

# The design, implementation and evaluation of a short-term course for Japanese tour guides, as part of the 2006 Saruku Haku Expo' in Nagasaki.

Systemic Functional Linguistics, Genre, Tour Guiding, Nagasaki Saruku Haku

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## 要 約

本稿では、長崎さるく博 2006 の一環として行われた日本語ツアーガイド養成のための短期研修の計画と実施について評価を行う。この研修は応用的言語理論と文化人類学の見地に基づいて計画された。計画段階では分野分析を通じて訓練の場を再現することが重要で、養成の段階では学生の学習経験を最大化することを目的として、教室内の中心者・従属者関係を概念化するために行動主義的教育理論が用いられた。これらの技巧の有効性は一連の主観的・客観的手段で分析され、結論としてこのカリキュラムの実効性が示されると共に、今後の開発を待つ分野も明らかになる。

### 1) The aims of the investigation

This paper evaluates the design and implementation of a short-term course for Japanese tour guides, which was taught as part of the 2006 Saruku Haku Expo' in Nagasaki. The course was designed based on ideas drawn from systemic functional linguistic theory and cultural anthropology. The concept of emulating a Community of Practice through genre analysis was key at the design stage, whereas at the instructional stage, constructivist educational theory was used to conceptualize the core-periphery relationships in the classroom, with the goal of maximizing the students' learning experience. In summary, the efficacy of these techniques was analyzed using a range of subjective and objective measures and the conclusion highlights the strengths of the curriculum, whilst including several areas which will be developed upon in the future. The chief aims of this investigation were broken down into five basic concepts:

- a) To use Systemic Functional Linguistics, particularly the concept of generic structure/ Mode to analyse an expert/ professional tour guide's written plan for the whole walking tour.
- b) To use Systemic Functional Linguistics, particularly the concept of genre/ Mode to analyse an expert/ professional tour guide's spoken discourse during the walking tour.
- c) To use Systemic Functional Linguistics, particularly the concept of genre/ Mode to analyse an expert/ professional tour guide's written discourse in their field notes.
- d) Based on the analyses of (a), (b) and (c), to design a curriculum for a one week intensive intermediate level English language volunteer walking tour-guide program in Nagasaki, Japan. The course was to be taught in the first week of August.
- e) To evaluate the efficacy of Systemic Functional Linguistics, particularly the concept of genre/ Mode,

and how it was utilized for curriculum development in this short-term intensive intermediate level English language volunteer walking tour-guide course.

## II) Rationale and main conceptual themes

Until now, there has not been any systematic English language tour guiding program established in Nagasaki. For just under a decade, the *Nagasaki Foundation for the Promotion of Peace* has been running free Intermediate and Advanced English Conversation lessons for those volunteer guides who registered with them, and has issued a handbook (NFPP (2000)), but the course has been a general English conversation class with no emphasis on actual tour guiding. The general assumption was that anyone with a grasp of English could explain the contents of the Atomic Bomb museum to the non-Japanese tourist using choice phrases memorized from the manual. However, when one considers the underlying need for sensitivity when dealing with this particular subject, and the fact that 2005 was the 60th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombing when the world's media descended upon Nagasaki, the demand for competent experienced foreign language guides becomes apparent. However, so as not to antagonize Japan's allies in the West, the central government, who funds the Peace Memorial Hall where the Foundation is based stipulates that the guides should be volunteer citizens of Nagasaki, so that they can articulate the facts of the bombing in their own voices, separate from central government. Furthermore, from 2006, Nagasaki's local municipal government is launching a drive to increase tourism in Nagasaki through the Saruku Haku volunteer walking guide program. As the demand for experienced volunteer guides has escalated, the timing is right for the design of a structured intensive intermediate course which can introduce the skills needed to escort a group of 10 non-Japanese along a walking course safely. As such, in the summer of 2005 the author was invited to prepare a week-long intensive course under the auspices of the Nagasaki University of Foreign Studies/ College of Foreign Languages aimed at intermediate speakers of English, with the express aim of increasing awareness of tour guiding skills in Nagasaki.

Initially there was an investigation of the students' needs, followed by the design and implementation of a syllabus and finally an evaluation of its success. Some external framework is essential to prevent the instructor being blinded by his or her ethnocentric assumptions regarding discourse production when designing a curriculum (Holliday (2003, p. 169)). Although the author is an experienced tour guide in English and Japanese, one must be aware that there is more than one way of tour guiding. This being said, the traditional Japanese style of tour guiding is usually top-down, didactic, tour-guide centered, and the tourists are often discouraged from asking too many questions in case they embarrass the guide if he/ she cannot answer. As the majority of volunteer guides tend to be retirees with time on their hands, one must be exceptionally cautious in Japanese culture of being seen to criticize an elder. As an experienced tourist too, the author can attest to how frustrating many non-Japanese find this style of guiding. Furthermore the Japanese volunteer tour guides already practicing at the Peace Memorial Hall have learnt to tourguide by trial and error, and have never had a systematic program before. So one had to be careful not to patronize them by assuming that they had no experience whatsoever. By using an external frame, the instructor can present a second paradigm which students can emulate without feeling censured. The guides can then try both styles by themselves.

To this effect, the efficacy of Structural Functional Linguistics, in particular the concept of Mode/Genre was under analysis in terms of curriculum development. Before an educator can build a curriculum, it is essential to know what needs to be taught, and later have an external framework against which one can measure the effectiveness of the teaching method (Savage et al (2003,p.137)).

Although this course was aimed at intermediate speakers of English, due to the variation in ability and time constraints, other SFL tools such as Field and Tenor were not as relevant in the teaching of the course, nor in its assessment. This is not to say that they were ignored, more that the important issue was to emphasize the staging of the text, its schematic structure so that information (facts, names, dates) could be presented in an interesting and understandable order.

Secondary issues, such as the value of Genre in empowering students' learning by creating a Community of Practice (taking account of Lave and Wenger's Core/ Periphery theory (Lave and Wenger (1999)) were considered. Social-constructivism, namely the role of language in learning (the students' learning in the course as well as the learning of the people they are guiding around) was also highlighted.

There are a number of practical issues underlining the importance of this area of research.

1) The students are expecting to be able to tour guide in English to enter into an (expert) sphere of practice after completion of the course, and it is important that the instruction is as relevant and practical as possible.

2) The Field (content), Tenor (social functions) and Mode (textual integrity) of any text, perhaps particularly an expert tour-guide text, all fit together to form a unique text type (Feez (2003, p. 213) for this specific activity. So arguably the walking course itself has a unique Genre, as it is designed around a theme (such as Chinatown), contains specific social relationships (native-Japanese bilingual volunteer tour-guides and non-Japanese tourists) and is staged. Although the text/ discourse itself is staged due to the fact that the group walks from one exhibit to another, at each point/ stage in the walking course, the tour-guide gives a spoken explanation, which is a sub-Genre, with its own pattern of staging.

3) Other similar tour-guide courses focus on students memorizing scripts written by "experts", creating situations where the tour-guides are unable to interact with their listeners nor respond to their questions. The Genre is also usually inappropriate as the scripts are often (amateur) direct translation from Japanese (where staging and Modal features, as well as syntax, are different- for example, the Rheme typically precedes the Theme in Japanese). Using an Initiation-Response-Feedback style of staging, a student is able to place an exhibit in a historical context, interact with the listener, and then educate them (in a process analogous to Scaffolding). However IRF staging is practically unheard of in Japanese pedagogy, especially in tour guiding, so it needs to be taught explicitly. Due to the often unpredictable nature of the Response stage, the whole script has to be prepared using special notebooks, and lots of examples of expert Feedback

need to be shown. Feez (2003, p.223) calls this process 'building context'.

4) Existing descriptions of genre in the SFL tradition have been criticized in the past (Carter (2003,p.95) for "neglecting work in other traditions of description". By conducting this type of research it is possible to augment the "library" of known genre types, as well as encourage re-examination of archetypal genres to see change through time.

### III) The circumstances in which the project was conducted.

The course is jointly programmed by Nagasaki City Hall's Tourism section, Saruku Haku department, the Peace Promotion Section of the Nagasaki Foundation for the Promotion of Peace at the Peace Memorial Hall (Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum) and Nagasaki University of Foreign Studies/ College of Foreign Languages. The author was the sole instructor. The specified Curriculum can be found in Appendix A. There were three days of fieldwork, one in the Peace Zone around the Atomic Hypocenter, one at the Atomic Bomb Museum, and one outside walking tour in downtown Nagasaki city, looking at Nagasaki's chequered Christian and Chinese history. There were also two days of classroom based study activity. The contact time was from around two to three and a half hours each day. The students, numbering 30, were local citizens who are interested in becoming volunteer tour guides with an intermediate level of spoken English. There were 27 females, and 3 males, with the median age being 55 years old, with a span from 18 to 78 years old. They were mostly retirees, homemakers, or students. Although it was an "intermediate level" class, the students were not evaluated before they joined in. It was self-selecting - if they thought they could do it, then they applied and places were allocated on a first-come first-served basis. As a result, of a class of 30 people, perhaps only 5 were good enough to use modality (for example) with any accuracy. Also a few of the students were seniors hoping to brush up their rusty English.

#### **Formative assessment:**

Throughout the course students kept a diary, a tour-guide notebook and were encouraged to record themselves for self- and group- reflection on their learning outcomes (Feez (2003,p.218). Teacher-feedback and peer-feedback are highly integral features of the lesson plans.

#### **Summative assessment and qualification:**

At the end of the course all students will become accredited volunteer tour-guides, based on attendance. Although formative assessment, in the form of tape recordings and discussions of their tour guiding notebook (really a kind of process-portfolio) is used, their performance is irrelevant for the sake of the summative assessment. This is partly because one aim of the course is to promote interest in tour guiding, to encourage participation, and it was felt that failing students would not be productive. Instead, a series of similar courses are due to be scheduled over the next 18 months, and weaker students will be encouraged to develop their skills further at those times.

### IV) Methods used

#### a) Evidence Collected

a) An experienced/ professional guide's written walking course design. This was used to understand

firstly the overall structure of a course (See Aim A :To use Systemic Functional Linguistics, particularly the concept of generic structure/ Mode to analyse an expert/ professional tour guide's written plan for the whole walking tour.).

*b)* A recording of an experienced/ professional guide's spoken discourse

for partial transcription. See Appendix B. (This relates to Aim B: To use Systemic Functional Linguistics, particularly the concept of genre/ Mode to analyse an expert/ professional tour guide's spoken discourse during the walking tour.)

*c)* An expert/ professional tour-guide's written field notes. These helped the instructor understand the basis of the guides patter, as well as to enable the instructor to explain to the students how to build their own tour-guide notebook (process-portfolio). This relates to Aim B and C: To use Systemic Functional Linguistics, particularly the concept of genre/ Mode to analyse an expert/ professional tour guide's written discourse in their field notes.

*d)* Copies of students' walking course designs, written field notes and transcriptions of their spoken discourse. This will act as evidence to evaluate the success of the course. If the student are able to satisfactorily reproduce (spoken/ written) texts which emulate the "expert" guide's.

The instructor also kept a personal observation notebook to note his thoughts and reflections throughout the course. At the end of the course the Culture Center at Nagasaki University of Foreign Studies devised a Japanese survey. This survey offered a unique opportunity for the students to report back on their impression of the course anonymously in the native language. The staff at the Culture Center has kindly supplied an English summary of the 25 completed and returned forms. They were asked to comment on their performance, my performance and the quality of the course and instruction as part of the Culture Center's ongoing commitment to educational excellence. The results of this survey were announced at the university's faculty meeting on September 29th, 2005.

#### b) Analytical method

Due to the relatively small number of students allowed to participate, the analysis was qualitative.

*a)* A guide was interviewed to understand the rationale behind the staging of the whole course, and the staging of their spoken discourse at each point in the walked course.

*b)* Partial transcriptions of spoken discourses by the guide and the students were made.

*c)* The formative assessment regime was useful for the instructor to see objectively the degree to which the students understood, valued and achieved the tasks set them.

At the course design stage, Systemic Functional Linguistic discourse analysis was relied upon to dissect expert texts, noting especially the Social Purpose of the discourse, the long and short term goals, and critically, the staging of the texts. Close reading of transcribed expert guide material was additionally conducted as a group.

## **Evaluation regime**

All the students, providing that they attended 80% of the classes automatically received the tour-guide accreditation. In terms of evaluating the teaching of genre, it was successful in that the majority of the students demonstrated understanding of the staging of the discourse and was able to start structuring IRF sequences in their pattern. This could be evaluated by conducting a SFL discourse analysis of selected students' transcribed discourse and comparing/ contrasting them with the Expert's. This data was collected during the formative assessment activities.

### V) Findings

A) The meta-awareness of the Function of the discourse was helpful to the younger students. Particularly the Peace Museum, the Short Term Aim, to demonstrate the truth (often horrific) of the atomic bombing is often at odds with the Long Term Aim, which is to promote understanding for World Peace. Especially when escorting North-American tourists, the guides have to balance their personal anger or grief with the need to build a mutual understanding with their guests

B) The Mode. Before the students were shown the Expert Text (Appendix B) or experienced an authentic tour (Day Three), the students without exception reverted to type. They presented the information in a list according to what they remembered first, without regard to choosing the order of the data. They failed to ask questions nor to engage with the audience in other ways (for example, by pointing out details in an exhibit, or directing them to move somewhere).

C) After the paragraph sorting exercise, students began to consider the priority of the information they give to the tourists. More ambitious students started to consider Theme-Rheme issues too.

D) The Field. In the Nagasaki Peace Guidebook (2000) much emphasis is placed up on the facts, often using huge numbers, temperatures and dates. The students all realized the utility of avoiding big numbers and facts to achieve understanding. They gained satisfaction finding and using metaphors. For example instead of saying the blast reached around 4,000 degrees Celsius, the fact that this is hotter than the surface of the sun is more appreciable to the layperson. Or instead of talking about "200 meters" or "200 yards", they started to talk of "10 minute walks". In their guide notebooks, they also started to consider imperial and metric ways of expressing the same weights and measures.

E) The Tenor. The students started to concentrate on using techniques to establish rapport. The dialogue developed away from a monologue.

F) The Tenor. All students attempted IRF sequences with varying degrees of success. Some students actually began to over-employ the method. Anxious students, especially those with limited listening ability were cautious at first of using open questions ("What do you think this is?", "How old do you think this is?") so instead were encouraged to use closed questions ("Was this cathedral built before the war or after?", "What proportion of citizens in Nagasaki were Chinese 400 years ago? A) 1/10 B)1/100 or C) 1/7?"). According to the observation notes, many students enjoyed the game dimension of multiple choice questions brought to their pattern. This also strengthened their rapport with their "tourists". Other students started to feel confident enough to invite questions from the floor )"Do you have any questions?").

G) After the Tenor issues were drawn to their attention, students stopped using 3rd person imperatives to the tourists ("Come here now!") and started to use first person imperatives ("Let's go..."), the inclusive use of first person plural "Next we are going to.." and especially Text F) or Modal forms ("Would you mind following me please.") to give commands.

H) The students became aware of how Health and Safety issues are dealt with in English during the course of a tour. To quote from one student's guiding notebook:

"thunder is coming. Please keep away from those trees. Let's go to a shop.

Please go single file. Make a single file. The traffic here is bad. Keep to side of the wall.

Please wait and let them pass. It is very hot today everyone so please drink plenty of water. Are you feeling faint? Why not rest up for a while." (sic)

#### VI) Evaluation of the project

Objectively speaking the students demonstrated a development in their skills, particularly the ability to confidently demonstrate in front of an audience. Upon inspection of the video record of the experienced curriculum it becomes apparent that at the start of the course, without exception all of the students were visibly anxious, and lacked confidence in their English; but by Day 6 all of them were happy to stand up and present an exhibit in English.

Subjectively speaking, the course was praised by the officers in charge at the Peace Memorial Hall, and the City Tourism Office when they came to conduct the award ceremony on the final day. It was commented that the students were confident, looked professional, and gave positive feedback on the course. The students themselves enjoyed the course, the experienced curriculum, as shown by the positive feedback to the anonymous survey.

However, there are areas which ought to be developed. Regrettably, the Field and Tenor areas of the register were barely touched on during the course of the project, due to time and language ability constraints. Also too much emphasis was placed on field work over class based instruction. Besides the stifling August heat, time was not used as efficiently as it could have been as students have to walk from site to site. Perhaps the same exercises could be achieved using photographs of the exhibits in future. Nevertheless, it is of crucial importance that the students walk the route at least once with an expert, to learn the route and to consider health and safety issues, such as road crossing points, barrier-free issues, location of public toilets and so on. A guiding manual, with the main ideas drawn from SFL written down bilingually may have been a good supplement to the Power Point presentation on Day One. This would make the staging of the genre explicit from the first day of the course. This final suggestion has been put to the Foundation for the Promotion of Peace, who are hoping to revise these aspects of the Nagasaki Peace Guidebook in the near future.

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**Appendix A Specified Curriculum for the course**

2005年8月1日(月)から6日(土) (Monday August 1st to Saturday 6th 2005)

6日間連続・12時間完結講座 (6 days intensive, 2hours/day)

長崎を英語でガイドしてみよう! (Let's tour guide Nagasaki in English!)

〈英会話中級〉 (Intermediate level English)

**授業のねらい Purpose of the Course**

The purpose of this course is to enable intermediate speakers of English to escort a party of around 10 people around famous sites in Nagasaki.

**授業内容と方法 Study Materials**

We will build a tour guiding notebook that will act as a resource for future reference. Students will follow several walking course routes with expert guides, and will then be expected to guide each other around in smaller groups giving mini-presentations to each other.

Students who attend more than three quarters of the course will be eligible for a voluntary tour guiding license issued by the Nagasaki Foundation for the Promotion of Peace and Nagasaki City Hall Department of Tourism (Saruku Haku).

**授業計画 Lesson Schedule**Day One

Classroom based lecture. Orientation using Power Point. Handouts, Course Materials.

Day Two

Classroom based study. How to structure a tour, how to structure a presentation within a tour. . Paragraph Sorting Exercise.

Day Three

Field trip. Saruku Haku Course "Nagasaki, the Rome of Asia". Nagasaki's Christian and Chinese Heritage.

Day Four

Field Trip. Saruku Haku Course "A visit to the Hill with the Bells of Angelus". The Peace Zone Course.

Day Five

Field Trip. Nagasaki Foundation for the Promotion of Peace. The Atomic Bomb Hypocenter, Peace Statue, Atomic Bomb Museum.

Day Six

Classroom based Review. Health and Safety. Metaphors.

Closing ceremony. Volunteer tour guide certificates are awarded by officials from Nagasaki City Tourist Bureau (Saruku Haku) and Nagasaki Foundation for the Promotion of Peace.

**Appendix B An example of the "expert" text used for needs analysis using a Structural Functional Linguistic approach, followed by a summary of the key issues for the project raised. Textual features which were not picked up on in the course of the project have been omitted.**

### Expert Text

Ladies and gentlemen, would you gather around me please. Is everyone here? OK. Now, we have just come from the atomic hypocenter where the bomb was dropped at 11:02 am on the 9th August 1945. We walked through the Peace Park and have now arrived at the Peace Statue. This statue was erected in 1955 by a famous sculptor, Mr. Seibou Kitamura, from Shimabara city in Nagasaki Prefecture.

<Question from a tourist: Was he an atomic bomb victim?> No, he was not, he passed away about 18 years ago aged 108 years old.

Let's look at the statue. It shows a man, 10 meters high with both arms outstretched. What do you think this position symbolizes?

<Several exchanges between the tourists>

Some good ideas there. His right hand points to the sky, and is said to symbolize the threat of an atomic bomb from the sky. His left arm stretches out horizontally, symbolizing the extent of the devastation. His eyelids are half-closed in ardent prayer, as he remembers the souls of the dead.

Every year on August the 9th the Mayor of Nagasaki and the Prime Minister of Japan hold a memorial service in front of the memorial, and they deliver a Declaration of Peace to the world's Media.

Next shall we move onto the site of the former Nagasaki Prison over in this direction. We can only see the foundations from here, but when we get closer I will discuss who was imprisoned here, what nationalities they were and why they were imprisoned.

Structural Functional Linguistic Analysis (Summary of main points)

#### **Name of Genre:**

Tour guiding

#### **Social Purpose of the Genre**

To inform and educate a group of tourists about the sites along a walking course. To entertain them.

#### **Staging of the text**

<b>Staging of the text (Schematic structure)</b>	<b>Text</b>
Gather the tourists around the guide, by recapping the previous site/ exhibit.	Ladies and gentlemen, would you gather around me please. Is everyone here? OK. Now, we have just come from the atomic hypocenter where the bomb was dropped at 11:02 am on the 9th August 1945. We walked through the Peace Park and have now arrived at the Peace Statue.
Supply information	This statue was erected in 1955 by a famous sculptor, Mr. Seibou Kitamura, from Shimabara city in Nagasaki Prefecture

Answer a question	<Question from a tourist: Was he an atomic bomb victim?> No, he was not, he passed away about 18 years ago aged 108 years old.
Puts a question to the tourists to excite their curiosity. Listen to their responses and give an acceptable reply.	Let's look at the statue. It shows a man, 10 meters high with both arms outstretched. What do you think this position symbolizes? <Several exchanges between the tourists> Some good ideas there. His right hand points to the sky, and is said to symbolize the threat of an atomic bomb from the sky. His left arm stretches out horizontally, symbolizing the extent of the devastation. His eyelids are half-closed in ardent prayer, as he remembers the souls of the dead.
Supply information	Every year on August the 9th the Mayor of Nagasaki and the Prime Minister of Japan hold a memorial service in front of the memorial, and they deliver a Declaration of Peace to the world's Media.
Introduce the next site/ exhibit and guide the tourists in that direction	Next shall we move onto the site of the former Nagasaki Prison over in this direction. We can only see the foundations from here, but when we get closer I will discuss who was imprisoned here, what nationalities they were and why they were imprisoned.

Register analysis:

The Field:

Technical vocabulary, hypocenter. Dates, places and times.

The Tenor:

1st person imperatives ("shall we move..") and modal commands ("would you gather around me please..")  
Rapport building though IRF ("What do you think this.. ") and answering tourist questions. Inclusive use of first person plural, possibly to maintain group solidarity ("we can only see.."). He also uses questions to move the tourists around ("Is everyone here? ")

The Mode:

The use of Theme-Rheme to reinforce the message. He repeats information he has given to build up a picture.  
Thematic Progression. rather than just a list of facts.