

# Using Movies and their Novelizations in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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## BACKGROUND

This paper reports an innovative approach to using movies in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) as a follow-on to Howell (2014), which outlined a way of using Japanese comic books. The pedagogic philosophy is the same, targeting a learning environment that provides a sense of social safety and opportunities for social play, and an environment that is to some degree bilingual, providing explanatory support using the L1 of the learners (Japanese).

Using movie dialogues is a common way of teaching spoken English in Japan, employed by both Japanese and non-Japanese teachers of English. There exists an Association for Movie English Education (映画英語教育学会), and the Screenplay Corporation based in Nagoya publishes a wide-ranging series of the English screenplays of Hollywood films alongside Japanese translations of the script, with explanatory notes written in Japanese by Japanese college professors. Guides offering examples of classroom practice are also published by the same company (e.g. Kishimoto & Namazue, 2012). Japanese textbook publishers such as Nan'un-do and Kinsei-do have published English textbooks based on classic films such as *Roman Holiday* (Watanabe, Iwasaki, Ito, & Huynh, 2009; Imura, Matsuda, Yamamoto, Caldwell & Healy, 2010). In the English-speaking TEFL literature, using movie dialogues has been a staple topic in presentations and papers written by English teachers based in tertiary institutions. Some Japan-based native speaker teachers of English prefer using movies instead of textbooks as the instructional materials for their classes. For example, veteran former-Hiroshima University professor Peter Goldsbury uses films in his classes in a variety of ways:

One [way] is to use films of published books, so that students can look at the differences between the book and the film adaptation. I have done this successfully for many years, with works as diverse as *Moby Dick* and *Harry Potter*. (P. Goldsbury, personal communication, August 2, 2014)

All this is not new. The claim to innovation in the present article is twofold, involving both the choice of instructional materials, and also a novel combination of classroom activities that can be used with large class sizes. Firstly, few if any reports have been made of the use of movie novelizations. Novelizations are novels written as an adaptation of the film script, in contrast to the traditional chronological order of novels being adapted into movies. The second claim for innovation lies with an original method of combining classroom activities in a way that has the potential to create an enjoyable lesson, even with large class sizes. I have called this method the 'h3Bt' method, which is an abbreviation of 'head-Three Block-tail'. The method will be explained in the main part of the article after a brief introduction of the materials used in the classes.

## MATERIALS

A common teaching strategy in TEFL is to deploy a wide variety of enjoyable activities in each class. Popular feature films lend themselves well to such a strategy because of the range of input channels in which movie narratives are available to the general public. The greater the number of channels there is available, the better it is for the purposes of TEFL. The essential channel is the English dialogue on DVD or Blu-ray discs. Since the pedagogic approach of h3Bt values L1 support, switching to a dubbed Japanese audio track will also ideally be possible. Japanese subtitles will ideally be supplemented by the possibility of switching to English subtitles, but these are not always available. The novelization should also be available in a Japanese translation. Sometimes a simplified English reader may also be commercially available, released as part of such series as Penguin Readers or Scholastic Readers. In addition, as previously mentioned, the screenplay may be published in parallel text with a Japanese translation. The availability of channels for three of the films I have used — *Rain Man*, *Spider-Man* and *Fatal Attraction* — is schematically summarized in Figure 1. *Rain Man* has the most channels available, and *Fatal Attraction* the least.

**Figure 1. Variety of Input Channels for *Rain Man*, *Spider-Man*, *Fatal Attraction***

	Movie: English audio	Movie: Japanese audio	Movie: English subtitles	Movie: Japanese subtitles	Screenplay book	English novelization	Japanese translation	Simplified reader
<i>Rain Man</i>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Spider Man</i>	○	○	○	○	×	○	○	○
<i>Fatal Attraction</i>	○	×	○	○	×	○	○	×

Tie-in products may boost the popularity of movies and generate additional profits for the producers of the film. Amongst such tie-in products are novelizations written to order by professional authors, and based on the screenplay of the movie. In an article for the online journal *Hazlitt*, journalist Will Sloan has interviewed well-known authors of this type of novel, for example Alan Dean Foster and Greg Cox. Cox explains that “the challenge is, you’re trying to turn a 110-page script into a 300-page novel, so you’ve got to flesh things out, especially since the script is just dialogue and action” (cited in Sloan 2014).

An example of ‘fleshing out’ can be seen if we look at some dialogue from Barry Levinson’s film *Rain Man* and then compare it with the corresponding text from the novelization by Leonore Fleischer. First of all, the film dialogue between the Babbit brothers is quoted below:

*Who took this picture?*

*D-A-D.*

*And you lived with us?*

*Yeah. One, oh, nine, six, one, Beechcrest Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.*

*When, uh...? When did...? When did you leave?*

*January twenty-first, nineteen sixty-five.*

This can be compared with the corresponding dialogue from the novelization:

*‘Daddy took the picture. By himself,’ Raymond said proudly.*

*Charlie couldn’t take his eyes off the photo; he was amazed almost beyond words. He and Raymond.*

*Charlie and Raymond. Charlie and Rain Man.*

*'And you...lived with us? Then?'*

*'You lived with us then,' said Raymond. Was he only parroting Charlie, or did he know that he was the elder brother, with a rightful seniority? Sinking down on the edge of the bathtub, Charlie continued to stare at the photograph, trying to pull all this together in his head.*

*'When...when did you leave?' he asked at last in a low voice.*

*'It was Thursday,' Raymond said promptly.*

*Thursday? Charlie could only stare.*

*'It was snowing outside. I had cream of wheat for breakfast. You spat yours out. So Maria gave you bananas and milk. And she stayed with you when Daddy took me to my home. January twenty-first. Nineteen sixty-five. On a Thursday.'* (Fleischer 1989: 135-136)

In the absence of the visual clues provided by the actor Tom Cruise, Fleischer uses prose to describe Charlie's emotional state - 'proudly', 'amazed almost beyond words' — and free indirect thought to convey the character's train of reflection — 'did he know that he was the elder brother?' It is noticeable that the dialogue in the novel is in some cases more extensive than that in the film e.g.

*January twenty-first, nineteen sixty-five.*

compared to:

*It was snowing outside. I had cream of wheat for breakfast. You spat yours out. So Maria gave you bananas and milk. And she stayed with you when Daddy took me to my home. January twenty-first. Nineteen sixty-five. On a Thursday.* (Fleischer 1989: 136)

Will Sloan relates how the novelist Alan Dean Foster was able to describe in detail the dreams of the 'hypersleeping' crew of the *Nostromo* in *Alien*, something completely absent from the film. But in *Alien 3*, he was warned not to be overly creative and "to follow the script exactly the way it's written." An example of sticking more closely to the dialogue in the film can be seen in Peter David's novelization of Sam Raimi's first Spider-Man film. The film dialogue between Mary Jane and Peter Parker (Spider-Man) is quoted first:

*The fact is...I'm in love with somebody else.*

*You are?*

*At least I think I am. It's not the right time to talk about it.*

*No. Go on. Would I know his name, this guy?*

*You'll think I'm a little girl with a crush.*

*Trust me.*

The corresponding text from the novelization is as follows:

*"The fact is," she continued, still presenting her back, "I'm in love with somebody else."*

*Peter thought his head was going to explode. He cleared his throat. "You are?"*

*"At least...I think I am." Then she did turn back and look at him. "This isn't the time to talk about this."*

*"No, go on," he said urgently. Fighting to remain nonchalant, he took a step closer to her, closing the distance between them. "Would I know his name? This guy?"*

*"You'll think I'm a stupid little girl with a crush."*

*With as much fervency as he could muster, he said, "Trust me." (David 2002: 278)*

In contrast to the novelization of *Rain Man*, with the exception of a few words, the dialogue in this extract is exactly the same as that in the original film. The *Rain Man* novelization uses half as much text again (152 words versus 102 words) as the *Spider-Man* novelization in covering six lines of movie dialogue. This illustrates textually the differences in the degree of freedom which Sloan reports writers are allowed in novelizing film scripts. Teachers may have different preferences over which style of novelization suits their purposes better. If novelty and additional vocabulary are desired, the more unconstrained style of novelization may be better. But if, for pedagogic purposes, the objective of the teacher is to use the novelization to recycle the exact words of the movie, a closer novelization in the style of *Spider-Man* will be more suitable. In all cases though, a novelization will not have the major changes to plot and characterization that are common in the adaptation of novels to film.

## **METHOD AND SYLLABUS**

Alongside the innovation in choice of material — using novelizations together with movie dialogue — the courses of EFL lessons described in this article employ an original configuration of classroom activities. This method is called the head-Three Block-tail or, in abbreviation, the h3Bt method. The core of the method consists of three main blocks of activities. Appended to these blocks are a head activity to start the lesson and a tail activity to bring the lesson to a close. The terms ‘head’ and ‘tail’ are used because, as will be explained in detail later, the head activity is planned to ‘catch the tail’ of the previous lesson in the course. The first and foundational block of each lesson is, however, the movie block. The movie block comprises three activities: answering comprehension questions after viewing a scene; writing to dictation a 5-to-8 line dialogue from the screenplay; and memorizing the dialogue in pairs. A subsequent novelization block consists of five activities: rapid silent reading of the Japanese translation of the extract from the novelization; matching ten English and Japanese expressions; reading aloud in chorus part of the English extract; pair dictation of the remaining part of the English extract; sequencing the order of appearance of the English expressions as the teacher reads the extract. The final block is conversation in which students form rotating circles of pairs and ask and answer personal questions deriving from the language or the themes of the movie. The method is summarized below and discussed in more detail in the remainder of the article:

### ***Head activity***

#### ***Movie Block***

*Viewing Q&A*

*Dictation*

*Memorizing*

#### ***Novelization Block***

*Reading Japanese*

*Vocabulary Matching*

*Reading aloud in chorus*

*Pair Dictation*

*Vocabulary Sequencing*

#### ***Conversation Block***

*Q&A in rotating pairs*

### *Tail activity*

Another rationale for using movies in TEFL is the potential for unity and continuity of content provided by suitable film narratives. By no means are all films suitable. In general, since the whole film cannot be viewed in class, a simple narrative is better than a complex one if the students are to gradually understand the story. Furthermore, as the h3Bt method depends on pair work, movies which can be shown as a succession of short dialogues are better than those with either long monologues or little speech at all. For a course of lessons, it is convenient to divide the film into eleven scenes for eleven lessons, and then add at least three review classes in which no new material is presented. As the method is fundamentally humanistic in its philosophy, grading is maximally lenient, depending mostly on weekly attendance. Three vocabulary quizzes are included in the syllabus, but these are quizzes in the British rather than the American sense, in that they are not intended to be tests measuring achievement, but rather spelling games offering a fun and stimulating way to review vocabulary. Attendance and quiz scores are marked off by the students themselves using an A4-sized attendance sheet picked up at the start of each class and handed back at the end. The grading is therefore cumulative and maximally transparent.

Part of the humanistic approach of the method is to enable participants to get to know people they didn't know before, or did not know so well. For this reason, and also as a method of control in large classes, seating arrangements are not free, but rather are organized by the teacher. Numbers are placed on desks in the first lesson, students are asked to leave and re-enter the classroom in order to be given random seat numbers. Pairs are then changed at the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> lesson. This adds a social stimulus to the course, as well as reducing the discomfort of pairs who, for whatever reason, feel uncomfortable in each other's company. A major function, therefore, of the first and second review lessons is to re-assign seating. The sequence of activities in the review classes is not the same as that in the main lessons. Each review class starts with a 'disappearing text' exercise. For this activity the teacher writes on the board an extract from a text (either the novelization or simplified reader) used in previous classes. First, students simply read aloud in chorus after the teacher. The teacher next asks one individual student to repeat the reading aloud of the extract. Then the teacher erases parts of words from the text on the board and asks the students to read aloud in chorus again (some of the words targeted for partial deletion should be those that will appear later in the vocabulary quiz). The final stage in the disappearing text activity is calling on one or two students to read the text aloud. After this activity, a new assignment of seats is made for the following four or so classes.

Following seat re-assignment, a few minutes of the film seen in previous classes may be viewed passively with no pedagogical tasks. Next, one dialogue selected for review from previous classes should be presented in the same way as in the main class. Again, some of the vocabulary expressions in the dialogue should be items in the vocabulary quiz. After the dialogue activity, the third main review activity is rotating timed conversations, using a selection of the questions practiced in previous classes. Before the vocabulary quiz, a few more minutes of passive re-viewing of the film may be allowed, during which the quiz sheets can be distributed. The quiz itself is simply ten items of vocabulary presented in ten sentences, with half the target word erased and the number of missing letters indicated in brackets (Appendix 1). The teacher collects the quiz sheets, writes the correct spellings on the board, and re-distributes the sheets randomly for peer scoring. After scoring, the students leave their seats and return the sheets to each other, check the accuracy of the scoring and then enter their score on their attendance sheet. The teacher ends the review lesson by

saying he or she will dismiss the class after at least three class participants volunteer to ask him or her any question in English. To summarize, and before going on to describe in detail the activities used in the main h3Bt lessons, the activities used in the review lessons are listed below:

- disappearing text (reading aloud)*
- seat re-assignment*
- passive viewing of the film*
- movie dialogue (dictation and memorization)*
- conversation (Q&A in rotating pairs)*
- vocabulary quiz*
- quiz scoring*
- Q&A with teacher*

## HEADS AND TAILS

As mentioned in the previous section, the expressions ‘head’ and ‘tail’ are chosen as metaphorical terms to designate the activities which start and end each class. They are separate from the three main blocks of the lesson and are intended to provide connections between each lesson and its predecessor and its successor. Specifically, the tail or concluding activity of each lesson is not a summary of the lesson’s content, but is a preview of the content of the next lesson, and the head or introductory activity of each lesson catches the tail by providing feedback on the previous lesson’s tail. Thus, in a sense, the tail precedes the head and the very first lesson in the course has no head, only a tail. It could be said that head and tail activities are just a variation of the traditional teaching procedure of setting homework and checking the homework at the beginning of the next class. The difference is that the tail activity is done in class time and it is not assessed by the teacher.

If the available materials permit, the tail consists of two activities. The first uses an A4-size extract from a simplified reader with content anticipating the movie dialogue in the next class, and the second activity (printed on the reverse side of the A4 sheet) asks the students to write a rough back-translation into English of a Japanese translation of the next class’s movie dialogue. An example of tail activities from the fifth lesson of the *Rain Man* course is shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. Example of Tail Activities**

**Preparation 5(a)**

Fill in the blanks with words from the box.

all   in   down   only   back   up   with   take   out   on   both   where

At the airport Charlie telephoned his office. The news was not good. (.....) the bank and the customer for the Lamborghini cars were still very unhappy. Charlie needed to get (.....) to Los Angeles fast.

Charlie picked (.....) his bag. ‘OK, Raymond,’ he said. ‘We’ve got to move quickly. Our plane leaves (.....) six minutes. Look, there it is out there.’

Charlie pointed (.....) through the window at the plane. Raymond suddenly looked very anxious. ‘Crash,’ he muttered. ‘That plane crashed in August. August 16, 1987. One hundred and fifty-six people were - They were all - .’

‘That was a different plane, Ray,’ Charlie said. ‘This is a beautiful plane. This one is safe.’

‘Crash,’ Raymond muttered. ‘Crash and burn.’

Charlie did not know what to do. They had (.....) four minutes to catch the plane. ‘We have to fly home, Ray,’ he said. ‘It’s important. What did you think we were doing here? This is an airport. This is (.....) they keep the planes! Come on!’

Charlie put his hand (.....) Raymond’s arm. Raymond put his hand to his mouth and bit it. Then he screamed and began to shake (.....) over.

For a second, Charlie just looked at his brother (.....) an astonished expression. Then he saw that he had to calm Raymond (.....). ‘It’s OK, Raymond,’ he said quickly. ‘It’s OK. We’ll drive to Los Angeles. It will (.....) three days, but we’ll drive. No planes.’

### Preparation 5(b)

Make a rough translation into English.

Charlie:

- じゃあ。。。アメリカン航空にしよう。

Raymond:

- ああ、他の航空会社。

Charlie:

- コンチネンタル航空。コンチネンタルに乗ろう。さあ。

Raymond:

- ああ。コンチネンタルは1987年11月15日に墜落。1713便。死傷者28人。

Charlie:

- 真剣に言ってるんだぞ、レイ。

Raymond:

- ああ、深刻だ。

As can be seen, the first activity is simply a matter of replacing missing words from a selection of options written in a box at the top of the page. One option is to choose small function words as the target, in particular prepositions and particles, as these can be difficult for learners of English, and some incidental focus on them in this way may be useful. The second (back-translation) activity would be difficult if an accurate and idiomatic translation were required, but it is to be stressed that this is only a ‘quick-and-dirty’ translation, intended to familiarize students with the dialogue they will encounter in the next class and to generate rough written output. Students are instructed to proceed at their own pace and told that they are free to leave the classroom once they have completed the activities, written their name at the top of the sheets, and handed them in to the teacher together with their attendance sheet. The teacher collects all the A4 sheets and attaches a blank ‘post-it’ type sticky message to each sheet in preparation for the next class’s head activity. In the head activity of the following class, the teacher distributes the tail sheets randomly to the students at the beginning of the class, and reads aloud the prose extract so that the students can mark their classmates’ answers as right or wrong (○ or × in traditional Japanese style). The students also write a free

tweet-style message on the sticky message (e.g. *It's hot today!, I'm so sleepy this afternoon!* etc.) and, on a signal from the teacher, leave their seats to return the tail activities to the student whose name is on the sheet.

In addition to serving as a link between lessons, head and tail activities offer a regular, familiar, and smooth way to begin and end each lesson. Students notice that the lesson is about to begin as the teacher walks around the class distributing the head activity sheets, have a last chance for chatting, and then must pay attention to the teacher in order to mark their classmate's sheet. The tail activities allow the lesson to end with all the students being active, and, as they finish at different times, the exiting of students from the class is gradual and quiet. On the other hand, problems with heads and tails in the lesson include students forgetting to write their names on the tail sheets, making it difficult to return them in the head activity, and also the fact that some students are inevitably absent from each lesson, which sometimes leads to small numbers of students not being able to participate in the head activity if the number of absentees on that particular day is less than that of the previous lesson.

## MOVIE

The first and most important block of activities uses movie dialogues as a representation of native English speech. Of course, movie dialogue belongs to the text-type of language that is written to be spoken. It is not naturally occurring conversation, which may often be heavily phatic and topically dynamic, but rather is part of an artificially constructed work of art. It has distinct artistic functions, including moving the narrative forward and contributing to the characterization of the protagonists. As Sarah Kozloff (2000) points out:

What we've often overlooked is that 'viewers' are also 'listeners', in fact they are 'eavesdroppers', listening in on conversations that – in reality – are designed to communicate certain information to the audience (p.14).

Nevertheless, as commercial Hollywood movies tend to be based on the artistic principles of realism — the audience temporarily suspends disbelief and believes that the characters are in some way real — movie dialogue in contemporary settings must approximate to some degree to natural speech. There is, moreover, some empirical research suggesting that movie dialogue can present a reasonably accurate pragmatic model of 'real' conversation, more so pragmalinguistically than sociopragmatically (Rose, 2001; Tatsuki & Kite, 2006). For pedagogic purposes, the more natural the dialogue, the better, although heavy accents and intensive use of either geographic or social dialects are not desirable. The following 6-line excerpt from a dialogue between Mary Jane and Peter Parker in *Spider-Man* displays a number of linguistic features typical of naturally occurring conversation (highlighted in bold print):

*What are you doing around here?*

***Begging*** for a job. *How about you?*

***Oh***, *I'm headed to an audition.*

***An audition?*** *So you're acting now.*

***Yeah***. *I work steady. In fact, I **just** got off a job.*

***That's great.***

In the third line, Mary Jane uses the interjection *oh* as the utterance launcher of her turn. In line 5 she uses one of the most frequent and versatile ‘small’ words in spoken English – *just*. It is the 31<sup>st</sup> most frequently occurring word in CANCODE, the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (O’Keefe, McCarthy & Carter 2007). She begins her reply with the response token *yeah*, which is much more common than *yes* in informal conversation, ranking as the 8<sup>th</sup> most frequently occurring word in CANCODE. In the second line, Peter’s answer shows the common ellipsis of subject and operator (*Begging vs. I am begging*). In line 4 he echoes the last word (*audition*) of the previous turn, and in line 6 he uses the kind of evaluative lexis (*great*) that research has shown to be so common in naturally occurring conversations (Thornbury and Slade 2006). In fact, Peter Parker as played by Toby Maguire displays several other features of spoken English found to be typical by linguists e.g.

contractions (*So how’d it go? vs. So how did it go?*)

discourse markers (*I can’t tell you everything. I mean, there’s so much to tell*)

right dislocation of noun phrase (*Would I know his name, this guy? vs. Would I know this guy’s name?*)

Having said this, the choice of which lines of movie dialogue to use in the h3Bt method is based primarily on practical rather than linguistic considerations. Because the lesson is constructed around pair-work, it is desirable to select dyadic speech rather than monologues or scenes in which three or four characters are speaking. And because the students are asked to memorize the dialogue, it is better to have a limited (5-8) number of turns with only one or two sentences in each turn. Of course, the more dramatic and impactful the scene, the better. For purely practical purposes, it is ideal if the scene is close to the beginning of the individual chapter on the DVD or Blu-ray disc, so that the scene can be replayed easily just by the touch of a button.

The pedagogical sequence of the movie block is first for the students to read five multiple-choice comprehension questions about the scene in which the dialogue extract is embedded (Appendix 2). After viewing the scene with English audio and Japanese subtitles, they ask the questions to their partner, and then the answers are checked by the teacher calling on five students to ask him or her the same five questions. In plenary mode, having students ask and the teacher answer the questions avoids the embarrassment of wrong answers for the students. The next procedure is for the students to read aloud the selected lines of dialogue in chorus after the teacher, after which they write them down to the dictation of the teacher. Spelling is checked by distributing a fair version and by re-viewing with English subtitles if they are available. The students are then asked to repeatedly read the script aloud in pairs until they barely need it to perform. The scene is then watched again and the students are asked to do a final rehearsal before one pair of students is randomly selected for performance of the scene while the rest of the class listens. The pair can be randomly chosen by asking a student to choose a number between, say, one and thirty, and then the teacher counts off heads until the number is reached. Optionally, if time and language options on the disc permit, the scene can be reviewed with Japanese audio and English subtitles, before moving on to the novelization block of the lesson.

## NOVELIZATION

One of the risks to offering a movie-based course of EFL lessons is that students will spend too much classroom time just passively watching the movie. Making use of novelizations helps reduce that risk. If the teacher chooses an extract from the novelization that corresponds to the scene from the movie used in the

lesson, this is a means of covering the same narrative content, using different semiotic channels whilst potentially recycling some of the same vocabulary. Vocabulary is a major focus of the novelization block of the h3Bt method. The block consists of five activities. The first is rapid silent reading of a Japanese translation of the extract selected. This is to assist Japanese learners in the difficult task of understanding the novel in English. The second activity is matching ten English words or expressions with the corresponding words in the Japanese translation. This matching is conducted through two sub-activities. A words and expressions sheet is given to each student with the English expressions numbered randomly 1-to-10, and the Japanese words and expressions lettered randomly a-to-j. The student's task is to match the numbers and the letters. An example from the fourth lesson of the *Spider-Man* course is shown below.

*Match the numbers and the letters:*

1. snapped back	(a) 驚いて
2. as if	(b) あの
3. wrong somehow	(c) 求人欄
4. in astonishment	(d) 彼女のしゃべり方
5. the way she said it	(e) まるで
6. that's great	(f) シカ
7. froze	(g) どこかおかしい
8. deer	(h) そいつはすごい!
9. uh	(i) 凍りついた
10. classifieds	(j) 鋭く言い返した

The second sub-activity is to confirm the answers by means of 'mingling-matching-writing'. In 'mingling-matching-writing' the teacher randomly distributes to students 10 slips of paper with English expressions written on them, and 10 slips of paper with the corresponding Japanese expressions written on them. The twenty students are asked to stand up from their seats, mingle with the other slip holders until they find their match, and then write both the English and Japanese expressions on the board. The teacher checks and highlights the expressions, reading them aloud and asking for choral repetition. The third activity in the novelization block is simply a listen-and-repeat reading of the first part of the extract from the novelization. This is then followed by pair student dictation. In this fourth activity, one member of the pair is designated *Student A* while his or her partner is designated *Student B*. Student A and Student B are given different sheets (optionally color-coded if circumstances allow) with text on one side while the reverse side is mostly blank. Student B should write down the English text on the reverse side of his or her sheet to student A's dictation, and then, when that is completed Student A should write to Student B's dictation. Upon completion, students should look at each other's sheets to check spellings. The fifth and final activity in the novelization block requires the teacher to read aloud again the entire extract from the novel and the students to number the sequence in which they hear the ten expressions which have been previously highlighted. This can be a somewhat difficult task on a single reading, so I have found it useful to provide two of the answers myself, thus asking students to number the correct order for only eight expressions.

It should be acknowledged that this vocabulary focus is doubly *ad hoc*. Firstly, the items are not selected on bases such as frequency, ease of learning, or future needs. In the above example, they just happen to be words used in the novelization of *Spider-Man*. Thus, although *answer back* may be found in a reference work such as *Collins Cobuild Phrasal Verbs Dictionary* (Hands, Walter & Woodford 2012), the more metaphorical expression *snapped back* is not to be found in any list of common phrasal verbs. Secondly, which specific ten expressions are chosen from each extract is constrained by the need to find a Japanese expression in the translation which specifically corresponds to the original English. As translation is not a word-for-word operation, this is not always possible for every English expression in the extract from the novelization. Nevertheless, despite the *ad hoc* and potentially idiosyncratic nature of the vocabulary items, the use of authentic materials avoids the drawbacks of some lexically planned approaches. One deficit of traditional language teaching has been an over-emphasis on individual words and their literal meanings. Corpus linguists have shown that words are very often used as part of multi-word units, and that, for example, a single word such as *nowhere* is less commonly used in spoken language than certain multi-word formulations such as *at the same time* and *you know what I mean* (O’Keefe, McCarthy, & Carter 2007: 47). In the h3Bt courses for *Rain Man*, *Spider-Man* and *Fatal Attraction*, less than half the expressions highlighted from the novelizations are single-word items. It is also an error to think of metaphorical meanings as belonging only to literary genres. On the contrary, cognitive linguists have highlighted their importance not just in fictional writing, but also in everyday concepts (Lakoff & Johnson 2003).

## CONVERSATION

The aim of the conversation block is to give students chances to speak more freely in the lesson by interacting with their classmates in conversation. This is achieved by means of rotating timed conversations. Students get up from their desks and stand face-to-face with their partners in two concentric circles around the four walls of the classroom. If there is an odd number of students, the teacher can substitute by playing the role of student. Or alternatively he or she can ask one pair of students to move around together and function as one. Students are asked to converse in English for two minutes after which, while the outer circle remains in place, the inner circle rotates either clockwise or counter-clockwise so that each student has a new partner for the next two minutes. The conversations are timed by the teacher using a kitchen timer set to two minutes. After about four or five rotations students may seem to get tired or bored and they should then be asked to sit down again. If students wish to talk completely freely on topics of their own choosing, they are allowed to do so. Since free talking may be hard to do off the cuff, and some participants may lack the fluency to do so, students are given a teacher-prepared Q&A sheet of five questions with three possible answers to each question. They can then simply read off the questions on the sheet and choose one of the answers provided by the teacher, hopefully adding some follow-up information by themselves. Of course, students can and do often revert to their mother tongue, but the teacher should monitor this and discourage 100% reversion. In writing the questions, the teacher can follow the advice of humanistic practitioners such as Gertrude Moskowitz (1978) and “look for ways to make the materials genuinely relevant to the students through making truly personal connections between their lives, feelings, beliefs, and desires and the subject matter at hand” (p.197).

The questions should therefore be about personal issues that arise from the movie scene under focus in the lesson. That may include traditional questions about likes and dislikes (music, films etc.) or about experiences, recent or distant (e.g. *How has your day been?*; *What is your best memory of childhood?*), about romance (*What type of boy / girl is your type?*; *Have you ever told a boyfriend / girlfriend that you wanted to break up?*), or – in moderation – about personal stances on controversial issues (e.g. *Do you think the law is too soft on youth crime?*; *What do you think is the best newspaper in Japan?*). However, the humanistic approach in general, and Moskowitz’s famous ‘caring and sharing’ book in particular, can be relentlessly positive to the point of being vulnerable to caricature; for example in activities such as *I’m Attractive, You’re Attractive*, whose purpose is to “focus on seeing the beauty of others” (Moskowitz 1978: 94). My own approach is to try to generate a sense of playfulness by also occasionally using negative situations and dark, even macabre, humor (*What would you do if your partner was unfaithful?*; *If you were going to kill me, how would you do it?*). Hypotheticals (*What would you do if.....?*) both stimulate the imagination of students and encourage them to use the common contraction *I’d*.

For purposes of familiarization, the teacher should briskly read aloud through the questions and optional answers before the students begin their rotating pairwork. As a recap, and as an incentive to adopting a positive attitude to the task, he or she should call on five students to answer the five questions when the rotations have finished and the students have returned to their seats.

### PARTICIPANT REACTIONS

The h3Bt method has two major benefits for me as teacher and thus a major participant in Japanese university English classes. It offers a feasible way to conduct a varied and enjoyable lesson for what can be large groups of over sixty students. It also facilitates the introduction of some Japanese into lessons without me being required to speak fluent Japanese myself. In fact, it purposely eschews large amounts of teacher talk, and would not require near-native levels of English fluency from Japanese teachers of English.

The method has been applied to three films to date in classes with Japanese (and a small number of Chinese) students at Hiroshima University: *Rain Man*, *Spider-Man*, and *Fatal Attraction*. In my estimation, *Spider-Man* has been the most successful of the three. This may be surprising if one considers *Spider-Man* to be an action movie, heavy on special effects and short on dialogue. But in fact, the first film in Sam Raimi’s trilogy is a charming, well-cast and well-acted teenage love story, which resonates well with audiences who are still in their teens or early twenties.

At the time of writing, questionnaire answers are unfortunately only available from 31 students who attended the *Fatal Attraction* course.

**Figure 3. Responses to a Post-Course Questionnaire on *Fatal Attraction* (number of students)**

	<i>The course was fun</i>	<i>The course was useful</i>
Strongly agree	26	18
Agree	5	12
Neutral		1
Disagree		
Strongly disagree		

The answers reveal a strong feeling that the course was enjoyable. There was also a feeling that the course was useful, but this was not as strong as the feeling of enjoyment. *Fatal Attraction* is somewhat notorious for its scenes of sex and violence, and in the lessons I showed scenes of violence, but skipped the two sex scenes. Indeed one student commented:

- *I wanted to watch all scene, not partial.*

Another alluded to the sexual content:

- *最初は不倫ドラマが教材ときいて少し先行きが不安になりましたが結果的に肩に力を入れることなく楽しくそしてしっかり英語を学べたのでとてもいい授業だったと思います (At first I was a little uneasy about what would happen with materials based on a story about adultery, but it turned out not to be hard going and we were able to learn English well and in an enjoyable way. So it was a very good lesson.)*

Comments tended to stress pleasure and enjoyment rather than usefulness e.g.:

- *It was a pleasure for me to come to this lesson every week.*

Other comments expressed positive feelings about being able to interact with a number of different students:

- *授業で色々な人と話したり映画を見たりできたので楽しかったです (It was fun because I could watch a movie and talk to various people in the lesson.)*
- *知り合いが増えた...楽しかった (I got to know more people...it was fun.)*

Another positive comment included a reference to timed conversations:

- *“Fatal Attraction” はおもしろい教材でありました。楽しく英語を学べる教材でもあるので非常に良かったと思う。次の年もこの教材を使ってほしいと思う。あと Timed Conversations が良かった (Fatal Attraction was interesting teaching material. It was very good because it was teaching material from which we could learn English in a fun way. I think you should use it again next year. And timed conversations were also good.)*

## CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This article has reported an innovative approach to using movies in TEFL. The innovation lies in the hitherto unreported use of movie novelizations (and their Japanese translations) and in the new combination of pedagogic activities used in the lessons. Although no claim is being made that it is any more or less ‘effective’ than others, direct and indirect feedback from students at Hiroshima University suggests that the approach provided an enjoyable classroom experience.

At the time of writing, the author has prepared a h3Bt syllabus based on the celebrated film, *West Side Story* and the novelization of the original Broadway musical (Shulman 1961). This will enable song lyrics to be used in the tail activities. Other Hollywood musical films that have spawned novelizations, and are thus adaptable to the h3Bt method, include *Grease* (De Christoforo 1978) and *Fame* (Fleischer 1980). Additional novelizations for which materials have been prepared, but not yet used are *Armageddon* (Bolin 1998) and *Ocean’s 11* (Gram 2001). I also hope to remain open to feedback from students and colleagues, and to make gradual and incremental improvements to the method.

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## APPENDIX 1

An example of a review quiz on *Fatal Attraction*. The number in brackets is the number of missing letters.

1. My father died of a heart att..... (3).
2. I'm sorry. I apolog..... (3).
3. Sorry, I was just fooling aro..... (3).
4. Sorry about tomorrow's meeting, but we've got a cris..... (2).
5. It's funny being a lawy..... (2).
6. You must have to be discre..... (2).
7. It made him feel uncomfor..... (5).
8. You sound like you've got a hango..... (3).
9. She reached the spot where he lay unconsci..... (3).
10. Dan cleared his thro..... (2).

## APPENDIX 2

An example of viewing comprehension questions from the final scene of *Spider-Man*.

1. What does Harry vow?
  - (a) *He promises one day he will marry M. J.*
  - (b) *He vows one day he will kill Peter.*
  - (c) *He swears one day he will get revenge on Spider-Man.*
2. What is the inscription on Uncle Ben's gravestone?
  - (a) *'R.I.P.' (Rest in Peace)*
  - (b) *'Gone but not forgotten'*
  - (c) *'Beloved Husband and Uncle'*
3. What does Peter say about Uncle Ben?
  - (a) *'It's been so hard without him.'*
  - (b) *'He was a great man.'*
  - (c) *'I loved him so much.'*

4. What was Uncle Ben's advice to Peter?

(a) *'Always be kind to M.J.'*

(b) *'Money isn't everything.'*

(c) *'With great power comes great responsibility.'*

5. Why does M.J. cry?

(a) *She is so happy.*

(b) *She misses Uncle Ben.*

(c) *Peter can't give her love.*

## 要 約

### 英語教育における映画と小説化された作品の使用

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本稿では、映画とその小説化された作品を使用した新しい指導法を提言する。小説化された作品に関する多様なアプローチや、15週間に渡る授業のシラバスの典型例を示し、さらに、各授業における手法を概説する。本稿はここで用いられた手法を、Head-3Block-Tail ('h3Bt') method とした。最後に、授業に対する調査協力者の反応について触れ、考察を行う。