Web page activity 2.1

Affective aspects of motivation in language learning: ‘Language Orientation Questionnaire’
by Zoltan Dörnyei:


Web page activity 2.2

The complexities involved in the experience of language learning in L2 situations is vividly described in Eva Hoffman’s autobiography, *Lost in Translation* (1989), in which she charts the conflicting emotions and motivations surrounding her learning of English in Canada, after her family’s emigration from Poland when she was 14. While negatively disposed to Canada – she criticises the landscape, the houses, her classmates – at the same time she recognises the importance of learning to speak accentless English, as ‘correct speech confers status’ (Schumann 1999: 35).

Web page activity 2.3

Access the link below for further information on the concept of ‘flow’:

Web page activity 2.4

Look at these two extracts. **Extract 1** is the original article (from *The Guardian newspaper online*), **Extract 2** is the version of the original simplified for inclusion in the coursebook *New English File: Upper-Intermediate – Student’s Book* (Oxenden and Latham-Koenig 2008). Compare the two with regard to the simplification strategies used in creating the coursebook extract. Speculate on the rationale for the simplifications and reflect on the possible impact of them for language acquisition.

**Extract 1**

Fantasy or fact – Japan’s children play safe

Anxious parents flock to a risk-free indoor playground amid fears of rising crime

*Justin McCurry in Ebina, The Guardian, Saturday 2 September 2006*

Like parents everywhere, when Ryosuke and Taemi Suzuki take their young daughter out to the local park they want her to have fun, make friends and, perhaps, try something new. But when they bring her to Fantasy Kids Resort they are practically guaranteed something extra: peace of mind.

‘We’ve been here before and we’ll definitely come again,’ says Mr Suzuki, 25, as his 18-month-old daughter, Manaha, heads towards the bouncy castle. ‘This place has everything under one roof, but most importantly, it puts absolute priority on safety.’

Mr and Mrs Suzuki are not alone in wanting to remove just about every element of risk from what is supposed to be the most carefree part of a child’s day.

Fantasy Resort is one of at least a dozen playgrounds around Japan that leave nothing to chance, pitching their services to the growing number of parents who constantly fret about the threats posed to their tiny offspring by disease, accidents and other people.

The playground is a world away from ordinary playgrounds, with their concrete surfaces, rusty swings and sandpits that often conceal unwelcome deposits by dogs. First-time visitors must provide proof of identification before they enter the indoor, air-conditioned premises, located above a large supermarket in Ebina, west of Tokyo.

Shoes must be removed at the door – they carry germs – and the wheels of baby-buggies are sprayed with an antibacterial solution before being parked, in neat rows, just inside the entrance.

Inside, parents who cannot keep track of their child’s every move can rest assured that they are being watched over by about 20 staff dressed in bright yellow overalls and more than a dozen security cameras mounted on the ceiling.
Although pets are banned from the playground, its large sandpit contains sterilised sand which is sifted daily to remove any potentially harmful objects. Most of the bigger toys are inflatable to reduce the risk of injury.

The playground’s obsession with safety has grabbed the attention of parents who believe the days when they could let their children play outside unattended have gone for good.

A recent government survey found that more than 70% of parents said they were worried about their children’s safety in the wake of a spate of crimes. Parental paranoia has been seized on by firms offering everything from safety buzzers that can be attached to school satchels to GPS-linked mobile phones that track children’s whereabouts every six seconds and send alarms to parents when they stray from an approved route.

Yet over 50% of parents want more police officers to patrol popular school routes in a country where most children, including primary school pupils, walk to and from school in small groups. A similar number want the police to inform them if individuals with criminal records involving children move into their neighbourhood.

Headlines about recent gruesome crimes – one girl’s body was stuffed in a box, another was stabbed a dozen times in the chest – give the impression that Japan is in the grip of a crime wave directed at children, but statistics suggest otherwise. Although child kidnappings have risen 25% since 2001, crimes against children have dropped by a fifth over the same period, according to the police.

Some experts say that Japanese parents are also taking their obsession with cleanliness too far. Koichiro Fujita, a professor of tropical medicine at Tokyo Medical and Dental University and specialist in parasites, said the Ebina playground’s antibacterial sand could be doing children more harm than good.

‘Children should be exposed to nature, breathe in fresh air, and have contact with animals,’ he told the Associated Press. ‘Playing inside weakens your immune system.’

But others say they are not surprised by the popularity of the new, risk-free approach to playtime. ‘While it’s necessary to be exposed to some bacteria in the environment to boost the immune response, there could be advantages to taking your children to a “germ-free” playground,’ said an expert on parasites at the National Institute of Infectious Diseases in Tokyo. ‘For example, stools left by cats and dogs in neighbourhood parks can contain parasites that can, in rare cases, cause severe health problems.’

Many parents are inclined to agree. More than 250,000 people visited Fantasy Kids Resort between its opening in November 2005 and May this year, its operator said, paying 420 yen (£2) each for the first hour and 210 yen for every 30 minutes after that.

And if the firm’s ambitious plans are realised, in five years’ time Japan’s new generation of overly cautious adults will have 30 similarly spotless playgrounds to choose from for a day out with the kids.

(http://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/sep/02/japan.justinmccurry, accessed 16 May 2014)
Japan’s children play safe

When Ryosuke and Taemi Suzuki take their 18-month-old daughter to Fantasy Kids Resort in Japan they are guaranteed total peace of mind. Fantasy Resort is one of several playgrounds in Japan that provide for the growing number of parents who constantly worry about possible dangers threatening their children such as disease and accidents.

First-time visitors to the playground must provide proof of identification before they enter, and shoes must be removed at the door because they carry germs. Even the wheels of baby-buggies are sprayed with an antibacterial solution.

Inside, children are watched over by about 20 staff dressed in bright yellow overalls and more than a dozen security cameras are mounted on the ceiling. Although pets are banned from the playground, its large sandpit contains sterilised sand which is cleaned daily to remove any potentially harmful objects. Most of the bigger toys are inflatable to reduce the risk of injury. This is to protect the resort as much as the children, because parents of a child injured while at nursery might easily sue the school.

‘We’ve been here before and we’ll definitely come again,’ says Mr Suzuki, ‘This place has everything under one roof, but most importantly, it puts absolute priority on safety.’

Mr and Mrs Suzuki are not alone in wanting to remove just about every element of risk from their children’s lives. According to a recent government survey…

(Oxenden and Latham-Koenig 2008: 47)
Web page activity 2.5

- In the dialogue below, mark instances of the types of elaborative changes described in Section 2.3 in the chapter.
- What are the implications for the design of learning materials, in particular for the creation of dialogues?

Extract from the Limerick Corpus of Irish English

Speaker 1: … And ah what else was I going to ask you your role here is manager.
Speaker 2: Station manager.
Speaker 1: Yeah and what was your occupation before this.
Speaker 2: Ah before this I was a driver actually.
Speaker 1: Aha and how did you get involved in um community radio then.
Speaker 2: Well I got involved in pirate radio station back in nineteen eighty three
Speaker 1: Umhum.
Speaker 2: and I was with that until ah we went off the air in thirty-first December nineteen eighty nine.
Speaker 1: Umhum.
Speaker 2: and I was part of the group that applied for one of the county licences but we didn’t get the licence.
Speaker 1: What station was that now?
Speaker 2: It was Independent Radio Mayo.
Speaker 1: Right.
Speaker 2: But Midwest Radio got the licence so then I was out of it then from until nineteen ninety five when, um, I seen an advertisement in the local paper that they were setting up a
community radio station in Castlebar […] and the manager was leaving so didn’t quite know what to do about the manager so I said look it I says I’ll take over if you want and …

Speaker 1: And you heard

Speaker 2: I had the experience and expertise in it so I took over

Speaker 1: And you’re in the strange situation that you’re an unpaid man.

Speaker 2: That’s right that I’m actually a volunteer in the station.

Speaker 1: Umhum.

Speaker 2: I just happen to have the time.

Speaker 1: The time right.

Speaker 2: Yes.

[…]

Speaker 1: Okay that’s how you became involved can you answer why you became involved

[ laughing ] these are all personal at the beginning – yes yeah go on -

Speaker 2: With the radio it’s because I love the radio

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: I’ve always loved radio.

(extract reproduced with permission)

**Web page activity 2.6**

Think about how you might use this poem at various levels:

What a wonderful bird the frog are.

When he sit he stand almost.

When he hop he fly almost.

He ain’t got no sense hardly.
He ain’t got no tail hardly neither

When he sit, he sit on what he ain’t got almost.

Hardly!

(Anonymous)