



May 17, 2024

Volume 14

Aomori Prefecture English Education
Society

テキストから自分の言葉へ

読んだり聞いたりした内容を自分の言葉で言い換える。おそらく中学校でも高校でも、国語そして英語の授業でたくさん取り入れられている活動の一つではないでしょうか。母語であれば日常生活においても普段やっていることなので、英語においてもあまり難しく考えずにできる範囲でやってみましょう。

Making Changes means Making It Your Own

An important part of learning a language is '*making it your own*.' One way to '*make English your own*' is to change the language that you encounter—sometimes just a bit and sometimes quite significantly—while keeping the meaning mostly the same. By making changes, the language goes from being '*textbook English*' to being '*your own English*'.

Here is an example of '*making it your own*' using a passage from one of my own English textbooks.

This is a passage that describes newspapers; it is provided as a speaking passage in a discussion about media. Newspapers have a long history, but at present, they are not trendy and most people probably see them as old-fashioned. Many people might also say that newspapers are inconvenient—after all, you have to have a subscription or you need to go to a store and buy one. On the other hand, newspapers do have a tactile appeal—people like the feeling of holding a newspaper and find that turning the pages is quite pleasurable. Newspapers also clearly distinguish news content from advertising, and they often include various types of content, for example analysis, opinion, and special features on specific topics.

passage (a); 4 sentences; 101 words

Here is my modified version:

Newspapers have been a common part of life for a long time, but a lot of people might say they are no longer needed. I think most people would also say newspapers aren't very convenient—you either have to subscribe to get one delivered every day or you have to go to a store and buy one. However, for some people the physical experience of a newspaper is important. Some say they like the feeling of holding a newspaper and that turning from page to page is very satisfying. Another important point is that newspapers are clear about identifying advertising. Newspapers also include different types of content—news, of course, but also analysis and opinion. A really important thing for me is that newspaper often have special features on topics I would never read on my own.

passage (b); 7 sentences; 137 words

Let's line up the contents ... and the sentences one by one:

(1a) Newspapers have a long history, but at present, they are not trendy and most people probably see them as old-fashioned.

(1b) Newspapers have been a common part of life for a long time, but a lot of people might say they are no longer needed.

(2a) Many people might also say that newspapers are inconvenient—after all, you have to have a subscription or you need to go to a store and buy one.

(2b) I think most people would also say newspapers aren't very convenient—you either have to subscribe to get one delivered every day or you have to go to a store and buy one.

(3a) On the other hand, newspapers do have a tactile appeal—people like the feeling of holding a newspaper and find that turning the pages is quite pleasurable.

(3b) However, for some people the physical experience of a newspaper is important. Some say they like the feeling of holding a newspaper and that turning from page to page is very satisfying.

(4a) Newspapers also clearly distinguish news content from advertising, and they often include various types of content, for example analysis, opinion, and special features on specific topics.

(4b) Another important point is that newspapers are clear about identifying advertising. Newspapers also include different types of content—news, of course, but also analysis and opinion. A really important thing for me is that newspaper often have special features on topics I would never read on my own.

The changes that I made were at the vocabulary level, the sentence level, and the content level. For vocabulary changes, identify on a key word and look for a word that is similar and brings a similar meaning. For sentence changes, moving things from the beginning of the sentence to the end – and vice versa – is usually a way to begin. An important area where you may want to make changes is the content—this is a very important type of change. One idea is to change from a general statement – something about the topic that is true for everyone ... to a personal statement – something that is true *for you*. Making changes like these goes a long way to '*making textbook English into your own English*.' And making *English your own English* is an important step on your English journey.

Next REAL ENGLISH: June 2024!

◇朝夕の寒暖差はあれども爽やかない季節になりました。田んぼにも水が入りつつあり、部活動の大会や授業も本格的に始まりました。GW も明けて、まさに頑張り時ですね。体調に気をつけて元気に学びましょう。円安も相まって弘前にもたくさんの外国人が訪れました。みなさん英語でコミュニケーションするチャンスあったかな? 機会があったら自分の言葉で話してみては。(文責 伴)

青森県英語教育学会Real English 第14号

2024年（令和6年）5月17日発行

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発行所 〒036-8560 弘前市文京町1 弘前大学教育学部英語教育講座内

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