benefits from peer-assessed dictation: noticing peers’ mistakes, and chances to understand and learn vocabulary. The process of designing and delivering dictation was regarded as beneficial. Students particularly emphasized the benefits as dictation designers, as they needed to study and digest the words before they could design proper dictation. The learning potential comes probably from their active engagement in learning.
Hence, they perceived dictation to be less helpful when only participating in dictation.

Discussion

The findings revealed that in both schools, dictation was not used in the way that dictation is meant literally, i.e. writing down what is being read. Dictation in this study assessed students’ understanding of words and their abilities to use words. When conducting dictation, teachers in two schools deployed different strategies to get students involved. In school A, students provided feedback to peers and in school B, students acted as assessors. To answer my research question, students in two schools recognized positive impacts in terms of emotional support and opportunities to learn, as well as the potential restrictions. The opportunities to learn include learning from peers’ strengths and weaknesses (both schools), chances for reflection (school A), receiving insightful feedback (school A) and in-depth learning of vocabulary through organizing dictation (school B). Although this study was conducted with a small number of students, it demonstrated potential benefits of peer assessment through collecting data in natural classroom settings.

In this study, two types of peer assessment in dictation were identified: students assessed each other and provided feedback; students designed and delivered assessment to other students. The first type was frequently discussed in a wide range of peer assessment research focusing on the peer feedback (e.g. Mok, 2011). The second type, peer-designed assessment, was relatively less addressed in the existing literature, although it is suggested by Black et al. (2003) as being helpful. Regarding the first type of peer assessment, students who considered peer feedback to be helpful felt that peers offered easily accessible support and useful advice (Cowie, 2009), in the form of feedback on potential areas for improvement and recommendations on learning strategies. Students’ involvement in assessing others’ work triggered self-reflection, and enabled students to notice peers’ strengths and weaknesses (Carless, 2011). This study also shows that feedback offered emotional support, and made dictation less threatening. Hence, in addition to activating learning opportunities through a socially-constructed process, peer assessment offered motivational support. It supports that the functions of peer assessment involve multiple aspects, including cognitive, social and affective purposes and consequences (Cowie, 2005).

As regards to peer-designed dictation, the benefits did not lie in information from feedback, but in the process of constructing dictation and checking through others’ work. Students studied the word meanings and word uses in more detail, hence developing an in-depth understanding of word uses. Checking the whole class’s work also enabled them to notice the potential mistakes and reinforced their memory of spellings. Student-designed dictation was not frequently mentioned in educational literature, probably because dictation was a low-cognitive activity and focused on surface learning. This
study shows that even in such an activity, the process of assessing others triggered students’ active engagement with assessment, and contributed to student learning in a constructive way. Therefore, this study suggests that students should be involved more actively in the design and delivery of assessment. Peer assessment can be used not only in dictation, but also to assess other skills in different aspects of learning.

Students also articulated the constraints of peer-assessed dictation, which included lack of insights in peer feedback (school A), template-like feedback (school A), lack of chances for learning when participating in assessment (school B) and dictation being time-consuming (both schools). The first two constraints were likely to be relevant to the nature of assessment tasks. The feedback generated from dictation could be limited. For alternative assessments to be productive, they should include tasks that require high-order thinking and represent meaningful instruction activities (Marshall & Drummond, 2006). The third constraint further supported that students should be more actively engaged in the assessment in order to learn; hence, they felt dictation less helpful when they only answered the dictation questions. Despite the constraints articulated, the findings intended to encourage rather than discourage teachers to implement peer assessment in their classes. This study shows that peer assessment can trigger learning opportunities, which can be enhanced through adopting meaningful tasks and involving students actively in the assessment process. An insight drawn from this study is that assessment tasks, student engagement and learning are three interlocked concepts in classrooms. For assessment to induce productive learning, the assessment tasks and student active involvement are two important components.

Conclusion

This qualitative study inquired students’ perceptions of assessment through an example of peer-assessed dictation in the Chinese context. Two examples presented in this article show that students perceived more benefits from assessment whenever they were actively engaged. Their active engagement with assessment enabled them to notice good and poor performances, promoted reflection, enhanced further learning by providing feedback and suggestions, and urged students to study vocabulary use in greater depth. The constraints articulated by students further indicate that the learning potential can be enhanced by providing more meaningful activities. This study demonstrates how an assessment technique used frequently in the Asian context can become more productive. It shows that assessment tasks, student engagement with assessment and student learning are three interlocked concepts. For assessment to promote student learning, meaningful tasks are needed and students should be engaged more actively. Although this study focused on dictation in the Chinese context, it has implications for a larger context. It is likely that different assessment techniques are used in different
context, and this study encourages teachers to involve students more actively in the assessment.

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### Note on Contributor

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Appendix 1: Dictation in School A
Sample in AC1
1. It is by no means clear ___________ to end the strike.(do)
   总统能采取什么措施来结束这场罢工根本不为人所知。
2. Film has a much shorter history, especially ___________ such art forms as music
   and painting.(compare)
   电影的历史短得多，尤其是它与诸如音乐、绘画等艺术形式相比较时。
3. ___________ math for the whole afternoon and the numbers swam before my
   eyes.(work)
   整个下午我都在做数学题，众多数字在我眼前晃来晃去。
4. If she doesn’t want to go, nothing you can say _________.(persuade)
   如果她不想去，你说什么都说服不了她。
5. If we ___________ adequate preparations, the conference wouldn’t have been so
   successful.(make)
   如果我们没有做好充分的准备，会议是不可能那么成功的。
6. A number of buildings have arisen ___________ a year ago but ruins.(there)
   在一年前曾经只是一片废墟的地方建筑物已拔地而起。
7. The manager was concerned to hear that two of his trusted workers
   _________.(leave)
   听说他信任的员工中有两名要离开，经理很是忧虑。
8. The manager _____________ from Paris where he had met some European
   business partners.(arrive)
   据说经理已经从巴黎返回了，他在巴黎会见了一些欧洲的生意伙伴。
9. A lot of language learning, ________ is happening in the first year of life, so
   parents should talk much to their children during that period.(discovered)
   正如被发现的那样，大量的语言学习是在人生的第一年发生的，所以父母
   应当在那个时期和孩子多说话。
10. Not until he retired from teaching three years ago ________ having a holiday
    abroad.(consider)
    直到三前年从教学上退休后他才考虑到国外度假。
Appendix 2: Dictation in School B
Sample dictation from BC2

Words:
1 After a one-hundred race, Johnson’s breath came in short ________
2 Henry Adams went to the American ________ to seek help, but no response was given.
3 Volunteer is a person who does ________ work. (用新学的)
4 Fire suddenly broke out. People ran for the exits, ________ out in terror.
5 Is the painting a ________ Picasso? I don’t want to get a fake.
6 The lost child was found ________ the streets alone.
7 The movie opens with a ________ in a New York apartment.
8 He is very sad ________ to hear of your father’s death.
9 The city had been captured (攻占). But there was a secret underground ________ to help citizens get foods and clothing.
10 Nowadays many children have their own ________ at a bank so they can be in charge of their money.
11 “Linverpool（利物浦——足球队）are bound to win.”
   “Do you want a ________? I don’t think they will.”

Phrases:
Be reluctant to do; go ahead; take a chance; get accustomed to ; on the contrary; line up;
1 Lucy thought Johnson had taken a very bad vacation. ________, Johnson enjoyed every minute.
2 My eyes slowly ________ the dark after I turned off the lamp.
3 “May I start now?”
   “Yes, ________.”
4 As Johnson isn’t confident of his looks, he ________ photographed.
5 We ________ on the weather and planned to have the party outside.

Translation
1、一只从上海走到杭州的部队在一天内走过了90公里的路程。
2、现在最困扰Johnson的是怎样才能得到Lucy的原谅
Towards an Effective Intercultural Training for English Majors at King Saud University

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Abstract

In language learning and teaching circles, intercultural competence has been gaining ground and is increasingly seen as inseparable from linguistic competence. This paper calls for developing intercultural communicative competence among Saudi students majoring in English with specific reference to cognition, affect, and behavior. This is done through an investigation of the cultural contents of the current syllabi taught to EFL BA level students at one of Saudi Arabia's leading universities. This investigation underscores a need to integrate a number of specific intercultural teaching/learning activities into the syllabus.

Introduction

The communicative approach adopted in most ESL/EFL contexts worldwide, considers target language-based communicative competence to be essential in order for foreign language learners to participate fully in the target language culture. Consequently, the target language culture and its inhabitants are viewed as crucial elements to learning success. Language learners are not only expected to acquire accurate forms of the target language, but also to learn how to use these forms in given social situations to convey appropriate, coherent and strategically-effective meanings to the native speaker and non-native speaker as well. Thus, learning a foreign language becomes a kind of enculturation, where one acquires new cultural frames of reference and a new world view, reflecting those of the target-language culture and its speakers (Alptekin, 2002).

As various communicative features underlying the sociolinguistic, conversational and strategic competences in the target-language culture are different from those in the language learners’ own culture, it is suggested that instructors develop target-language communicative competence in language learners by integrating language and culture. This is found to be both pedagogically and educationally sensible, as it is said to offer a multidimensional perspective or experience for the learners (Porto, 1996). Integrating language and culture is also seen as the fundamental purpose of language learning for it gives learners experience of another language and a different way of coping with reality.