

# Inviting Altruistic Agency Among Students

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**Summary:** Agency is normally understood as the capacity to act, to have a degree of self-determination and control over one's self and the world. Altruistic agency is being able to act so that others might themselves have more agency and better chances to be self-determined even though it might mean we have less. While teachers seem to have such altruistic agency to varying degrees (as they attempt to agentize their students with knowledge and understandings that can change the world), it can also be stimulated in students themselves in such a way that they help each other learn more effectively. I will be looking at activities to encourage students to be more helpful to each other so they can learn in a more dynamic environment and be resources for each other in many ways. I will also look at external media and how it might also be used to create more altruistic agency. Angeles Arrien said, "I think the human spirit always wants to make a contribution. And I don't think there are enough invitations" (Briskin et al, 2009:156). So how can our classes and teaching be more invitational?

## Outline

Agency & Altruism in SLA,

Why We Want to Invite It Among Students

Some Examples: Sapolsky, Talking Twins, Ranchamadran, NPOs, Grameen (social businesses), Girl Effect, cross age tutoring, NPRMing,

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# Confluency Factor!

The biggest impact on how your partner speaks is YOU! People are not fluent alone, they are fluent together because they help each other speak in many ways. This is called CONFLUENCY.

To help your partners speak better and make friends in the class, you can

1. Face them and give them good eye contact.
2. Show you are excited to talk with them.
3. Smile and be attentive.
4. Shadow (repeat) some of their words.
5. Summarize what they say to confirm understanding.
6. Ask questions for clarifications and to expand the conversation.
7. Use emotional rejoinders ("wow!" "really?" "right" "no way!" "amazing", etc.)
8. Share your own information but do not hog the time.
9. Adjust to your partner's level and help them with vocabulary when needed.
10. Show you are really interested non-verbally, verbally, and through your complete attention.
11. Call them up to confirm homework and enjoy a good conversation.
12. Get into the habit of asking, "What can I do for you? How can I help?"

"Fluent speaking is at least partially the result of fluent imagining." When you know what your topics will be, imagine some of the things you might say and some of the information you might want to give before class begins. Some famous basketball star once said, "You win or lose the game by what you do with your mind when you are not on the court."

## 融合ファクター!

あなたの英会話能力に最大の影響を及ぼす人はパートナーです!パートナーの英会話能力に最大の影響を及ぼす人はあなたです!人は一人きりで話しかけようと思いません。人は多くの方法で互いに話すのを助けるので、人と一緒にいると話しかけようと思えます。これを融合 (confluency) と呼びます。

あなたのパートナーが話し方が上手くなるのを助け、授業の中で友情を築くために、次のようにしてみましょう。

1. パートナーと面と向かって、相手の目をしっかりと見て話します。
2. あなたと話ができで楽しい、という気持ちを表に出しましょう。
3. スマイルを忘れず、相手の話をよく聞きましょう。
4. 相手の言ったことを繰り返して (繰り返して) しましょう。
5. 分かっていますよと伝えるために、相手の言ったことをまとめてみましょう。
6. それについてもっと教えて下さいと言って、会話を広げましょう。
7. 気持ちを表す応答句を使いましょう。 ("wow!" "really?" "right" "no way!" "amazing" など)
8. 自分に同意することも教えましょう。でも自分ばかり話さないように。
9. パートナーのレベルに合わせて、必要ならば難しい語句を教えてあげましょう。
10. 本心に興味を持っていますよということ、言葉以外でも言葉でも表し、たえず注意をしましょう。
11. 相違の確認をするためにパートナーに質問を投げ、楽しく会話を交わしましょう。
12. "何かできることある? 何でも書いちゃってね" と相手の習慣にしよう。

「上手に話せるようになる方法の一つは、上手な想像です」自分の話題を決めたら授業が始まる前に、これを書こうとかこれを教えてあげようなどと想像してみましょう。ある有名なバスケットボールのスター選手がこう言ったことがあります。「試合に勝つか負けるかは、コートにいない時にどう頭を使っているかによって決まるんだ」

## Collaboration 101: Students Help Educate Students

Tim Murphy, Yuan Ze University

Higher education is made by a very strange technology, what I've called a 'customer-input technology'. Colleges and universities can buy one important input to their production only from their own customers: students help educate students. Good fellow-students, other things being equal, will lead to a better education than poor fellow-students. These are the 'peer-effects' that show up regularly in empirical studies of college quality, and they're certainly apparent to those of us who teach...

Meyerson, J. W. (1998). *New thinking on higher education*. Bolton Mass.: Anker Publishing Co. pp. 2-6.

## Big Messages to students about their ability to learn:

1. Your classmates will have more influence on you than your teachers.
2. You have a big influence on your classmates whether you know it or not.

Things you CANT change immediately: your past, the required courses, who your classmates are, who the teacher is.

Things you CAN change immediately: your own attitude and behaviors toward your classmates, the course, and the teacher.

## Attitudes and Behaviors that Enrich Students Learning in Groups

- ※ Be friendly and willing to communicate.
  - ※ Know you don't have to be perfect and that others around you are not perfect. We all make mistakes. Relax, start learning from where you are. Look for opportunities to make friends.
  - ※ Look for opportunities to discuss classroom related work.
  - ※ Make appointments to do homework and help each other learn.
  - ※ Stay on task. When classmates get off task, gently bring them back.
  - ※ Talk about your classes with your classmates and with your teacher. Let your teacher know when things are working or not. Dare to negotiate.
  - ※ Be enthusiastic! Or pretend! (Sometimes we become what we pretend!)
- What else can you do? Talk to classmates about all this and ask them.

What are the characteristics of a classmate that really stimulates you to learn all you can?

