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Capitalizing on Cultural Differences in EFL Classrooms in Japan

Sonia Yoshitake, Himeji Dokkyo University, Japan

Every year more and more EFL teachers arrive in Japan enchanted by the idea of living and teaching in an exotic culture of the Orient. Teaching in a very different culture is an interesting experience on the one hand, but as a cultural experience it can also be a very frustrating one and, in fact, often is. Building rapport between students who speak "a little English" and teachers who speak little Japanese is not easy. The more high spirited a teacher is, the greater the dilemma, and the more often the teacher is critical of the students, their previous English teachers, large class size, and the Ministry of Education, if not the Japanese culture itself. This article offers practical suggestions to EFL teachers for coping with cultural confrontations and outlines how some features of the Japanese school culture can be useful tools for class management.

Positive Features

Many culturally derived expectations regarding language and education are unconscious and unless made explicit they are not available for analysis and reflection. As McGroarty and Galvan assert, both the EFL teacher and the students bring culture into the classroom. Nothing shapes one's views of language and education, they add, so profoundly as culture, and these views influence expectations regarding the nature of both teaching and learning in a language classroom (1985, p. 82).

According to Reischauer, one of the outstanding Japanese virtues is the great capacity for cooperation within various groups (1990, p. 25). This group consciousness fosters a sense of collective responsibility that is alien to westerners (Taylor 1989, p. 73). But this also means that the stronger the group ties, the weaker the sense of individuality; that is, love of consensus means dislike of individual initiative in the classroom (Taylor, 1989, p. 115).

A second characteristic that the Japanese share is a Confucian cultural heritage that displays unstinted efforts in acquiring education (Reischauer 1990, p. 27). In practice, students are constantly told from childhood on to sit quietly and listen to the teacher, and not to stand up and speak out unless called upon. As a result, they are reluctant to express their opinions. Moreover, they feel insecure in responding to the general open-ended questions EFL teachers often ask in the classroom. Unfortunately, such a lack of self-assertiveness can become a serious drawback in the quest to master a foreign language.

A third characteristic of Japanese society is its orderliness in various aspects of life (Reischauer 1990, p. 28). Though EFL classrooms are generally packed with some 40 to 80 students, the size of the class should not worry or disturb a teacher. The students are generally trained to maintain order in large class situations. What is important is that the teacher approach the

class with enthusiasm and adapt his/her teaching style to the Japanese school culture. Students are very sensitive to the attitude of the teacher.

Practical Suggestions

Recognizing the capacity for cooperation, unstinted efforts in acquiring education, and orderliness as virtues of Japanese students that you can rely on in order to facilitate class management, there are several ways to modify the school culture and the students' learning styles. Consider, for example, roll call, a seating chart, and small group activities.

Roll Call

School administrators usually require teachers to keep a record of the attendance of each student, and roll-call is usually a boring routine task. It can, however, be converted into a very effective warm-up communication activity. For example, why not require students to reply with something other than 'here' or 'present' by asking each student a question? For the first few classes it is advisable to write 3 to 5 questions on the board to minimize the students' feeling of insecurity. Good questions are those that help elicit pieces of information about each student; for example,

"Mr. A, how do you come to school?"
"Miss B, do you like the city/town you live in?"
"Mr. C., have you ever had a native speaker (American, British, etc.) teacher of English?"
"Miss D, have you ever been abroad?"
"Mr. E, do you have a friend/friends from an English speaking country/ countries?"

From this question-answer roll call, the teacher will know who needs extra encouragement and attention.

A variation, if this roll call takes too much time and bores other students, is to have everyone write answers to questions on a piece of paper. Whether or not you let students read their answers directly from their papers, they perform with more confidence and comfort once they have pre-written answers. One important instructional goal is to incorporate writing with speaking in order to enhance speaking capability (Yoshitake 1989, pp. 28-31).

In brief, a teacher from a more liberal tradition, or one with a new class from a rather rigid educational system, can use the roll-call as an ice-breaker to generate rapport between the teacher and the students. It is a good idea to suggest and demonstrate to students from the very first class that their verbal participation will be expected and required.

Seating Chart

Class size is generally quite large in Japanese schools. In this situation, one technique for efficient class management is to assign seats. To indicate to the students that in the EFL class individual decision is respected and stressed, the teacher can let the students select their own seats for the semester. This should not take more than five or so minutes for a class of as many as 40 to 80 students in Japan. Usually orderliness in the room does not deteriorate. Moreover, to enhance the student's commitment in the direction of defining himself/herself in terms of individuality, it is a good idea to pass around a seating chart for each student to sign.

With a seating chart, the teacher can easily record student attendance, class participation and test grades *and* constantly refer to them. It can also be used in encouraging students to take direct and active responsibility for their learning by making class grades, evaluation and standing available to students whenever they wish. When the teacher has several large classes of forty to eighty that meet only once or twice a week, a seating chart makes it possible to address students by name. Knowing individual students is an important part of class management and a significant first step towards person-to-person communication.

Small Group Activities

In small-group teaching, the class is divided into groups of two to six for the purpose of engaging in cooperative learning experiences. (Bejarano, 1987, p. 485) Any class activity except tests can become a group task. For example, in listening comprehension training, each student will respond with more assertiveness if he/she has listened to the tape lesson in a group in which members can support each other in performing assigned listening tasks. Even in having individual students read a passage out loud, if time to practice in small groups is allotted before they are required to read, student performance will be more successful. This is not a waste of time because it will keep the students from mumbling in low voices one after another out of fear of making errors, and thus hampering the flow of the class.

Small group teaching which gives students the security of a group-bond works particularly well with Japanese students since they are trained to cooperate and help each other to prevent situations that might otherwise prove embarrassing to friends. (Condon 1986, p. 32) The groups can be made smaller and smaller gradually to encourage students to become more self-assertive and ready for individual spontaneous interaction with the teacher.

Conclusion

No matter how well Western-style class behavior is explained or rationalized to Japanese students, one will have difficulty conducting EFL classes effectively without using practical, step by step techniques. As students become more comfortable with Western classroom expectations (i.e., those of the Western EFL teacher), EFL classes can be effectively enhanced by the rapport between the teacher and students. Those teachers who can demonstrate an understanding of the cultural frictions that are likely to confuse students will overcome potential frustrations and succeed in generating the attitudes desired and needed for functioning both inter-culturally and in English.

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About the Author

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Conference Announcements

The Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT) will sponsor its Seventeenth Annual International Conference on Language Teaching/Learning at the Portopia Convention Center, Kobe, Japan, November 2-4, 1991. The deadline for submission of abstracts for papers, demonstrations, workshops, and colloquia is May 1, 1991. Contact: JALT Central Office, Lions Mansion Kawaramachi #111, Kawaramachi Matsubara-agaru, Shimogyo-ku, Kyoto 600, Japan. Tel: 81-75-361-5428. Fax: 81-75-361-5429.

The RELC Regional Seminar on Language Acquisition and the Second/Foreign Language Classroom is scheduled to be held in Singapore, April 22-26, 1991. Contact: The Director (Attention: Seminar Secretariat), SEAMEO Regional Language Centre, 30 Orange Grove Road, Singapore 1025.

"SOL in the Horizon: Sociology of Language and Speakers of Other Languages in the 1990s" is the title of a symposium to be held in honor of Joshua A. Fishman's 65th birthday and to advance the inter-disciplinary development of the sociology of language. The symposium will be held at the University of California, Santa Cruz during the 1991 LSA Linguistic Institute, July 8-12, 1991. Contact: Ofelia Garcia, The City College of New York, School of Education, New York, New York 10031. Tel: 212-650-6273. e-mail: OGACC@CUNYVM.

The First International Conference of the Malaysian English Language Teaching Association (MELTA) will be held at the Petaling Jaya Hilton, near Kuala Lumpur, May 14-17, 1991. The theme of the conference will be "Teaching and Learning English in Challenging Situations." Contact: MELTA, Wisma FAM, Jalan 22 5/9, Kelana Jaya, 47301 Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.

Hey Baby! Teaching Short and Slow Songs in the ESL Classroom

Dale T. Griffee, University of Pittsburgh ELI, Japan

This is the second in a series of four articles on using popular songs in the language classroom. The first article, titled "Hey Baby! Teaching Songs That Tell Stories in the ESL Classroom," appeared in the *TESL Reporter*, Vol 23, no. 3 (July 1990) issue and featured four techniques: 1) *Tell Them A Story*, a way of introducing a story song; 2) *Strip Songs*, a listening technique that provides students with the lyrics; 3) *Paraphrasing*, a writing and discussion technique that uses paraphrasing as a way of working with vocabulary and meaning; and finally, 4) *Point of View*, a discussion technique for students at the intermediate and above levels.

This article deals with short and slow songs. The third article in this series will discuss short and fast songs, and the final article will discuss long songs.

Short and Slow Songs

Short and slow songs are songs that have a slow tempo and last less than three to three and a half minutes although many short and slow songs may be much shorter. Short and slow songs usually have only one or two verses with no repeating refrains. They rarely tell stories although they may have complex imagery and vocabulary. Short and slow songs are popular with language teachers because teachers believe they are easy to teach and easy for students to understand. I have even attended song presentations where the presenter suggested that only short and slow songs were suitable for the language classroom. See the end of this article for a selected list of short and slow songs.

A Possible Lesson Plan

Teachers sometimes wonder how many techniques should be used to teach one song. This question can be answered only by the teacher in the classroom, who is in a position to take into account variables such as time available, student interest and the object of the lesson plan. This article will explain five techniques from which classroom teachers can choose. *Drawing the Song* and *Pictures* introduce and preteach vocabulary, *The Cloze Passage* gives the lyrics to students by means of listening, *Song Cards* and *Song Word Puzzles* both offer additional ways of working with vocabulary and grammar. (While I find short and slow songs to be very helpful for listening and vocabulary work, I don't usually select them for use with extended discussions. For a discussion technique, see the technique *Point of View* in the first article in this series, which is suitable for all types of songs.) The first two techniques, *Drawing the Song* and *Pictures,* should probably be done first, but the remaining three techniques could be done in any order. Although *The Cloze Passage* and *Song Cards* are recommended for use with short and slow songs, the remaining three techniques can be employed with any type of song. I will use the short and slow song "I Left My Heart In San Francisco" to illustrate the techniques.

Drawing The Song

This vocabulary technique builds the skills of listening, grammar (prepositions of location) and to a lesser extent, discussion. It can be used with very low to intermediate level students. This technique doesn't have steps but it has several alternatives.

One alternative is for the teacher to draw objects mentioned in the song, writing the name of the item under each drawing. In the song "I Left My Heart In San Francisco," this procedure would result in a drawing such as the one below:

Another alternative for a higher level class, or as a review, is to have the class listen to the song and then ask students to draw a scene from the song or a scene they feel is suggested by the song. The pictures they produce can then be discussed in small or large groups.

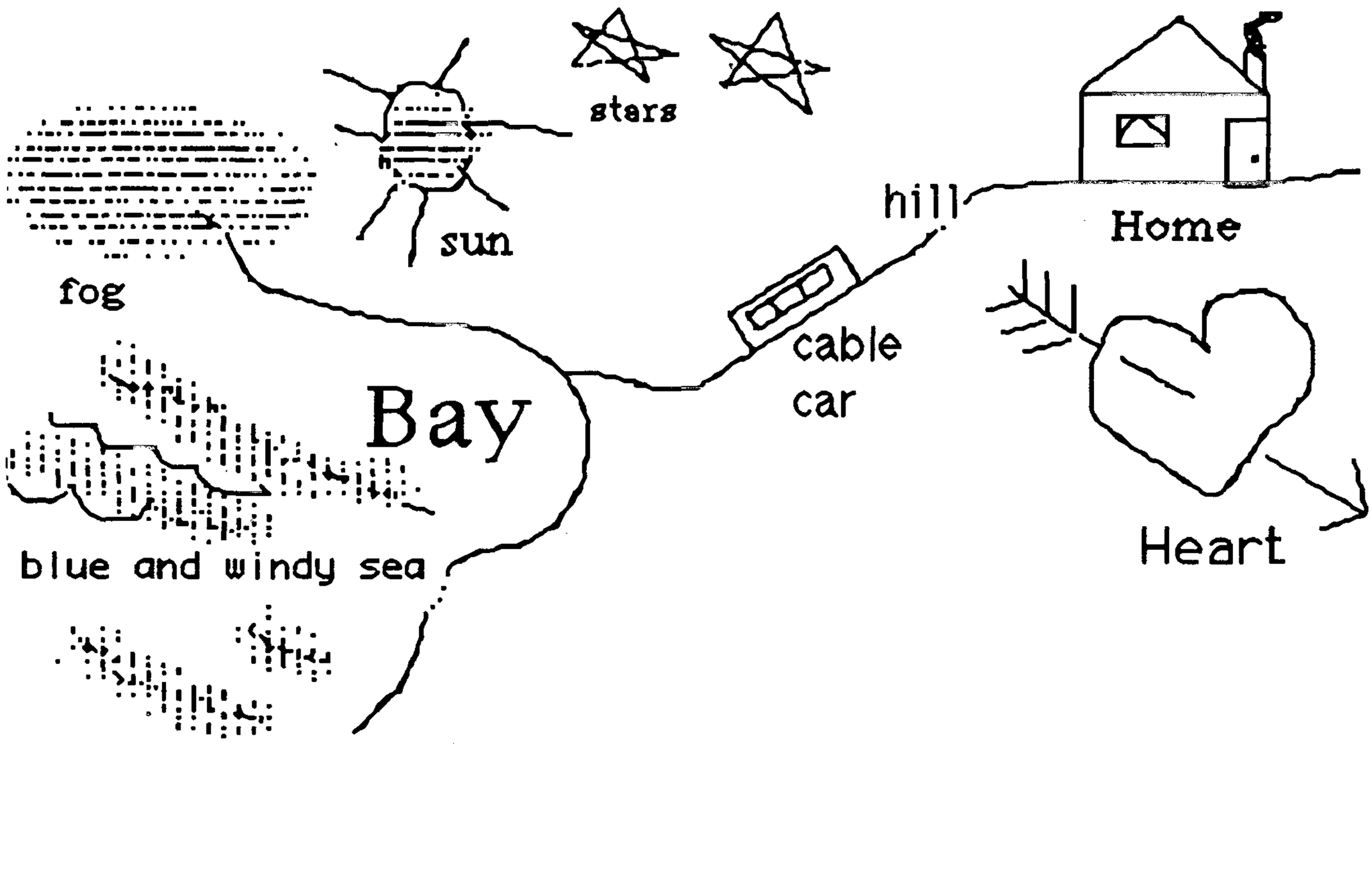
A third alternative is to dictate the drawing to the students using prepositions of locations such as above, over, next to, slightly to the left, etc. For example, "draw a hill and at the top of the hill draw a house and under the house write the word *home*."

A final alternative is to ask students to draw their personal responses to a song. For example, after they listen to a song such as "The Marvelous Toy," students can draw a favorite toy they had as a child.

Pictures

Like the previous technique, *Pictures* works with all songs to introduce vocabulary and practice listening and limited discussion. It is based on the assumption that pictures from magazines, travel brochures or calendars create strong images of the song and help students remember vocabulary. It can be used with very low to intermediate level students.

Make a list of all the vocabulary in the song that could be illustrated by a picture (e.g. objects, locations and cities). Decide if you want to list the vocabulary on the



board. Collect corresponding pictures and show them to the class as they identify the vocabulary items. A short discussion can be conducted while showing the pictures using questions such as, "Do you know what this is?" and "Have you ever been here?" If you want to use the song again, store the pictures in a safe place such as a clear plastic folder so repeated use does not damage them.

Extensions

1. Show the pictures and ask the class to guess the type of song (e.g. love, country, rock, etc.) or which vocabulary items might be in the song.
2. Show the class the pictures after they have listened to the song instead of before and then discuss them.
3. As a way of preparing students to deal with the theme of the song, select a picture with a theme that is related to the song and ask students for their personal reaction. For a song about city life, show a picture of a city and ask a question about a city they would like to visit, or a city they remember as a child, or the city they think is the best to live in today.

The Cloze Passage

A cloze passage is any passage with every *n*th word blanked out. It is probably the most familiar and popular song teaching technique currently used in language classrooms. In fact, in many cases it is the only technique teachers use and is, for that reason, over used. However, as long as it is used with discretion, it can be effective.

Before you begin teaching the song, prepare a handout with the text (and blanks) or write it on the board. For example if you decided to blank out every fifth word of the song "My Country 'Tis Of Thee", it would look like this.

My country 'tis of _____
Sweet land of liberty,
_____ thee I sing.

An alternative to blanking out every *n*th word is to blank out selected words which correspond to a particular teaching point (e.g. blank out the verbs). This focuses the cloze in the direction you want. If you don't have a specific teaching point, but are using the cloze as a general listening exercise, cloze out the stressed and easy to hear words rather than contractions, prepositions or other hard to catch words. The important thing in using a cloze passage is to be aware of what you are clozing out and why.

This technique works well with low to intermediate students and is best suited for short and slow songs. I have seen teachers use, or rather misuse, this technique with long and fast songs, but long songs especially those with repeating verses have too many blank spaces, and fast songs move so quickly that students don't have enough time to write the missing words.

In class, have the students listen to the song first. Then hand out the cloze lyrics. Ask students to listen until they are able to fill in all the blanks or give up. Finally, go over what they have written and verify the correct words.

Variations

1. Have students work in pairs.
2. Give students additional help such as the first letter of every clozed word. For example, "Country R___, take me home."

3. Anticipation. Ask students to write in what they think might go in the blanks before they listen. Stress that they should guess even if they are not sure.
4. Avoid clozing two or three words in a row as students usually cannot catch them and you will have to stop the tape and/or replay the tape several times. Cloze only one word per line.
5. If you want to re-use the same cloze handout sheets for more than one class, number the blanks and have students write the words on a separate piece of paper.

Song Cards

Song cards are blank cards on which the teacher writes the words to the song. Each card has either a single word or phrase written on it. Together all the cards form the complete set of lyrics. While listening, the students arrange the cards in order. This activity works with short, slow songs but not fast songs because students don't have enough time to move the cards. It is suitable for very low to low intermediate students and works only with short and slow songs. Below are some sample cards.

Before you begin, get some cards about the size of business cards or cut a larger card into smaller pieces. Paper works as well, but card stock lasts longer and is easier to handle. Write all the words to the song on the cards. For a very short song put only one word on each card.

Play the song through once to give students a preview. Tell the students to listen only and not to take notes because you are going to give them the words. Put the cards face up on a table or flat surface. One set of cards can be used by several students. Play the song and ask the students to arrange the cards in the correct order. This may take several listenings.

If you use *Song Cards* for review in a later lesson, the challenge and interest will remain high. *Songs Cards* are successful because they use several sense modalities: visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Even poorer students who only listen and watch while other students put the cards in order are participating through their visual and auditory senses.

Extensions and Variations

1. *Song Cards* are a good way to introduce singing. After several sessions of working with *Song Cards*, the tune as

I left
in San Francisco

my heart
High

well as the words become very familiar to students.

2. Select the concrete nouns and for each one draw a picture on the card instead of the word. Mix them up and insert them in the deck.
3. Paste the cards on a large piece of paper and hang them on the wall.
4. Ask students to arrange the song cards before they listen. They then listen to the song to confirm that they got the order correct.

Song Word Puzzles

This technique works with all songs and is appropriate for very low to high intermediate students. It is primarily a vocabulary enrichment technique and is based on the assumption that puzzles fascinate students, hold their attention and give them a reason for working with language.

Before you begin, select a word that has some connection with the theme of the song but is not necessarily in the lyrics. This is the secret word. Make as many lines as the secret word has letters. In the example which follows, the secret word is *California,* which has ten letters. Therefore, this puzzle will have ten lines. Next select ten words from the song. Each word you select must contain at least one letter from the secret word. Line up the words so that the secret word can be seen vertically after the puzzle is complete. Hand out the puzzle. Ask students to write in the answers and discover the secret word. Conversely, writing in the secret word makes the puzzle easier. You can also make the word puzzle easier or more difficult by changing the definitions.

1. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
2. _ _ _
3. _ _ _ _ _
4. _ _ _ _
5. _ _ _
6. _ _ _ _
7. _ _ _ _
8. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
9. _ _ _ _ _
10. _ _ _

Clues (and Answers)

1. city on the west coast (San Francisco)
2. large body of water (bay)
3. to be by yourself (alone)
4. moving air (wind)
5. can't see well in it (fog)
6. where people live (home)
7. where all roads lead to (Rome)
8. when people don't think of me (forgotten)
9. a city with the nickname of "city of light" (Paris)
10. not happy (sad)

What is the secret word? (California)

Acknowledgements

Pictures, Extension Three is based on an idea from Alan Maley described in his excellent article "Poetry and song as effective language-learning activities" in *Interactive Language Teaching*, Ed. Wilga Rivers, Cambridge University Press 1987. *The Cloze Passage,* Suggestion One is from Julian Bamford; Suggestion Two is from Miho Steinberg; Suggestion Three is from Steve Brown and Marc Helgesen; and Suggestion Five is from Steve Lander. *Song Word Puzzles* is from ESL songwriter Ken Wilson.

A Selection of Short and Slow Songs

Julie Andrews. "Edelweiss." *The Sound of Music.* RCA. RCP-1558

The Beach Boys. "White Christmas." *The Beach Boys' Christmas Album.* Capital Records. 4MX-2-164

Tony Bennett. "I Left My Heart in San Francisco." *Tony Bennett San Francisco.* DTO. 10040A

Billie Holiday. "Solitude." *The Billie Holiday Story.* MCA. C2-4006

Kiri Te Kanawa. "Blue Skies." *Kiri Blue Skies.* London. 414 666-4

Bette Midler. "The Rose." *The Rose.* Atlantic. CS 16010

Willie Nelson. "Georgia On My Mind." *Stardust.* Columbia. FCT 35305

Linda Ronstadt. "My Funny Valentine." *For Sentimental Reasons.* Elektra/ Asylum. 9-60474-4-E.

James Taylor. "Isn't It Nice To Be Home Again." *Mud Slide Slim and the Blue Horizon.* Warner Bros. M5 2561

About the Author

Dale T. Griffee teaches at the University of Pittsburgh ELI, Tokyo. He is author of Conversation Directions, *a task-oriented, intermediate conversation textbook, Addison-Wesley (in press). The song techniques in this article will appear in* Songs In Action, *Prentice-Hall (in press).*

Announcements

The *Journal of Second Language Writing* is now accepting submissions on topics related to the study and teaching of writing in a second language. The editors encourage theoretically grounded reports of research and discussions of central issues in second and foreign language writing and writing instruction at all levels of proficiency. Some areas of interest are personal characteristics and attitudes of L2 writers, L2 writers' composing processes, features of L2 writers' texts, readers' responses to L2 writing, and assessment/evaluation of L2 writing. Contact Ilona Leki, *Journal of Second Language Writing*, Department of English, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996-0430. Tel: 615-974-7080.

Reader: Essays in Reader-Oriented Theory, Criticism, and Pedagogy is a semiannual publication addressing reading, readers, and reader-oriented approaches to texts including literature, visual images, and student writing. Contact: Elizabeth A. Flynn, Editor, Dept. of Humanities, Michigan Technological University, Houghton, Michigan 49931.

From July 17 to 26, 1991, the Institute of Culture and Communication at the East-West Center will offer a workshop for college and university faculty who wish to develop courses in intercultural and international topics. Participants will examine possible texts, interact with East-West Center staff, discuss issues with the authors of texts currently used in intercultural courses, share ideas with each other, and develop full course outlines. Contact: Larry Smith or Richard Brislin, East-West Center, Institute of Culture and Communication, 1777 East-West Road, Honolulu, Hawaii 96848.

Developing Teachers: Some Ways to Go, Some Ways to Be

Mark N. Brock,
City Polytechnic of Hong Kong

There are two general approaches to teacher education current in our field today: training and development. Before discussing some of the ways that we teachers can go beyond training to development, it is important to distinguish between these two approaches.

Teacher Training

Training occurs when the teacher trainer directly intervenes in the teaching process and directs the trainee toward some specific, quantifiable goal. Often the trainer will specify what areas of change the trainee should concentrate on and many times will suggest avenues for change or action to be taken by the trainee.

Freeman (1989) illustrates training when he discusses a vocabulary lesson in which the trainee does not solicit information from students before presenting new vocabulary to the class. Freeman suggests that a teacher trainer in this situation might direct the trainee to alter the way in which he/she presents new vocabulary. The trainer might prescribe that the trainee in the future elicit student knowledge before presenting new vocabulary, and then set a time frame for the trainee to apply this skill in class. The trainer would also set criteria for evaluation. In training, teacher trainers direct, inform, model, prescribe, and evaluate.

Training is based on the belief that certain behaviors characterize effective teaching and that these behaviors can be quantified and imparted to the teacher trainee (Freeman, 1989). Teaching is seen in parts and these parts are the central focus of training. Richards (1990) refers to this focus on parts as a microapproach to teacher education. A microapproach categorizes those aspects of teaching that are thought to characterize "effective instruction," and they are taught to the trainee. These might include:

1. Wait-Time—Trainees are instructed to wait after asking a question, after students respond, or before the teacher comments.
2. Questions—Trainees are instructed to ask certain kinds of questions (for example, referential rather than display questions).
3. Feedback—Trainees are instructed in ways to use feedback.
4. Time-on-Task—Trainees are instructed to keep their students on task.

The goal of training is to assure that trainees are competent in using these components of teaching in certain observable and quantifiable ways. There are, of course, objections to this approach to teacher education. Some teacher educators (Fanselow, 1990; Freeman, 1990; Richards, 1990) have warned that teaching is a very complex activity that cannot be diluted to certain "low-inference" categories like the ones mentioned above. Though training teachers in these skills might be useful and helpful in certain

situations—such as with beginning, inexperienced teachers—these skills in themselves do not reflect the whole of teaching. Furthermore, Freeman (1990) has cautioned that an over-emphasis on training activities can lead to formulaic teaching, the kind that applies the same teaching strategies, activities, and solutions in every situation. An emphasis on training may also cause the trainee to feel defensive and can even take from him/her the power to decide how and what to teach. If this happens, the responsibility for teaching is taken out of the trainees' hands and placed in the hands of the teacher trainer, short-circuiting the development of the trainee.

Teacher Development

Teacher development, on the other hand, is focused on assisting the teacher in exploring, developing, and reflecting on his/her teaching. Unlike training, development takes a holistic view rather than an analytical view of teaching. Teacher educators using this approach seek to aid the teacher in developing internal processes or conceptual constructs that will serve in guiding decision-making and enhance understanding of the processes involved in teaching. Teacher educators attempt to help the teacher develop a locus of control (Gebhard, 1990; Fanselow, 1990; Freeman, 1990). The teacher educator in a developmental framework is not a banker (Freire, 1973) who "deposits" information ready-made into the mind of the teacher. The teacher educator is more a midwife (Belensky et al., 1987) who seeks to draw out from the teacher hypotheses about teaching and a sense of inner- or self-control for making decisions which are appropriate to a particular teaching situation.

Direct intervention, guiding, prescribing and evaluating do not fit in a developmental framework of teacher education. Instead, development is marked by the indirectness the teacher educator uses. Teacher educators, rather than directing, seek to influence, to support, to enhance and draw out the teacher's own approaches to teaching rather than to impart or prescribe the teacher educator's opinions and methods. Gebhard, Gaitan, and Oprandy (1990) state that development seeks to enforce the individual qualities of teaching, as there is not one best way to teach. They believe that teacher development should activate in the teacher an awareness, an acute sensitivity to how one's own teaching affects students and the classroom environment.

Richards (1990) has called a developmental framework a macroapproach to teacher education. A macroapproach considers larger dimensions of teaching such as student grouping, classroom management, and activity structuring. These are aspects of teaching that cannot be reduced to quantifiable behaviors or skill components. A macroapproach to teacher education is more holistic, more cognizant of the complex relationships involved in teaching. High-inference behaviors and broader generalizations about teaching characterize this approach.

Development Strategies

There are a number of development strategies that teacher educators employ in moving teachers toward development. Gebhard, Gaitan, and Oprandy have suggested that development can occur when teachers have the chance to examine and reflect on their teaching by participating in several different activities.

These might include:

1. Observation—Teachers systematically observe others' or even their own teaching.
2. Keeping a Journal—This provides the teacher opportunities to reflect on his/her teaching through writing.
3. Projects for Investigating Teaching—Teachers examine their own teaching, choose an area for change, then re-examine to see how the change, once implemented, has affected the students and themselves.
4. Reading—Teachers read about the experiences of other teachers or read research—particularly ESL classroom-based research.
5. Discussion Groups—Talking about one's experience can reveal insights about teaching that were previously absent.

Observation as a Teacher Development Tool

Though each of these methods for development could be discussed at length, observation is one of the most widely used and investigated methods of teacher development and the one considered here. Observation has great potential as a development tool because it gives the teacher a method and the power to investigate teaching and use the knowledge that investigation uncovers to make informed decisions about what and how to teach. Observation is a methodology for enhancing growth and developing awareness. This is a radically different approach from one that hands the teacher pre-packaged skills.

Fanselow (1987) has defined observation as a way of "seeing teaching differently." By this, he means that in observing other teachers, the observer gains new insights, new ideas into his/her own teaching. With these insights can come understanding, alternatives, and the power to change. Observing then becomes something like a living mirror. By looking at others' teaching, the teacher can more clearly see and explore his/her own teaching.

There are many ways to observe and many tools to use in observing. In observing others, teachers can take notes, collect dialog samples, participate in action research (Nunan, 1990), use seating charts, use observation schedules or checklists, or tape their classes. Each of these techniques has merit, and each can open new understandings of teaching processes and strategies.

Whatever method is chosen, researchers caution that observation is not for the purpose of judging or evaluating. The purpose of observing others is to discover new possibilities for one's own teaching. The purpose of observing one's own class is to gain insight into the complex interactions and relationships that shape a particular classroom environment. Most of all, the purpose of observation is to enhance awareness, to give the teacher the power of decision-making, and to foster in the teacher a sense of control. With a developmental tool such as observation, teachers can continue to develop, to grow, and to see teaching more clearly throughout their professional lives.

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English across Cultures; Cultures across English: A Reader in Cross-cultural Communication

**Review by Richard Schmidt,
University of Hawaii at Manoa**

ENGLISH ACROSS CULTURES; CULTURES ACROSS ENGLISH: A READER IN CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION. Ofelia García and Ricardo Otheguy, Eds. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1989. Number 53 in *Contributions to the Sociology of Language*, Joshua Fishman, Series Editor. Pp. xvi + 492. Deutsche marks: 178.

English across Cultures; Cultures across English is a collection of twenty-two articles with a single overriding theme: the spread of English has resulted in interactions between interlocutors who share the same language (as a native, foreign, second or newly indigenized language) but who often do not share cultural or communicative norms. Such interactions are often problematic. To explore the problems that arise in communication between such speakers, Garcia and Otheguy have assembled a volume of papers by authors of many different nationalities, with a focus on language situations as diverse as the U.S., Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, the Caribbean, India, and several areas of Africa, the Pacific, and the Far East.

A number of articles in the book are especially relevant to teachers of ESL/EFL, including papers dealing specifically with classroom interaction by Saville-Troike and Kleifgen ("Culture and language in classroom communication"), Cazden ("English for academic purposes: a hidden curriculum in ways of speaking"), Malcolm ("Invisible culture in the classroom: minority pupils and the principle of adaptation"), and those dealing with larger societal concerns and their relationship to educational contexts, such as the papers by Fernando ("English as problem and resource in Sri Lankan universities"), Christie ("Questions of standards and intraregional differences in Caribbean examinations") and Edwards ("Patois and the politics of protest: Black English in British classrooms").

Other articles do not deal directly with classoom teaching but are of inherent interest to teachers and anyone concerned with the comparative study of culture. In an interesting article dealing with routine speech formulas in Singapore ("Cultural congruence and conflict in the acquisition of formulae in a second language"), Kuiper and Lin argue that although many people in Singapore are bilingual, having grown up speaking both Singapore English and Singapore Hokkien, they are not bicultural, because their two languages code essentially the same Singapore Chinese culture. John Algeo, a well-known dialectologist, presents a taxonomy of British-American lexical differences which may not be of direct relevance to most teachers of ESL/EFL but which is interesting on its own merits to all who

simply enjoy the English language. Jeff Verschueren presents an analysis of international diplomatic misunderstandings that could have been averted had those who spoke English realized that speaking the same language does not always mean saying the same thing.

A major shortcoming of the book is the lack of a satisfactory framework for organizing the articles into a coherent framework. The organization presented by the editors (four sections with very long and very similar sounding titles) is not well motivated, and at least half of the articles could have been assigned to a section other than the one they are located in. Several other devices for organizing material are easily imaginable, for example by geography (Europe, Asia, etc.), by interlocutor types (native-native, native-nonnative, or nonnative-nonnative interaction) or by situational domains (classroom interaction, business transactions, workplace relations, politics and diplomacy, translation, etc.). Not all the articles are of equal quality, and the price of the book, 178 Deutsche marks (approx. U.S. $118), is too high to recommend the book to teachers for personal purchase. This volume should be part of every library's reference collection, however, and should be consulted by scholars of language and culture and those seeking cultural information concerning areas of the world of particular personal interest.

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Handling Directions

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5. Use a variety of words in giving directions. This provides practice and familiarization with various kinds of directions. *Circle, cross out, underline, match, complete, list, check,* and *write* are some direction words which can be used.

6. Provide an opportunity for students to follow a direction with a negative in it. (e.g., Circle the word that does **NOT** belong with the others.)

7. Provide an opportunity for students to follow a series of written directions. Write a work plan on the chalkboard. Include the name of the materials to be used, the pages and the specific tasks you wish to be completed. You can number the tasks if you want them to be done in a prescribed order.

Have students write shopping lists. (e.g., **Write** the names of five people you have on your gift list. List two items you might buy for each person. **Identify** the store where you will look for each item. **Specify** the amount of money you intend to spend on each person.)

8. Have students comply with directions on standardized examinations. Copy directions and sample questions onto a handout. Follow this procedure with as many different

examinations as you can find. It is better to emphasize correctly complying with the directions rather than correctly answering the sample questions. Students will find the test situation much less threatening if they are familiar with this aspect of test taking.

9. Provide students with the opportunity to fill out various application forms. Every space on a form is a direction even if it is a single word. Students must pay careful attention to the smallest detail. A statement such as "PLEASE PRINT" can be a problem.

Possible forms that can be used are: job applications, driver's license, admission applications to training programs and schools, housing applications, marriage licenses, etc.

A Sample Exercise

The following exercise has been around in one form or another for a long time. Still, it may be new to your students and provides useful (and entertaining) practice in following directions.

Can You Follow Directions?

This is a test to see if you can follow directions. You have three minutes.

DIRECTIONS

1. Read everything before doing anything.
2. Put your name in the upper right corner of this paper.
3. Circle the word *name* in sentence two.
4. Draw five small squares in the upper left corner of this paper.
5. Sign your name under the title.
6. After the title, write "Yes, Yes, Yes."
7. Put a circle around each word in sentence five.
8. Put an "x" in the lower left corner of this paper.
9. Draw a triangle around the "x" you just wrote.
10. If you think that you have followed all the directions up to this point, call out "I have."
11. Draw a rectangle around the word "paper" in sentence four.
12. Call out your first name when you get to this point in the test.
13. On the reverse side of this paper multiply 729 by 2048.
14. Put a circle around your answer. Put a square around the circle.
15. In your normal speaking voice count out loud backwards from ten to one.
16. Now that you have finished reading carefully, do only sentence two.

You have finished. How did you do?

About the Author

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"What Do I Have To Do?" A Guide to Handling Directions

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Students' performance of any given task is to a great degree dependent on their ability to follow directions. Although following directions is not always considered a "comprehension skill," its usefulness for students both at home and at school makes it worthy of consideration. It is generally agreed that students perform more competently when they are able to follow both oral and written directions. The following are suggestions which will assist teachers in helping students achieve this goal:

1. Spend some time going over the vocabulary used in directions. Don't assume that because a student knows the meaning of a word in one situation, s/he will be able to apply it in another.

2. Have students repeat in their own words what is required of them. After directions are read silently, have a student explain what is meant. Students should then reread the directions. Don't allow a student to proceed if s/he is uncertain of what is expected.

3. Make directions to the point and furnish an example. This is important when writing teacher-prepared materials. Avoid redundant and extraneous language.

4. Simplify directions. Do not use more than one direction in a sentence. A direction should be clearly understood before going on to the next direction.

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