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Hey Baby! Teaching Pop Songs That Tell Stories in the ESL Classroom

Dale T. Griffee, University of Pittsburg ELI, Japan

Teachers using pop songs in an ESL or EFL classroom face certain questions. Some of these questions are, do all song techniques work with all songs? What is the best type of song to use? Should I use only short and slow songs? How can I use those hard-to-understand rock songs? What should I do if I read an article on song techniques and I hate the song used to illustrate the techniques? This article, first in a series of four, considers these problems and provides some answers.

Using Pop Songs: Some Problems

As a way of answering some of the above questions, let's look at some of the problems facing teachers who use songs, especially popular songs, in their classroom.

Wandering into a well-stocked CD, tape, and record store can be a bit overwhelming, especially if you haven't been in one for a number of years. If you know what you are looking for, you might be able to find it with luck or help from the clerk. But if you are searching for new songs to try out in an ESL or EFL class, you may come away with nothing except a headache.

Feelings and attitudes toward songs are another problem. None of us feels neutral about popular songs. In a music store we might spot an album that was popular when we were in high school or another album that came out when we were in college, and they make us feel as if we are meeting an old friend. There are also albums with strange and unfamiliar names and pictures of singers in strange clothes. Whatever they are, they're not our kind of music.

These two factors, the large number and variety of recorded songs that are available on the market today and our feelings toward them, are of concern to teachers working with songs. How can teachers work with specific techniques without appearing to recommend the songs they have selected to illustrate those techniques? From the point of view of the teacher evaluating a technique, the song being used to illustrate the technique may be unknown or uncongenial. Therefore, the technique might be disregarded because the teacher might think, "I don't like that kind of music, and I would never teach it" or "I don't see how that technique could apply to the kind of songs I like." Is it possible to match song techniques with songs that teachers already know and have in their own collections, but that other teachers may not know or even personally like? The answer is yes and the purpose of the remainder of this article is to show how.

What Makes a Song Suitable for Teaching?

Let us briefly consider what makes a song suitable for classroom teaching.

Some presenters have suggested that songs suitable for classroom use must be slow and clear so students can catch the words. Others have suggested we should only use top-40 songs to insure relevance. Each of these suggestions contains a valid insight, but my own experience has led me in other directions.

First, we must consider our classes. How many students are there? What is their age? What is their language level? And what are their musical tastes?

We must also consider how the song fits our lesson plan. Are we free to try any activity or are we restricted by a syllabus? Is the song viewed as a supplement to the textbook lesson which can thereby be justified in terms of vocabulary, structure or discussion topic? Or is the song being used after or between regular lessons?

Teachers must also consider themselves. How do you feel about the song? Do you like it? What does the song sound like in the classroom? Is it likely to distract or disturb other teachers and their classes?

And finally, do you have a copy of the song on tape or CD? The best song in the world won't do you any good if you can't find a copy of it.

In summary, my answer to the question of what makes a song suitable for teaching is...

1. the teacher likes it;
2. the students like it;
3. it fits the lesson; and
4. the teacher has a copy of the song.

How Many Types of Songs are There?

If we were able to reduce all the thousands of popular songs into a few easily identifiable types, we could describe song techniques that are compatible with each type. In that way, teachers would be able to classify any popular song and apply song techniques that fit.

There are many ways to classify songs, for example, according to type (e.g. pop, country, soul, rock), according to popularity (e.g. top 10, top 40, top 100); and according to time (e.g. current hits, oldies but goodies, songs of the '60's, etc.) However, when it comes to classifying songs for teaching, none of these schemes is useful.

In terms of song techniques, I have found it helpful to ask these questions: (1) is the song fast or slow? (2) Is the song long or short? (By short I mean shorter than three minutes to three and a half minutes.) And finally, (3) does the song tell a story? Using these criteria I have found it helpful to divide pop songs into four types: (1) songs that tell stories, (2) short and slow songs, (3) short and fast songs, and (4) long songs (longer than four minutes), the majority of which are usually fast.

This is the first article in a series of four on using pop songs in the ESL classroom and will concern itself with type one songs—those that tell stories. The remaining articles, which will appear in future issues of this journal, will deal with the other three types—short and slow songs, short and fast songs, and long songs.

Songs that Tell Stories

Songs that tell stories are songs that have a story line with a beginning, a middle and an end. They are almost always long and fast and for that reason often not easy to sing. See references for some examples of songs that tell stories.

A Possible Lesson Plan

How many song techniques are advisable for one song? There is no certain number, but the answer is probably more than one and less than five. At times I have used as many as four techniques to teach one song: one technique to introduce the song, another to provide students with lyrics, a third technique to work with grammar, and a final technique for class discussion. The following four techniques follow that pattern. *Tell Them A Story* provides the story line of the song, *Song Strips* provides the actual song lyrics, *Paraphrasing* gives students practice consolidating and reviewing lyrics and meaning, and *Point of View* is a discussion technique. These are, of course, not the only techniques that can be used with songs that tell stories.

Tell Them A Story

This technique uses the skills of listening, discussion and writing. It works only with songs that tell stories and is good for low to intermediate students. It is a listening technique that provides students with a paraphrased version of the song before listening.

Before you begin, write out the words to the song. Then write a paraphrased version for your class. Read the paraphrased version of the song to your students. This example comes from the song, "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer."

Rudolph was a reindeer who lived in the north land where there is a lot of snow and ice. He was normal or usual looking except for his nose. It was big and red. He was the only reindeer with a red nose. In fact, his nose would shine and glow in the dark. At night he could always see because of his nose. But the other reindeer didn't like Rudolph because his nose made him look different. They laughed at him. Also they wouldn't let him play games with them.

Then one December night something unusual happened. It was very foggy and Santa Claus could not see. When Santa and his regular reindeer flew into the sky, they became lost because they couldn't see any lights, roads or landmarks. So Santa went to Rudolph and asked him to help him. Santa asked Rudolph to be the lead reindeer. In other words, Rudolph would be in front and the light from his nose would give enough light for Santa and the other reindeer to see. In that way, they would be able to fly to give presents to girls and boys around the world.

After Santa and the reindeer returned to Rudolph's home town, Rudolph was a hero. All the other reindeer were proud of him and said that everybody in the world would always remember him.

As an optional step hand out the story for silent reading and class discussion. Then listen to the song and hand out the song lyrics if desired.

Strip Songs

This technique uses the skills of listening and discussion. It works with all songs and is good with low to intermediate students. Before you begin, cut the song lyrics into strips. Hand out the strips to students in pairs or groups and ask them to arrange them BEFORE they listen. For higher classes, ask students to discuss why they arranged the strips as they did. What clues helped them? Rhyme? Story development? Transition words? Finally, listen and rearrange strips as necessary.

Extensions

1. Give one strip to each student. Ask the student to memorize the strip and throw it away. Then ask the students to arrange themselves in what they believe to be the correct order. When they have arranged themselves, recite the song to the class.

2. Paste the strips on a sheet of colored paper and put it on the bulletin board.

Paraphrasing

This technique uses the skills of writing and discussion. It works with all songs and is good for high beginner and intermediate students. Before you begin, write out the lyrics. Also, write a paraphrased version of the song. Your paraphrased version may be a line for line paraphrase or a short paragraph. Hand out the lyrics and your paraphrase. Ask students to select the paraphrase they think is best. Discuss why.

Paraphrasing is a necessary discussion and clarification tool, but it's not easy. It's rather difficult to paraphrase a thought or an idea without changing its meaning, and many otherwise competent English speakers—including a few teachers—have trouble doing it. Nevertheless, paraphrasing is a necessary language skill and has many uses. For example one use is to check and verify understanding in conversation and discussion.

Paraphrasing has at least three characteristics which students should be aware of. First, it must be in the student's own words. Students cannot use the same words from the original. The phrase "somewhere over the rainbow" can't be paraphrased as "above the rainbow" but might be paraphrased as "somewhere far away" or "in the land of dreams." A paraphrase is not an opinion or an interpretation. It must reflect the original meaning. It tends, however, to use simpler words than the original. Finally, a paraphrase is usually introduced by a phrase such as the following:

in other words ...
are you saying (that) ...
do you mean ...
so what you're saying is ...

Extensions

1. Write a paraphrase of some of the lines of the song and mix these with the remaining original lines. Students arrange them in correct order.

2. Write out a line-by-line paraphrase, reproduce it and cut it into strips. Students arrange the paraphrased strips in correct order either by listening to the song or by comparing the paraphrased strips with the original lyrics.

3. Rewrite street language or dialects into standard language. Ask students to identify and match.

4. Students work in groups. One group writes a paraphrased version of the odd lines while another group writes a paraphrased version of the even lines. They then exchange, correct and re-write.

5. Assign all the lines from a song, one line to each student, pair, or group. Ask each working group to write a paraphrase of their line. After each group has finished writing their paraphrased line, have the lines read in correct order. If you want, paste the line on colored paper and post it next to the original lyrics.

Point of View

This technique uses the skills of discussion and writing. It works with songs that tell stories or songs that present more than one point of view and is good for intermediate students and above.

Many songs are about people who act in various ways. Their actions and motivations can be used for paraphrasing, storytelling, writing and discussion exercises. Before you begin, no special preparation is necessary. Introduce or review the song. Then draw a grid on the board (see example below) with one space for every character or group you want to discuss. The last character is yourself.

Working individually or in groups, ask students to write what they think is each character's point of view relative to the questions in the grid. Ask the students to consider what each character thinks and why they act as they do. Include the student as the last category and ask for personal opinions with such questions as "How do you see the problem?" or "Which character's problem do you think is similar to a problem you have?" Here are some additional discussion questions: "What is probably going to happen to each character in the future? In real life, do you know of anyone in this situation? What did they do? Can you think of a different solution?"

These four song techniques are not, of course, the only techniques that can be used, but they should work with any song that tells a story. Subsequent articles in this four part series will discuss short and slow songs, short and fast songs, and long songs.

Acknowledgements

I first saw the technique *Tell Them A Story* in a class taught by Shawn Keys. *Strip Songs*, Extension One is from

	Character 1	Character 2	Yourself
Question 1: What is the problem for this character?			
Question 2: How does the character deal with the problem?			

Kathi Bailey. *Paraphrasing* Extension One is from P. Dissosway, Extension Three from Marc Helgesen, and Extension Four is based on ideas from Alan Maley and Sandra Moulding.

A Selection of Songs that Tell Stories

American Traditional. "Frankie and Johnny." *Songs Alive*. BBC English

Ruben Blades. "The Hit." *Nothing But the Truth*. Elektra 9-60754-4

Johnny Cash. "A Boy Named Sue." *This is Johnny Cash*. CBK 3014

Harry Chapin. "Cat's In the Cradle." *Even If You Can't Carry A Tune*. New York: Regents Publishing Inc.

Harry Chapin. "Taxi." *Harry Chapin Greatest Stories Live*. Elektra C2-6003

Barry Manilow. "Copacabana." *Barry Manilow Greatest Hits*. Max 1561

Shangri-Las. "Leader of the Pack." *Original Rock & Roll*. GT 5-6251

Bruce Springsteen. "Darlington County." *Born in the USA*. QCT 38653

Kenny Rogers. "The Gambler." *Kenny Rogers Greatest Hits*. 4LV-51152

About the Author

Dale T. Griffee received his MA in TESOL from The School For International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont. He teaches at the University of Pittsburgh ELI, Tokyo. He is author of Listen and Act, *Lingual House 1982; co-author of* HearSay, *Addison-Wesley, 1986;* More HearSay *and* Conversation Directions, *Addison-Wesley, in press; and* Songs in Action, *Prentice Hall-Regents, in press.*

Dollars for Scholars: A "Thank You"

In the last few years, many *TESL Reporter* subscribers have contributed to the Alice C. Pack TESL Scholarship Fund. To all of you who have done so, the students and teachers in the TESOL (teacher-preparation) program at Brigham Young University—Hawaii express heartfelt gratitude.

This fund exists to assist students who demonstrate both academic excellence and financial need while pursuing a degree in TESOL at BYU-Hawaii. Many of these students come from developing nations in the South Pacific and Asia where their teaching skills are badly needed but the money to finance a university education is in short supply.

A number of *TESL Reporter* readers have considered their contributions to this scholarship fund a way of "paying back" some of the benefits they have received from their subscription to the *TESL Reporter*. If you would like to join their ranks, your tax-deductible contribution, large or small, will be welcome and put to good use.

Money orders or checks payable to the "Alice Pack TESL Scholarship" should be sent to The Development Office, BYUH Box 1906, Laie, HI 96762 USA or to the *TESL Reporter* c/o the editor.

Student-Generated Newspapers in an American Culture Course

Sophia Shang, Kagoshima Women's College, Japan

There are many reasons for having students make class newspapers. In the case of my course in American culture for Japanese students, the purpose was threefold:

1. to give my students a chance to summarize what they had studied in class
2. to inform other students of what each of my students had learned about American culture
3. to introduce my students to computers and give them a realistic and purposeful experience using them.

As additional benefits, by making class newspapers, my students would be able to practice the skills they had developed in their basic writing course the year before. At the same time, they could improve their editing skills, and using the computer would make this editing process easier.

The Course

The prerequisite for this course in American culture was a passing grade in a required writing course for college sophomores in the English department at Kagoshima Women's College. This writing course focused on building students' skills at the sentence and single paragraph level.

The American culture course, an elective for upperclassmen, ran for 30 weeks, divided into two semesters. The class met once a week for 90 minutes.

The Newspaper

Four newspapers were scheduled for the first semester and six for the second semester. Once the class got going, every three weeks one group was in charge of publishing a newspaper.

Each newspaper had five sections:

1. **interview**—preferably with an English-speaking foreigner
2. **class news**—summaries of topics discussed in class
3. **music**—an introduction to an English-language song and an interpretation of the song
4. **movie review**—a summary of the plot of an American movie as well as the reviewer's opinion about it
5. **book review**—a summary of a book about some aspect of American culture

"Staff" Assignments

The fourteen students in the course were divided into two groups. A rotating assignment chart ensured that each student in each group would write for each of the five sections at least once. The two students assigned to sections one and three were the general editors of that issue of the

newspaper. These editors were in charge of the newspaper cover, layout, copying and distribution.

Procedure

On the first day of class, I introduced the idea of class newspapers. The students were given a handout explaining the parts of a newspaper, guidelines for the articles, and the responsibilities of the editors.

Then the students received another handout explaining, in considerable detail, how to operate the computer since some of the students had little experience using one. (We used Twinstar, the English and Japanese version of Wordstar, on NEC9801 computers.) We went to the computer lab and followed the handout step by step. All the students had a chance to try using the computer.

The students were given four weeks to practice using the computer—composing, typing, and editing their articles. The editors of the first issue had to spend extra time learning how to format the paper. For the second issue, the first editors taught the new editors how to format the newspaper and print it out.

When finished, the newspapers were distributed to all members of the American culture class, freshman English majors, the English-teaching faculty, and several other interested teachers.

Beneficial Outcomes

The most important benefit of these classroom newspapers was attitudinal. In the course of the publishing experience, the students' attitude changed from "learning English because they were English majors" to "producing a good newspaper." They were happy to see themselves in print and proud of their newspaper.

Another major benefit involved students' editing skills. After an issue had been distributed, fifteen to twenty minutes of the next class period was spent reading the newspaper and making suggestions for improvement. At this time, the students had another chance to check their articles although the newspaper had already been printed.

In addition, most students thought that making newspapers was very satisfying because they could see the tangible results of their hard work. Some students were also able to use their creative, artistic talent--designing the newspaper cover and layout.

Finally, the students learned how to work, cooperate and help each other. The use of the computer for newspaper layout and editing encouraged this cooperation. In the process, students learned the basics for using Twinstar, and several of them now do other homework on the computer.

About the Author

Sophia Shang received her M.A. in TESL in 1984 from the University of Illinois. Currently, she is a lecturer at Kagoshima Women's College in Japan. She is especially interested in using video in the classroom.

Poster Project in "Rollage"

Charles R. French

When we give students the opportunity to use language as a necessary means to a 'real' end, we better approximate the conditions in which language is ordinarily acquired, one always having an authentic communicative goal to which language is subordinated. A class poster project dedicated to a single theme is one means to bring such authenticity into classroom learning.

The idea for such a project occurred to me while browsing through magazines in a dentist's office. On the back inside cover on one I'd picked up was an advertisement for an airline whose pictorial focus was a 'rollage' designed by the Czechoslovakian artist Kolar, the apparent inventor of the technique.

The technique seemed simple enough in its essential aspects for children to apply. Basically, all one needed to do was to integrate strips from two graphic images, alternating one with the other to form a composite picture wherein no information was lost from the originals. The challenge lay in the selection of images whose integration achieved the desired impact when interpreted by an appropriate caption.

I decided to give this as an assignment to all my students between 6th and 12th grade, allowing everyone about a month to do the job. (During this period, the 6th and 7th graders were required to turn in an "experimental" rollage which combined any two images whatsoever—just to make sure they understood the instructions and were giving some thought to the problem.) The best results from each course were placed on display on our school's bulletin board, where they comprised an evocative exposition underlined in English.

Of course, a significant objective of the project was the prompting of the reading and consultation that went into making meaning of the instructions that appear below (Since then, they have been modified somewhat, and I have no doubt that others can yet improve upon them and share every hope that they will.)

Poster Project Instructions

General Theme: Respect for Nature

General Guidelines:

1. Make a poster to promote respect for our natural environment.
2. Use 'rollage', the multi-image technique developed by the Czechoslovakian artist Kolar.

Specific Instructions:

1. Find two photo or print images to cut and paste into a rollage. it doesn't matter if the images are not the same size.
2. Use a ruler to draw lines on the backside of the images to make strips of equal width. (Strip width strip for image one may differ from strip width for image two. The aim is to divide each image into the same number of total strips.)

3. Number the strips to help keep them in order after they are cut. (Press lightly with your pen or pencil.)
4. Cut the images into strips.
5. Paste the strips onto a sheet of construction paper, alternating the strips, in order, from each original image. (The construction paper used in this step may be any color you choose. Strip arrangement need not be rectangular.)
6. Paste your rollage onto a sheet of white construction paper, leaving a border 4 cm. wide at the top and sides and 5 cm. wide at the bottom.
7. Type or print a caption in two lines on a piece of white paper 2 cm. wide. (You determine the length.)
8. Center and paste the caption in the space beneath your rollage.
9. Write your name and grade on the back of the poster.
10. Turn your poster in by the due date.

Captions:

You may choose one of the following captions to complete your poster or invent your own. Make sure your choice fits the meaning you want your rollage to convey.

1. Let's take better care of Mother Earth. She isn't getting any younger.
2. When will we stop mistreating our _____? We don't have forever.
3. All life comes from one common source. Can we harm _____ without harming ourselves?
4. Mankind and _____. We've got a relationship worth preserving.
5. Earth was not created by man. Let's stop acting as if we owned the place.

About the Author

Charles R. French received a B.S. in Special Education in 1975 and an M.A. in Educational Psychology in 1976 from Eastern Michigan University. Between 1977 and 1988, he taught composition to EFL students at Universidad Austral in Valdivia, Chile. Currently, he teaches 5th-12th grade students at the British School in Punta Arenas, Chile.

Sample "Rollage" Poster

Record Number of Foreign Students at U.S. Colleges and Universities

People's Republic of China is Leading Place of Origin

A new high of 386,900 foreign students attended colleges and universities in the United States in the 1989-90 academic year. Asian students are the fastest-growing sector of U.S. foreign student enrollment. Growth from the People's Republic of China (up 15% from last year) continued unabated, despite recent regulation of overseas degree study by the Chinese government. China was again the leading place of origin with 33,400 students, followed by Taiwan with 31,000. The number of students from third-ranked Japan increased 24% to 29,800 in a single year.

The Institute of International Education (IIE) recently published its annual statistics on foreign students at 2,891 accredited U.S. institutions, based on surveys conducted with grant support from the U.S. Information Agency (USIA). The new book, *Open Doors 1989/90*, reports that Asians fueled a 5.6% worldwide growth rate in 1989/90, the first large annual increase in foreign student numbers since the early eighties. Students from all South and East Asian nations numbered 208,100 (54% of the world total). Eight of the top ten places of origin were in Asia.

IIE President Richard M. Krasno commented in announcing the data that, "the United States continues to be a magnet for students from all rapidly-developing nations. The contribution that U.S. higher education can make to economic development is perhaps better recognized abroad than it is in the U.S."

Growth from All World Regions Except Africa, Middle East

Although Asian students were the major engine of growth, numbers from Latin America (48,100), Europe (46,000), North America (18,600) and Oceania (4,000) all increased at rates varying from 7 to 11%. Enrollments from the Middle East and Africa continued a steady decline. Both dropped 7% to 37,300 and 24,600 respectively. Middle Eastern students were nearly 30% of the total 10 years ago, and are less than 10% today. African students constituted 12% of foreign students in the United States a decade ago, and only 6% today. Especially sharp declines in numbers from Iran and Nigeria account for much of the decrease.

The number of students from the top five places of origin (China, Taiwan, Japan, India and Korea) almost doubled from 73,000 five years ago to 142,100 in 1989/90. Although numbers from China and Taiwan increased very substantially over that period, the steepest recent percentage increase has come from Japan, up 98% in just 3 years from 15,100 to 29,800.

Significant Statistics

For the first time in the 40 years IIE has conducted surveys, business (75,600, or 19.5%) edged out engineering (73,400) as the field attracting the most foreign

students. The next most popular fields were math/computer sciences (36,200) and physical/life sciences (32,900).

Foreign graduate students are still outnumbered by undergraduates, but the gap is shrinking. Graduate students numbered 169,800 (44% of total), with doctoral students increasing sharply (11% growth) to 59,700. East Asian students pursue graduate rather than undergraduate education in the U.S. in a 2:1 ratio and are the main source of growth in graduate enrollment.

California leads all other states in the number of foreign students, with 54,200 enrolled, followed by New York (38,400) and Texas (24,200). Two top-ten states, California and Florida, saw their foreign student enrollment expand by 10% in a single year.

Despite this Sunbelt growth, the Northeast still hosts the largest numbers, with 94,500 foreign students. The Northeast led the Midwest (87,100), South (80,800), Pacific Coast (72,000), Southwest (38,300) and Mountain (12,800) regions.

Women foreign students numbered 131,300 (34%), the largest number and percentage ever. The proportional share of women in foreign study traditionally has been low, hovering between 20 and 25% until the seventies, but has grown steadily over the past decade.

Enrollment in pre-academic intensive English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) programs is up sharply. Foreign student enrollment in ESL programs is a good indicator of the trend in foreign student flows. These students tend to go on to full-time degree study at U.S. colleges and universities. ESL enrollments grew 18% to 35,000 students, up from 29,700 the prior year. The largest increase was among Japanese ESL students (11,700), up 24% from last year.

How to Order *Open Doors 1989/90*

The new *Open Doors* is available prepaid at $34.95 plus $3 handling from IIE BOOKS, 809 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017-3580. The book is a 200-page statistical report on the annual IIE international student census with extensive explanatory text and over 100 supporting statistical tables and charts.

Brief Statistical Summary

Total Foreign Students in U.S. Colleges and Universities: 386,851

Total Foreign Students in Intensive English Language Programs: 35,036

Leading Places of Origin and % Change:

China	33,390	+15.0%
Taiwan	30,960	+7.6%
Japan	29,840	+24.3%
India	26,240	+12.4%
Korea, Rep. of	21,710	+5.3%
Canada	17,870	+11.5%
Malaysia	14,110	-12.7%
Hong Kong	11,230	+6.3%
Indonesia	9,390	+7.7%
Iran	7,440	-16.9%

Pronouncing American English: Sounds, Stress and Intonation

Hideko Howell, Brigham Young University

PRONOUNCING AMERICAN ENGLISH: SOUNDS, STRESS AND INTONATION. Gertrude F. Orion. New York: Newbury House, 1989. pp. xxiv + 321. Paper $19.50. Cassettes.

Pronouncing American English is a textbook for ESL/EFL students at all levels. It is not designed to teach students to sound like Americans, but rather to speak understandable (intelligible) English, even if it is with a charming foreign accent.

This book has thirty-five units divided into four parts. The first two parts deal with suprasegmental features of American English, such as vowel duration, syllable and word stress (including vowel reduction), and sentence intonation. The next two deal with vowel and consonant sounds. The book is designed to help the students develop a feel for the overall sounds in the English language by introducing the suprasegmental features first and then letting them practice the individual phonemes later.

At the beginning of each unit, brief but helpful tips for how to produce the target sound are provided. There are various practice activities, such as comparing similar sounds, listening, and practicing articulatory positions for target sounds, as well as the stress and intonation practice.

Each unit not only focuses on the target sound but also deals with suprasegmentals, such as intonation and stress. In practice exercises, the target sounds are introduced in various word and sentence positions. Stressed syllables are marked by the use of upper case letters. This visual aid helps students to be aware of stress as well as vowel reduction.

This text is most helpful in its treatment of vowel reduction. This topic is introduced in Unit Four, "Syllable Stress," and covered again in Unit Six, "Content Words and Function Words." This treatment is particularly helpful for native speakers of languages such as Spanish and Japanese since they tend to pronounce vowels clearly even when the vowels are in unstressed positions.

Among ESL texts, pronunciation texts tend to be the most boring. Listening and speaking texts have many enjoyable activities, reading texts have interesting stories, and writing texts let students express their thoughts and feelings, but many pronunciation texts typically offer none of these advantages. *Pronouncing American English* attempts to remedy this problem. For example, in the "Home Assignment" section at the end of each unit, there are riddles, proverbs, poems, and other activities with which to practice the target sounds.

Pronouncing American English is one of the few ESL pronunciation texts to focus on the suprasegmental features of English. It offers valuable guidance and practice in this area.

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TESOL Senior Seminar Research at Brigham Young University-Hawaii

Since 1968, the TESOL program at Brigham Young University—Hawaii has been preparing people to teach English to speakers of other languages.

Ten years ago, the requirements for a B.A. degree in TESOL at BYU-Hawaii were modified to include a "senior seminar." One of the requirements of this course was to plan, conduct, and report on a senior research project.

Numerous research questions of interest to other TESOL professionals have been investigated by TESOL students at BYU-Hawaii over the last ten years. The great majority of the reports on their research have now been compiled and organized. *TESL Reporter* readers interested in obtaining copies of these reports may request them by contacting the editor.

Titles and Authors

"A Study of the Effect of Intonation on ESL Students' Comprehension." Susanna Pik Yi So (1990).

"English Article Acquisition of Tongan L1 speakers and Cantonese L1 Speakers." Faye Funa (1990).

"The Accuracy of Teacher Judgement of the English Writing Ability of University ESL Students." Brent Green (1990).

"The Study Habits of Samoan and Japanese Students: A Comparative Analysis." Larry Purcell (1990).

"An Analysis of the English Language Needs of LDS Church Leaders in EFL Settings." Daleena M. Craig (1989).

"The 'Principle Effect' in Action—Determining Why Students Improve on the BE 220 English Grammar Test." McKay Eckman (1989).

"Common Writing Errors made by Locally Born and Educated Students Attending Brigham Young University—Hawaii Campus." Mildred Fuertes (1989).

"Readability of the Language Used on Teacher Evaluation Forms at BYU-H." Chanmaly Heung (1989).

"A Comparative Analysis of the Study Habits of Tongan and Singaporean Students." Mele Taukeiaho (1989).

"Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students: Who are they? Some Classroom Teachers' Experience." Rosalind Meno Ram (1989).

"Correlation of MTELP and CELT Scores for BYU-HC ELI Students: A Basis for Future Alternatives." Peter Tovey (1989).

"Essay Quality and Time Allowed for Writing: Increasing the Practicality of the ELI Essay Evaluation Process." Lindy K. Tham (1989).

"Variability in Writing Conferences." Christina M. Dahlqvist (1988).

"Dictionary vs. Contextual Clues." Sam Lee (1988).

"A Contrastive Analysis of Cantonese and Mandarin." Vicki Yung (1988).

"A Contrastive Analysis: Question Patterns in Mandarin and English." Christine K. Y. Chu (1988).

"Cognitive Strategy Transfer in Second

Language Reading." Benjamin Juan (1988).

"Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis Working Together." Sheila Lalonde (1988).

"A Critique of Three Classroom Observational Instruments." Zoe Ann Aki (1987).

"Live vs. Taped Dictation: Validity, Practicality, and Affect." Jaclyn Ip (1987).

"Functions of English for Hong Kong Students at Brigham Young University—Hawaii Campus." Zachariah K. H. Leung (1987).

"ELI Class Size and Passing Percentage, Are They Related?" Beth Haymond (1987).

"Live Dictation and Taped Dictation: Students' Performance and Affective Reaction." Mee Lee Lai (1987).

"The Relationship Between English Proficiency and Gesture Recognition." Kristen Phyfe (1987).

"A Comparison of the Acceptable-Word and Exact-Word Methods for Scoring a Cloze Test." Connie Kojima (1986).

"Non-Verbal Oral Language: A Difficulty Faced by ESL Students." Teri Lee Lehman (1986).

"Foreigner Talk: Implications for the ESL Teacher." Debbie Li (1986).

"The Difficulties of Teaching English as a Second Language in Hong Kong." Diana Tang (1986).

"Error Gravity: A Study of BYU-HC Faculty Opinion of ESL Writing Errors." Leslie Guinto (1986).

"Advantages and Disadvantages of Multiple-Choice Cloze." Ruby Ho (1986).

"A Contrastive Analysis of the English and Tongan Consonants." Teuila Latukefu (1986).

"Taiwan Mandarin: An Overview." Richard Timms (1986).

"Anxiety and its Affects on Test Performance." Annette Lukachovsky (1985).

"Literature: Its Values in Tonga's ESL Classrooms." Hisipaniola L. Makalo (1985).

"The Criterion Validity of Carleton's 'Blur Test'." Mere Meha (1985).

"The Inductive Approach versus the Deductive Approach to Teaching ESL Students the Order of Noun Modifiers in English." Johnny Ka Wing Mok (1985).

"Dictation as an English Language Proficiency Test." Yoshihisa Ohyatsu (1985).

"Motivating ESL Students in English Reading." Silipa Lutui (1985).

"Recognition-Production Problems in ESL Word Games." Galen Bench (1984).

"Predicting the Rate of Second-Language Acquisition from a Measure of First-Language Proficiency." Venny M. K. Lai (1984).

"A Study of the Effectiveness of Formal Instruction on Learners' Acquisition of the Order of Noun Modifiers in English." Jamie Chia (1984).

"Culture as an Impediment to Learning." Moira Stevenson (1984).

"T-units for Testing ESL Writing." May Kwong (1983).

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"Barriers to Developing English Speaking Skills for Adult Japanese Speakers." Nobuo Tsuda (1983).

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"What Happened with the Cloze Test?" Norma Murray (1982).

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"Sexism in Language." Elisabeth Ekedahl (1980).

"Male-Female Differences in Verb Inflection Errors in the Speech and Writing of Tongan Learners of English." Lorinda Cluff (1980).

Conference Announcements

"Teaching and Learning English in Challenging Situations" is the theme of the Malaysian English Language Teaching Association's First International Conference to be held May 14-17, 1991 in Kuala Lumpur. Contact: MELTA Seminar committee, Wisma FAM, Jalan SS 5/9, 47301 Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.

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

The Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT) will sponsor its Seventeenth Annual International Conference on Language Teaching/Learning November 2-4, 1991 in Kobe, Japan. The deadline for submission of proposals 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.

"California on the Move: Creating Strategies for the 90s" is the theme of the Twenty-second Annual Conference of California Teachers of English as a Second Language (CATESOL) to be held at the Santa Clara Convention Center April 11-14, 1991. Contact: Kara Rosenberg at (415) 493-1236 or (415) 858-0367 or Alice Gosak, 401 S. 15th Street, San Jose, California 95112. Tel. (408) 993-0119.

The Twenty-fifth Annual Convention of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) will be held in New York City, March 24-28, 1991. Contact: TESOL Convention Department, 1600 Cameron Street, Suite 300, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Tel. (703) 836-0774 Fax. (703) 836-7864.

The American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) will hold its conference (in cooperation with TESOL) in New York City March 21-24, 1991. Contact: AAAL, 1325 18th St. N.W., Suite 211, Washington, D.C. 20036-6501.

"SocioCognitive Approaches to Second Language Acquisition Theory" is the theme of the Eleventh Annual Second Language Research Forum to be held February 28 to March 3, 1991 at the University of Southern California. Contact: Constance Gergen, Co-Chair, SLRF 1991, Department of Linguistics, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California 90089-1693. Tel. (213) 743-2003 Fax. (213) 747-4176.

The Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics 1991 will be held April 1-4. Contact: Carol J. Kreidler, Coordinator, GURT 1991, SLL Dean's Office, School of Languages and Linguistics, Georgetown University, Washington, DC 20057.

Debate Topics

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Once the teacher feels that everyone knows how to word a resolution, the following assignment is given:

> For tomorrow/next week, bring in five debate topics, correctly worded.

The date the assignment is due, the teacher collects the students' work and types up a list of all the topics. Duplicate subjects can be eliminated. Poorly worded resolutions or those which are not clear can be put at the bottom of the list or on a separate sheet. The teacher then duplicates the list and gives every student a copy. Together the class can improve the poorly written resolutions. The list is discussed in class to ensure that the meaning of every resolution is clear. Those who generated unclear resolutions can be asked to explain or clarify.

Students bring the list to class with them and whenever a debate topic needs to be chosen they pull out their list and propose a topic. I usually let the class choose two or three topics and then vote. New topics can be added to the list at any time.

Other Uses

Obviously, these topics, being controversial, also lend themselves nicely to writing activities.

About the Author

Susan Rosenfeld is the director of the English Language Program at the American Cultural Center in Niamey, Niger (West Africa). Prior to assuming her present position, Ms. Rosenfeld taught in Burundi and Senegal.

Generating Debate Topics

Susan Rosenfeld, American Cultural Center, Niger

This activity prepares upper-intermediate or advanced students for holding debates in class (or clubs). It is appropriate for classes stressing intensive listening and speaking skills.

Background

When I first began teaching a Listening Comprehension/Oral Expression course, the students and I thought it would be a great idea to have debates. But we could never quite get started. My asking, "What shall we debate next week?" was met with silence. Result: no debates at all that year. This is what I did the following year.

Procedure

First, explain how a debate resolution is worded. It is not a question, but rather a statement with which one can agree or disagree. Example: "Should abortion be legalized?" is NOT a debate resolution. "Abortion should be legalized," or "Abortion should be outlawed" is. Discuss other examples of correct and incorrect resolutions. In resolutions such as "Tourists should not be allowed in our national forests" it is important to point out that "pro" and "con" are "pro" and "con" with reference to the statement. Since the resolution contains a negative, those "pro" are not in favor of tourists visiting national forests.\I learned to emphasize this point the hard way, when both "pro" and "con" prepared the same side of a debate a few years ago because the resolution contained a negative and thus was misunderstood by one team. In class have the students generate a few debate topics and have them work on the wording.

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