

## Group Dynamics in the Language Classroom (ELECT / 1cr.)

**Instructor:** Dr. Paul Leeming

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### Course Dates

4/20 (Sat. 16:00-20:00)	5/11 (Sat. 16:00-20:00)	6/1 (Sat. 16:00-20:00)
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### Course Description

This course introduces key ideas from group dynamics research and helps teachers effectively use group work in their own classrooms. Drawing on group dynamics research and theory both in language teaching and general psychology, course sessions and the final assignment will help teachers develop a range of techniques for creating a more positive atmosphere within groups. By completing assigned readings, participating in course activities, and completing the final assignment, participants will be able to:

1. Design and implement effective strategies for creating positive group dynamics;
2. Create groups that work together well;
3. Cope with problems that can arise with small group work in the language classroom.

### Course Schedule

Session	Issues/Problems	Assigned Readings
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>What is a group?</i></li> <li>● <i>Why use groups in the language classroom?</i></li> <li>● <i>How should we form groups?</i></li> <li>● <i>How do we establish positive group norms?</i></li> </ul>	<p>Chap. 1: <i>Becoming a group</i> (Dörnyei &amp; Murphey, 2003)</p> <p>Chap. 2: <i>Managing the class: Rules, norms and discipline</i> (Dörnyei &amp; Murphey, 2003)</p>
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>How do groups develop?</i></li> <li>● <i>How long should students work together in the same group?</i></li> <li>● <i>How can I make sure the groups are cohesive?</i></li> <li>● <i>What practical steps can I take to improve the classroom environment?</i></li> </ul>	<p>Chap. 3: <i>How groups develop</i> (Dörnyei &amp; Murphey, 2003)</p> <p>Chap. 4: <i>The cohesive group: Relationships and achievement</i> (Dörnyei &amp; Murphey, 2003)</p> <p>Chap. 5: <i>The classroom environment's contribution to group dynamics</i> (Dörnyei &amp; Murphey, 2003)</p>
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>What roles should I assign to students?</i></li> <li>● <i>How do I resolve conflict in groups?</i></li> <li>● <i>How do I design tasks to optimize group work?</i></li> </ul>	<p>Chap. 7: <i>Student roles and role modeling</i> (Dörnyei &amp; Murphey, 2003)</p> <p>Chap. 8: <i>Trouble shooting: Conflicts and apathy happen!</i> (Dörnyei &amp; Murphey, 2003)</p>

### Pre-course Reading

Chapters 1 & 2 from the course textbook (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003).

### Required textbook

Dörnyei, Z., & Murphey, T.. (2003). *Group Dynamics in the Language Classroom*. Cambridge.  
**ISBN:** 9780521529716

Please note extra readings will also be provided for small group discussions in the second and third sessions.

## **Assignments and Assessment**

- Participation & Collaboration 25%
- Discussion Leader 25%
- Group dynamics activity 50%

*Note: Points will be deducted for each day an assignment is late.*

### **Discussion Leader**

You will be required to lead a small group discussion on a paper. The discussion will be 25 minutes long, and you should prepare a one-sided sheet of A4 with a short one-paragraph summary of the article, and at least three discussion questions based on the article.

### **Group Dynamics Activity**

After the final session you will be required to write a paper describing an activity that helps with the group dynamics in a class. Your paper should be 1500 words or less (not including any references or appendices). Imagine that you are writing the paper to convince another teacher that the activity should be used in your teaching context. A suggested outline of the paper is:

*Introduction*-Describe the context for the activity including the level of the students and their motivation to study English.

*The activity*-Briefly describe the activity (it may be helpful to include materials needed in the appendices).

*Rationale*-Give a rationale for the activity, explaining how it enhances the group dynamics for the students you described in the introduction. This is where you should support your ideas with the readings from the course.

*Conclusion*-Briefly summarize your paper, and make a note of any potential weaknesses or problems with the activity.

*Please format your paper in APA7 using the assignment template on the program intranet.*

## **Evaluation**

Pass/Fail

## **Instructor Bio**

Paul Leeming (PhD) is a Professor at Kindai University and an adjunct Professor at Temple University. He has been teaching English in Japan for more than 20 years, and has taught students at various levels. He has also been involved in teacher training, teaching on the TESOL Masters program at Temple University Japan for 10 years. His current research interests are in task-based language teaching (TBLT), group dynamics, and motivation.. His work has appeared in a number of prominent international journals including *Language Learning*, *TESOL Quarterly*, *Language Teaching Research*, and *The International Journal of Applied Linguistics*. He is also the co-author of a series of textbooks called *On Task* that use a TBLT approach, and a series focussing on presentations called *Talking Point*.