Designing and Implementing Contextualized Performance Assessment Tasks

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Outline

- Why we contextualize learning
  - Learning Cycle
  - Brain structure
  - Memory model
  - Language learning process
- How we contextualize learning
  - From input to output
  - Relevant to learners
    - Performance tasks in the context of camp
    - Performance tasks in the real-world context
SESSION OUTCOMES

I can better understand the role of context in language development from input to output.

I can apply discussed strategies to design contextualized performance assessment tasks to facilitate language learning and transferal.

I can design contextualized tasks to facilitate learners’ performance in different communication modes.
David Kolb’s Learning Cycle

Concrete Experience
(doing / having an experience)

Active Experimentation
(planning / trying out what you have learned)

Reflective Observation
(reviewing / reflecting on the experience)

Abstract Conceptualisation
(concluding / learning from the experience)
Functions of the Cerebral Cortex

Sense → Integrate → Act

Integrative  Motor  Sensory

THE ART OF CHANGING THE BRAIN
ENRICHING THE PRACTICE OF TEACHING
BY EXPLORING THE BIOLOGY OF LEARNING
JAMES E. ZULL
Sense

- Signals from outside world picked up by sense organs and sent to special regions of brain for each of the senses
- Just little individual pulses of electrical energy, carrying no meaning in raw form

Integrate

- Individual signals get added up and recognized in the sum of all these signals
- Small bits merge into bigger patterns that are meaningful
- Meanings are integrated in new ways that become ideas, thoughts, and plans

Act

- Execution of those plans and ideas by the body
The Experiential Learning Cycle and Regions of the Cerebral Cortex (Zull, 2002)
Memory Model

- Touch store
- Hearing store
- Vision store

Attention
1. Bottom-up
2. Top-down

Encoding

(1) Mediation
(2) Mnemonics

Retrieval

Encoding

Sensory memory

Short-term memory

Long-term memory

Input

Output

Rehearsal: A control process
Functional Areas of the Cerebral Cortex

Motor areas
- Primary motor cortex
- Premotor cortex
- Frontal eye field
- Broca’s area (outlined by dashes)

Prefrontal cortex

Sensory areas and related association areas
- Primary somatosensory cortex
- Somatosensory association cortex
- Gustatory cortex (in insula on roof of lateral sulcus)
- Wernicke’s area (outlined by dashes)

Primary visual cortex
- Visual association area
- Auditory association area
- Primary auditory cortex

(a) Lateral view, left cerebral hemisphere

Colors:
- Red: Primary motor cortex
- Pink: Motor association cortex
- Blue: Primary sensory cortex
- Brown: Multimodal association cortex
- Cyan: Sensory association cortex
Why Contextualize Language Learning

- Language use happens in real-world situations
- All the linguistic and social knowledge required for effective human-to-human interactions: knowing how, when, and why to say what to whom

The Input Hypothesis Model of L2 learning and production (adapted from Krashen, 1982, pp. 16 and 32; and Gregg, 1984)
Why Contextualize Language Learning

The mind is organized around experiences. We remember our experiences and we index our remembered experiences so that we can find them later. Include as many as possible situations to simulate what will happen in real life later on.

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The Input Hypothesis Model of L2 learning and production (adapted from Krashen, 1982, pp. 16 and 32; and Gregg, 1984)
Why Contextualize Language Learning

We acquire language only when we understand messages; Comprehensible input is what learners process for meaning; Comprehensible input is slightly above the learners’ current level (i+1)

The Input Hypothesis Model of L2 learning and production (adapted from Krashen, 1982, pp. 16 and 32; and Gregg, 1984)
Contextualize Comprehensible Input to Reinforce Sensory and Attention

Activate
- linguistic prior knowledge
- extra-linguistic prior knowledge

Top Down Strategies

- Various and/or combined modalities
- Hearing: sound
- Vision: scripts, pictures (culturally rich authentic pictures)
- Body movement

Bottom-Up Strategies
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Performing Real-world Tasks

Contextualized Performance Assessment Tasks in Level 1
“Life as an Exchange Students”
Can-Do Statement for the Topic “Food & Drink”

Interpersonal:
• I can ask and talk about likes and dislikes in food and drink.

Interpretive:
• I can sometimes understand questions or statements on topics about food and drink.
• I can read and understand simple texts related to food and drink.

Presentational Speaking:
• I can present information about likes and dislikes in food and drink.
Comprehensible Input: Digital Storytelling about Taylor Swift and Wang Yuan
While waiting in line, students chat about the menu today and what they want to order.

Order food from the dining staff.

Chat about what they ordered and comment on the food.
你想吃什么

毛毛，干啥呢？

晚上一起吃个饭呀😊

好吧，帮我们点三份蒸饺
Eating Across Culture

Prepare future exchange students to China or U.S.
Performing Real-world Tasks

Contextualized Performance Assessment Tasks in Level 2 “Our Communities, Our Heroes”
Facilitating a Learner-centered classroom from Input to Output

Gradual Release of Responsibility

https://goo.gl/images/zAe1LJ
I do

Comprehensible Input

他姓Rowswell，他叫Mark Rowswel。

他的中文名字叫大山。

他是加拿大人。
他说中文。
We do
Guided + Collaborative

Offer variety of activities that can help learners use target language to work on meaningful tasks.

Scaffold instruction and guide learners work.

Engage learners in collaborative small group/pair activities.

Provide support and feedback to learners.
Fun

Challenge

Level & Age-appropriate
Integrated Performance Assessment

Real-world tasks
你选谁做三班班长(Class President)？

- Wei Yilen
- Peng Tian'le
- Mao Kai
- Rong Ke
- Lei Kai

请选我！

你叫什么名字？
你今年多大？
你有什么爱好？
你做什么做得很好？
你最喜欢上什么课？为什么？
你不喜欢上什么课？为什么？
你的性格？
You do

• Work independently
• Self-assess progress

Lunch Presentation

Flipgrid
Interactive Video
Chinese (Mandarin)

P

32

Linguafolio
Gradual Release of Responsibility

I do

We do (guided)

We do (collaborative)

You do

Role of the Teacher

Role of the Student

STARTALK

WOFFORD
Performing Real-world Tasks

Contextualized Learning in Level 3

“Our Communities, Our Heroes”
Why Real-world Performances?

• Way to expertise
• Prepare for the future
Design Real-world Tasks

**#1:** Decide on tasks that are meaningful, purposeful, interesting, and motivational for learners

**#2:** Arrange the tasks and contextualize them

**#3:** Engage learners in the tasks and provide feedback
Can-Do Statements for Cohort 3, Day 7

I can tell someone about my community’s heroes, and ask about others' heroes.
Meaningfulness of Can-Do’s

• Americans visiting China are often asked to describe the communities they are from

• Americans visiting China are often told about Chinese heroes, both current and historical

• Being able to introduce one’s own heroes provides linguistic repertoire to understand when Chinese introduce their heroes

• Being able to introduce one’s own heroes provides points for comparison when Chinese introduce their heroes: Are they heroes for the same reasons?
Comprehensible Input: I+1

Known material → 美國的英雄 ← Unknown material… that students have been trained over many years to assume is represented by the images on the screen, so S ask themselves, “what do these photos have in common?”

We all like to make guesses like this, right?
Introducing linguistic items with comprehensible input

Even if you don't speak Chinese, you have a good guess about what these characters mean.
Comprehensible input to scaffolded output

T/S modeled Q&A

S/S Q&A to practice

他是__还是__?

杰西·欧文斯
Recycle & reuse... in a new way

林肯是美国英雄

- 美国第16个总统

- 1809/2/12 (KY) -> IN (+IL) -> 1865/4/15 (DC)

- 他是美国英雄因为：一、他要一个美国，不要两个美国，二、他帮助了美国黑人。

All items either old knowledge or recently learned

Is first time all put together to give short biography of American hero
Use in Context

**#1:** Set-up context and assign roles → Check understanding of context and roles

**#2:** Engage in performances (T-S, S-T, S-S), paying attention to the five elements: location, time, roles, audiences, and script

**#3:** Engage learners in the tasks and provide feedback
Performing Real-world Task: Describing Our Heroes

• Ability to present to an audience

• T asks audience comprehension questions (admit real-life context for this is schoolroom)
Lesson-planning Trial-and-Error is Real Life, Too

Post-lesson notes to self

Video-vocab-video
Be Sure to:

• Focus on meaning instead of form
• Use tasks as the organizing principle instead of only as the final step
• Include tasks that are meaningful, interesting, relevant to learners, and to arrange tasks into a learning repertoire
• Think about how to present the tasks and engage learners
• Provide feedback effectively
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Selected References


