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# Line-up Spelling Bee: A New Twist on a Classic Learning Activity

Peter Duppenhaler, ELC Foreign Language Institute

Although the traditional spelling bee is something that many of us took part in during our younger days, it does not seem to be used very often in the ESL/EFL classroom. Perhaps the reason for this is the usually large size of these classes and the fact that students who are eliminated early naturally become bored and restless.

Following the simple modifications to this activity as outlined below, however, eliminates this problem. My experience with both children and adult language learners has shown that these modified "line-up spelling bee" procedures can make the "good old spelling bee" an enjoyable and effective teaching tool.

The activity itself is intended to be used as either a follow-up or review of the meaning and spelling of vocabulary items. In addition, it is a good diagnostic tool for pinpointing words that are giving students trouble. Finally, it is an excellent way to encourage clear, easy to read handwriting.

## Traditional Spelling Bee Procedures

For those readers who are not familiar with the traditional spelling bee, it runs along the following, basic lines:

1. The teacher divides the class into two teams (or selects two team leaders who take turns naming people they want on their respective teams until all the members of the class have been selected).
2. The teams line up on opposite sides of the room.
3. The teacher says a word to the first player on one team who then spells it aloud.
4. If the player misspells it, he/she sits down and the same word is given to the first player on the opposite team.
5. If that player spells it correctly, he/she remains standing and the next player on the other team gets the next word.
6. Play continues in this way, the two team alternating turns, and any player who makes a mistake sits down. When the last player on a team has had a turn, play returns to the first player. If time allows, play continues until only one player is left standing.

## Line-up Spelling Bee

A line-up spelling bee bears some similarities to the traditional type, but there are also some critical differences, as the procedural outline below indicates. It can be played with learners at any level although it seems to work best with younger learners. The time required is about ten to fifteen minutes.

The teacher will need a card file with one vocabulary item per card. (A card file offers the teacher the advantage of being able to quickly and easily add, remove, or rearrange the cards.) The vocabulary items, of course, are selected by the teacher on the basis of course objectives, student difficulties, etc.

Each card should have the selected English word on one side and the students' native-language equivalent on the other side. Chalk and a blackboard are also needed, but these are found in almost every classroom and require no special preparation. No student materials are called for.

**Procedure:**

1. The teacher divides the students into two to five teams depending on the size of the class.
2. The members of each team form a line perpendicular to the blackboard.
3. The teacher or one of the students acts as caller. (Note: Teachers who do not speak the students' native language can select a card, look at it, and then hand it to the caller, who then reads out the native-language equivalent on the back of the card.)
4. The caller reads the native-language equivalent of the word on the card, and the team members at the blackboard compete to be the first to write the target-language (i.e., English) equivalent of the word on the blackboard. Students are allowed to encourage each other, but they are not allowed to help each other.
5. The teacher erases all but the first, correctly spelled word.
6. The students at the front of each line now move to the end of their team's line, and the next team member moves up to be ready to write the next word. In this way, all students remain active players throughout the activity.

7. The caller gives the next word.

8. The activity continues until all the words have been called or the teacher says that time is up. This should be a fast review of material, so ten to fifteen minutes should be enough. The activity can be repeated later with new or frequently missed words.

9. The team (rather than any one individual as in the case of a traditional spelling bee) with the most words on the blackboard at the end is declared the winner.

**Variation 1:** The teacher says the word in the target language (i.e., English) rather than the native-language equivalent, and students then write it. The "illogical" English language sound-spelling correspondence comes home quickly.

**Variation 2:** The teacher says the word in the target language (i.e., English) rather than the native-language equivalent. Students must correctly spell it (as in variation one), and then, for an additional point, correctly pronounce it.

**About the Author**

*Peter Duppenthaler received his M.Ed. (TESOL) from Temple University. He has taught English in Japan since 1974, and is currently chief of both the Educational Research Division and the Educational Training Section at ECC Foreign Language Institute, Japan.*

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# The Story of Elvis Presley: Using Pair Work with Written Materials to Promote Listening Comprehension

Patrick Blanche, The Tokyo Center  
for Language and Culture

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Perhaps the most important part of any listening comprehension lesson should be the first one, the anticipation phase, which "sets the stage" for the listening activity itself. Some textbook writers have recommended a dictated introduction consisting of a few sentences that tell something about the subject of the (recorded) conversation or monologue to follow (James, Whitley and Bode, 1980). Others have suggested asking learners to read background references first and then to make predictions about the actual contents of the recording (Rost and Lance, 1984). This writer has advocated the use of a written summary that is cut into several strips of paper on which only five to fifteen words are shown: the students work in small groups and each group must reconstruct the summary by piecing the fragments together (Blanche, 1984). A short guided discussion on a related subject could also be a good opener, but it would require a fairly high level of overall linguistic development.

One advantage of the written materials is that they can more easily bring passive knowledge and receptive skills into play, and topics into focus. Yet I feel that their intrinsic effectiveness might be increased if they featured information gaps which could be filled in through pair work. The following is an illustration of what could be done in this respect.

## Materials

1. "Missing information: the life of Elvis Presley" (see figure one) was taken from *Pair Work One*, student-A and student-B books (Peter Watcyn-Jones, Penguin Books, 1984). This pair work exercise would pave the way for the listening comprehension activity.
2. "Elvis Presley—story of a superstar" (see figure two) was taken from *American Streamline! Connections* (Bernard Hartley and Peter Viney, Oxford University Press, 1984). The commercial tape recording of this story (which incorporates more complex language and more detailed information than the written materials previously used) would constitute the listening component proper.

## Procedures

**Prelistening.** The learners work with the written material in pairs and simply follow the directions given at the beginning. The instructor monitors their performance, corrects only the most serious errors by rephrasing some questions/answers as s/he walks around the room, and answers the questions addressed to him/her personally.<sup>1</sup>

**First listening.** The learners are told that they are going to hear a slightly different and longer version of the story they have just read. They are also asked to spot



## Blanche/The Story of Elvis

### Missing information: the life of Elvis Presley

A pop magazine has just started a new series called 'The History of Rock'n'Roll.' Each week it presents a short life-history of a famous rock'n'roll singer. On the opposite page is the life-history of this week's star -- Elvis Presley. Unfortunately, some of the information about him is missing. By asking Student B/Student A questions, fill in the missing information (Student B/Student A also has missing information and will ask you questions).

Before you start, read through the life of Elvis on the opposite page and work out which questions to ask. For example:

PART A

- What was his father's name?
- What sort of job did he get when he left school?
- When did his mother die?

PART B

- When was he born?
- Where did he move to in 1948?
- What happened in 1972?

Full name: Elvis Aaron Presley  
Parents: ..... and Gladys Presley  
Brothers/sisters: Jesse Garon (twin brother)  
 Died at birth

Full name: Elvis Aaron Presley  
Parents: Vernon and Gladys Presley  
Brothers/sisters: Jesse Garon (twin brother)  
 Died .....

Year	Main event(s)
1935	Born in ..... Mississippi, on January 8th.
1942	.....
1948	Moved to Memphis, Tennessee. Started at a new school. His father bought him .....
1953	Left school and got a job as ..... with the Crown Electrical Company. That summer, he went along to Sun Records in Memphis and paid \$4 to record two songs for ..
1954	Saw Phillips, the owner of Sun Records, asked Elvis to record a song called '.....' 20,000 people bought the record.
1955	Met Colonel Tom Parker. He became Elvis's manager.
....	Recorded a song called 'Heartbreak Hotel.' It sold over a million copies.
1957	Made more records -- all of them were big hits. Became known as the 'King of Rock'n' Roll.' He bought..... in Memphis which he called Graceland. Also went to Hollywood to make his first film -- <u>Love Me Tender</u> .
1958	Went into the army and became a soldier in West Germany. On ..... his mother died.
1960	Left the army and went back to Hollywood to make more films.
1967	Got married to Priscilla Beaumont -- a girl he had first met when .....
....	Appeared on a special television show. His daughter, Lisa Marie, was born.
1972	His wife, Priscilla, left him.
....	Elvis and Priscilla got divorced.
1977	Died of a heart attack at the age of ..... on August 16th. He left all his money to .. 80,000 people turned up for his funeral and his records were played on the radio all day.
1978	100 million Elvis LPs were sold. The 'King of Rock'n'Roll' was dead but certainly not forgotten.

Year	Main event(s)
1935	Born in Tupelo, Mississippi, on .....
1942	Got a guitar from his father for his birthday.
1948	Moved to ..... Tennessee. Started at a new school.
....	Left school and got a job as a driver with the Crown Electrical Company. That summer, he went along to Sun Records in Memphis and paid \$..... to record two songs for his mother's birthday.
1954	Saw Phillips, the owner of Sun Records, asked Elvis to record a song called 'That's All Right.' ..... people bought the record.
1955	Met Colonel ..... He became Elvis's manager.
1956	Recorded a song called 'Heartbreak Hotel.' It sold over a million copies.
1957	Made more records -- all of them were big hits. Became known as the 'King of Rock'n'Roll.' He bought a big house in Memphis which he called Graceland. Also went to ..... to make his first film -- <u>Love Me Tender</u> .
1958	Went into the Army and became a soldier in West Germany. On August 16th, his mother died.
....	Left the army and went back to Hollywood to make more films.
1967	Got married to Priscilla Beaumont -- a girl he had first met when he was a soldier in West Germany.
1968	Appeared on a special television show. His daughter, ....., was born.
1972	.....
1973	Elvis and Priscilla got divorced.
....	Died of a heart attack at the age of 42 on August 16th. He left all his money to his daughter. .... people turned up for his funeral and his records were played on the radio all day.
1978	100 million Elvis LPs were sold. The 'King of Rock'n'Roll' was dead but certainly not forgotten.

Figure 1.

## Elvis Presley -- story of a superstar

When Elvis Presley died on August 16, 1977, radio and television programs all over the world were interrupted to give the news of his death. President Carter was asked to declare a day of national mourning. Carter said: "Elvis Presley changed the face of American popular culture... He was unique and irreplaceable." Eighty thousand people attended his funeral. The streets were jammed with cars, and Elvis Presley movies were shown on television, and his records were played on the radio all day. In the year after his death, 100 million Presley albums were sold.

Elvis Presley was born on January 8, 1935, in Tupelo, Mississippi. His twin brother, Jesse Garon, died at birth. His parents were very poor and Elvis never had music lessons, but he was surrounded by music from an early age. His parents were very religious, and Elvis regularly sang at church services. In 1948, when he was thirteen, his family moved to Memphis, Tennessee. He left school in 1953 and got a job as a truck driver. In the summer of 1953 Elvis paid \$4 and recorded two songs for his mother's birthday at Sam Phillips's Sun Records studio. Sam Phillips heard Elvis and asked him to record That's All Right in July 1954. 20,000 copies were sold, mainly in and around Memphis. He made five more records for Sun, and in July 1955 he met Colonel Tom Parker, who became his manager in November. Parker sold Elvis's contract to RCA records. Sun Records got \$35,000 and Elvis got \$5,000. With the money he bought a pink Cadillac for his mother. On January 10, 1956, Elvis recorded Heartbreak Hotel, and a million copies were sold. In the next fourteen months he made another fourteen records, and they were all big hits. In 1956 he also made his first movie in Hollywood.

In March 1958, Elvis had to join the army. When his hair was cut thousands of women cried. He spent the next two years in Germany, where he met Priscilla Beaulieu, who became his wife eight years later on May 1, 1967. In 1960 he left the army and went to Hollywood where he made several movies during the next few years.

By 1968 many people had become tired of Elvis. He hadn't performed live since 1960. But he recorded a new album, From Elvis in Memphis, and appeared in a TV special. He became popular again, and went to Las Vegas, where he was paid \$750,000 for four weeks. In 1972 his wife left him, and they were divorced in October 1973. He died of a heart attack. He had been working too hard and eating and drinking too much for several years. He left all his money to his only daughter, Lisa Marie Presley. She became one of the richest people in the world when she was only nine years old.

as much new or different information as they can while listening to the tape.<sup>2</sup>

**First discussion.** In small groups, the students discuss perceived differences between the written version and the recorded version of Elvis's story. One person in each group announces the results of their discussion to the whole class.

**Optional listening.** At this stage, the teacher could direct the students' attention to some important points that might have been missed. For instance, s/he could write a couple of statements on the board, play the tape one more time and ask the class to tell him/her whether these statements were true or false (e.g., Elvis's parents were very religious: true; in 1953, Elvis got a job as a taxi driver: false).

**Second (or third) listening.** The tapescript is broken up into three parts: A, B and C. These segments are about the same length and are interspersed with an approximately equal number of blanks to be filled in. The class is divided into three or more groups and the students in each group get only one part of the script. Then the tape is played again.

**Second discussion.** The learners in each group compare their work and fill in some more blanks.

**Third (or fourth) listening.** Now the learners try to bridge the remaining information gaps.

**Third Discussion.** A, B and C students compare notes a second time within

their respective group. If there are still some blanks which haven't been filled in correctly, the teacher writes the corresponding answers on the board—but doesn't write them in any order. S/he asks the class where each word belongs, and then collects the written material.

**Written reconstruction.** Here comes the fun part! The students form A-B-C triads and start paraphrasing (rather than reproducing) the whole script together.

**Loud reading.** A male or female spokesman is chosen in each triad. Two or three spokesmen will be called upon to read out the story they have helped to reconstruct. The instructor will point out the discrepancies between the students' accounts, if any. This will also be a good time for him/her to correct some errors if error correction is desired. The students will hand in their papers at the end of the reading phase.

**Speaking out.** Finally, the students tell each other the story of Elvis Presley. To make it more challenging, the teacher could ask them to get into different groups again. Within each group a C person would begin with the A portion of the script, an A person would go on with the B part and a C person would conclude with the last part.

**Follow-up procedures.** As the learners are reading or telling their version of the reconstructed story, their speech can be recorded. If this procedure is followed, the instructor will have a complete practice tape which the learners will be able to use later

*(continued on page 56)*



## TESL Seminar Presentations Cover Wide Variety of Topics

How well do learners of English as a second language understand the myriad of "non-verbal oral signals" (such as "hmmm," "uh-uh," or "ah-hah!") so commonly used by speakers of English but so infrequently taught in ESL classes? Can a test which purposely blurs parts of a text be taken seriously? What are the implications of "foreigner talk" for the ESL teacher?

These and a number of other interesting questions have been investigated by seniors graduating in TESL at Brigham Young University—Hawaii Campus in the last year. Students earning their B.A. degree in teaching English as a second language at BYU-HC are required to plan, conduct, and report on their research on a topic that is both interesting to them and relevant to the concerns of teachers of ESL. As the following list of titles indicates, they have covered a wide variety of topics, but all meet these criteria of interest and relevance:

"The Inductive Approach vs. The Deductive Approach to Teaching ESL Students the Order of Noun Modifiers in English," by Johnny Ka Wing Mok.

"The Criterion Validity of Carleton's 'Blur Test'," by Mere Meha.

"Test Format and Debilitative Anxiety," by Annette P. Lukachovsky.

"Literature: Its Values in Tonga's ESL Classrooms," by Hisipaniola L. Makalo.

"Dictation as an English Language Proficiency Test," by Yoshihisa Ohyatsu.

"Motivating ESL Students in English Reading," by Silipa Lutui.

"The Difficulties of Teaching English as a Second Language in Hong Kong," by Diana Yat Man Tang.

"A Comparison of the Acceptable-word and Exact-word Methods for Scoring a Cloze Test," by Connie Shek Kan Kojima.

"Non-verbal Oral Language: A Difficulty Faced by the English as a Second Language Student," by Teri Lee Lehman.

"Foreigner Talk: Implications for the ESL Teacher," by Debbie Li.

Short explanations of a few of these research projects follow:

Teri Lee Lehman's paper discussed her findings from research conducted at BYU-HC regarding ESL students' comprehension of non-verbal oral language signals. She found that, in contrast to native speakers of English, ESL learners generally failed to comprehend the various non-verbal oral signals commonly used for communicating in English. Furthermore, length of stay in the United States had little influence on their amount of comprehension. Given the importance of non-verbal communication (experts claim that 65% of communication is non-verbal) and the fact that it is quite culture-specific, the case for teaching these oral signals in the classroom seems strong.

A promising new test format, devised by Philip Carleton, was investigated by Mere

Meha in her senior seminar research. In the test, a passage is purposely blurred (in varying degrees) by inserting several sheets of paper between the first page and a carbon copy while typing it. To comprehend (and re-write) the blurred passage, examinees must rely on their knowledge of English structure and vocabulary, and thus it becomes a test of their proficiency. The blur test offers several advantages. It is efficient, easy to construct, and relevant to the real world (who hasn't ever struggled to read a blurred copy?). Unfortunately, in comparing blur test results against those obtained with a cloze passage, a dictation, and the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency, the blurred passage used in this investigation failed to demonstrate validity as a testing device. Before ruling the blur test out, however, further research using different formats is needed.

Foreigner talk, the subject addressed in Debbie Li's research, is a simplified register commonly used by native speakers when they address foreigners. It is characterized by phonological, lexical, syntactic, non-verbal, and discourse modifications. While it is a common belief that modified input eases communication, whether or not it is helpful for second language acquisition is unclear.

The unique status of English in Hong Kong was investigated by Diana Yat Man Tang. In this former British colony, English is neither a second nor a foreign language. While it is an official language and a medium of instruction in the school system, it is not used as a *lingua franca* among the Chinese themselves. Therefore,

special difficulties arise when English is taught in Hong Kong schools. Tang's report explains the status of English in Hong Kong, including its functions in various sectors. It also discusses the major difficulties—linguistic, psychological, and environmental—faced by English language teachers in Hong Kong.

Problems with the different systems used for scoring cloze tests formed the rationale for Connie Shek Kan Kojima's senior seminar research. Kojima's research, which was carried out at BYU-HC, compared the acceptable-word and exact-word scoring methods in terms of their validity, reliability, and practicality. Consistent with the results of other research along the same lines, she found that both the acceptable-word and exact-word methods yield similar results as far as validity and reliability are concerned. The only apparent difference is the additional effort and time required when using the acceptable-word method.

Further information on these papers, as well as any of the other topics researched by TESL seniors at BYU-HC, can be obtained by writing to...

Lynn Henrichsen  
 TESL Program Director  
 CLA Division  
 BYU-HC  
 Laie, HI 96762-1294  
 U.S.A.

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## *American and British English Preferences: Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation, Prepositions, and Vocabulary*

Review by Madeline Haggan, University of Kuwait

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AMERICAN AND BRITISH ENGLISH PREFERENCES: SPELLING, GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION, PREPOSITIONS, VOCABULARY. Nancy Salama and Mary Ghali. Cairo, Egypt: Arab Renaissance Publisher, 1982. pp. 258, \$10.00.

Most English speakers can smile indulgently at Shaw's well-known thrust about the British and Americans being "separated by the same language." However, the difference between British and American English is not always so amusing to those whose job it is to teach English as a foreign language. Although academically well qualified for their job, and linguistically sophisticated, many such teachers, particularly when working abroad, find that their studies have not prepared them for the very real linguistic shock of working with colleagues and textbooks from the other side of the Atlantic.

Experience shows that Quirk and Greenbaum may be over-optimistic when they claim that "grammatical differences between British and American English are few and the most conspicuous are widely known" (1973: 4). Indeed, it is all too common that a teacher in this situation unwittingly marks students wrong on a point of grammar or spelling, only to discover later that it would have been perfectly acceptable to a transatlantic colleague.

This can be disconcerting to say the least and can have unsatisfactory repercussions.

Some teachers, for instance, may become overly loyal to their own brand of English, leading to an unnecessarily intolerant rejection of that of the other side. This attitude readily becomes transmitted to the students, and a kind of linguistic snobbery develops which is both culturally and pedagogically inappropriate.

On the other hand, other teachers, trying to be more open-minded, often find their professional confidence shaken by the situation. Encountering a disputed form, they may experience some kind of semantic satiation effect and find themselves unable to give a judgement as to whether a student's offering is right or wrong. This is confusing to the serious student, although some, being more unscrupulous and grade-oriented than others, are quick to take advantage by arguing with their British teacher that their American teacher had taught them to write it that way, and vice-versa.

From these remarks, it is obvious that a book such as *American and British English Preferences* has been long overdue. Here at last, within the covers of one reference text, are brought together those points of difference that hitherto were to be found scattered in various research papers and books on language. However, valuable as such a compilation would have been, the interest and worth of this book lie in the fact that it goes beyond a mere re-hash of what one might have read elsewhere. Instead, an attempt has been made to reveal those forms



that are actually preferred by speakers of the respective varieties. In this way the authors avoid the pitfalls of merely cataloguing the existing points of difference regardless of their frequency of occurrence. Particularly helpful are the notes given in "Advice to the Teacher" (ATT), where after leading us skillfully through the often complex variations in form that are possible, and the views of other authorities on the matter, they present us with a clear statement summarizing present trends in usage and recommending what the teacher should do.

The authors are themselves experienced teachers of EFL so that the range of material covered is slanted more towards classroom needs than towards broad, theoretical interest, and while they make no claim to be comprehensive, their coverage is both impressively and satisfyingly extensive. For example, apart from the expected differences pinpointed in grammar, spelling, vocabulary, etc., a chapter is included on the calligraphic preferences of the two groups. Needless to say, this constitutes an area of almost limitless idiosyncratic variation, but teachers of middle European students may find it useful to have access to such a list of acceptable forms. Anyone who has tried to decipher a handwritten letter in English from a continental correspondent will readily agree that the forms used in cursive script are not uniform throughout the languages using the Latin alphabet. This awareness of the problem is, indeed, one of the factors which makes this book fascinating reading for the general reader as well as the specialist.

Take, for instance, the chapter on punctuation, where topics range from differences in letter formats to differences in calendar layouts. With regard to the latter, we are given the intriguing information that, whereas a horizontal listing of the days of

the week is acceptable to both British and American users, only 11% of their American informants preferred a vertical arrangement as compared to 69% of their British informants. Hardly a fact to shake the teaching world, but it does serve to illustrate how perusal of this book constantly reveals differences of which the reader might not have been aware.

The book, of course, is not without its faults. Respecting the informants, for example, some criticism is in order. Besides using source material already published on British and American English, the authors based many of their conclusions on responses to a questionnaire filled out by 68 British and 46 American participants. While it is possible to overlook the discrepancy in respective sample sizes, the lack of a description of the sample populations is less easily excused. All we are told is that the participants were educated. Age, sex, professional bias, region of origin—all factors which might affect responses—are not revealed. Since the book is published in Cairo, how many of the informants were expatriates whose preferences might already have been 'contaminated' through lengthy exposure to transatlantic contacts? Neither is any information provided regarding the questionnaire itself. Although a lengthy presentation of the research method would no doubt be out of place in the book, more information on the informants would have been reassuring, along with perhaps a sample of the questionnaire items.

Another troubling point is the format. For quick reference, a teacher wants to find the relevant page easily and be able to grasp the point immediately. This facility is lost to some extent here by the use of too many, often unfamiliar, abbreviations, and an over-use of boldface type. On other pages, careless proofreading, or printing, allows an

apparently random use of heavy black type (e.g., p. 105). Finally on matters of format, a comprehensive index would greatly enhance the usefulness of the book. The "Index for British Vocabulary" helps, but it is not enough.

Finally, in spite of the stated aim of indicating preferences rather than providing all the possibilities, this approach is not always consistently adhered to. In the "Spelling" section, for example, in the British column, *connexion*, *deflexion*, and *inflexion*, are given equal weight as *connection*, *deflection*, and *inflection*. Surely an indication of the frequency informants' actual preferences would have been revealing.

Notwithstanding the above criticisms, *American and British English Preferences* remains an invaluable text made all the more useful by its extensive bibliography on the subject. The proof of the pudding is truly in the eating, and this reviewer has frequently been glad to have the book to refer to.

#### Reference

Quirk, R. and S. Greenbaum. 1973. *A University Grammar of English*. London: Longman.

## TEACH IN JAPAN

Persons with a degree or job experience in such fields as engineering, publishing, public relations, pharmacology, linguistics/language or education wishing to teach English to Japanese adults for one or two years in Tokyo and other parts of Japan should write to:

Personnel Director  
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**PROCEEDINGS:** *WHIMSY* stands for "World Humor and Irony Membership Serial Yearbook." *WHIMSY II: Humor and Metaphor*, *WHIMSY III: Contemporary Humor*, and *WHIMSY IV: Humor Across the Disciplines* are available for \$10.00 each.

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## *Language from Nine to Five* Review by Connie Shek Kan Kojima

LANGUAGE FROM NINE TO FIVE. Kearney Rietmann. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1985. pp. 192, List Price \$8.95.

*Language from Nine to Five* is a business oriented textbook. It is divided into twenty-six individual units. Each unit focuses on a specific topic which is very common in the business field, such as job interviews, traveling overseas, and so forth.

At the beginning of each unit, several questions which act as an introduction to the topic of the session are provided for teachers to ask the class. Following the introductory questions is a short story which is directly related to the topic. Teachers can use it for comprehension exercises as well as class discussion. This story can be either read aloud by teachers or students or read silently by the class. Then a series of written exercises following one after the other directs learners from oral communication to written communication. These written assignments, which involve group discussion, provide learners chances to learn from one another as well as from the teachers. Finally, the unit ends up with a cloze exercise, which helps

students review the vocabulary that they have learned during the lesson. Throughout the whole lesson students mainly learn both oral and written business communication skills from oral discussions and written exercises.

This textbook is very suitable for advanced level students who are studying business. Teachers should have high English proficiency and knowledge about business. They can easily select topics that meet students' needs from the contents list and they can even shorten the total number of units to fit the time of the course with ease. Furthermore, the introduction to teachers serves as a good teaching guide making a teacher's manual unnecessary. Overall, *Language from Nine to Five* is a good source for teaching especially when teachers are highly creative and students are willing to participate.

### About the Reviewer

*Connie Shek Kan Kojima, a graduate of BYU-HC's TESL program, now teaches English at Britannica American Village in Kobe, Japan.*

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*(continued from page 48)*

for self-monitoring purposes. Likewise, writing or speaking about the life-history of a Japanese "superstar" such as Seiko Matsuda or Yukiko Okada would be a welcome addition to the above activities.

### Conclusion

I feel that several advantages of using pair work with written materials to promote listening comprehension need to be underscored. One of them is that it allows learners to combine linguistic manipulation with a gradual, "gist" understanding of the spoken language: not only are these learners well prepared to deal with recorded speech, but grammar or vocabulary parameter can also be included in the written materials. In the case of the Elvis Presley story, the initial pair work seemed to reflect a structural emphasis on WH-questions and time relations. This particular feature could easily have been enhanced after the first listening by having the students formulate a given number of WH-questions aimed at gathering sequential pieces of information that were missing in the prelistening phase (e.g., What did President Carter say shortly after Elvis died? Why was Elvis attracted to music before his father bought him a guitar?).

Another advantage of working with written materials prior to a listening activity is that authentic language can actually be simplified without losing its genuineness. Elvis's story clearly shows what could be accomplished with a television commercial, a complete news broadcast, or even a movie. I myself have started using simplified language in written form for pair work exercises that are designed to make students ready to watch scenes from movies with the

sound on after (1) viewing these scenes with the sound off and (2) doing the pair work.

But, in my opinion, the biggest advantage of doing such pair work exercises is that it dramatically increases the amount of comprehensible input which learners become able to process. According to Krashen (1985), this is precisely what learners need in order to acquire the language more rapidly.

As the core component of a listening comprehension activity, the story of Elvis Presley has served my purposes very well in classes for Japanese adults and in demonstration lessons for Japanese teachers of English. The entire exercise keeps lower intermediate students busy for approximately 90 minutes (upper intermediate students will complete the various tasks in about an hour, advanced learners or teachers in 45 minutes or less). As a teaching demonstration tool, this story has helped me make the point that good language instruction does not depend so much on imagination and clever contextualizations as on a fundamental understanding of the processes involved in second language acquisition.

### Notes

1. If the learners are all lower advanced or advanced students, the written material could be collected at the end of the prelistening activity. This would make the whole exercise much more challenging but perhaps less focussed on specific differences between the written version and the tape-recorded version of Elvis's story. Lower intermediate, intermediate, and even upper intermediate students should probably use their written pair work as a guide during the first two or three listening activities.

Alternatively, the pair work material could be collected at the end of the prelistening phase, and learners could then be asked to reconstruct the written version of the story in pairs. This would help the less advanced students, but would make the entire exercise much longer and less focussed on listening *per se*.

2. The new or different information is as follows:

1. When Elvis Presley died, radio and television programs all over the world were interrupted to give the news of his death.

2. President Carter's statement: "Elvis Presley changed the face of American popular culture . . . He was unique and irreplaceable."

3. The streets were jammed with cars.

4. Elvis Presley movies were shown on television all day.

5. His parents were very poor and very religious.

6. He never had music lessons, but he was surrounded by music from an early age.

7. Elvis regularly sang at church services.

8. In 1953, he got a job as a truck driver.

9. Twenty thousand copies of "That's All Right" were sold, *mainly in and around Memphis*.

10. Elvis made five more records for Sun.

11. *In July 1955* he met Colonel Tom Parker, who became his manager *in November*.

12. Parker sold Elvis' contract to RCA Records. Sun Records got \$35,000 and Elvis got \$5,000.

13. Elvis bought a pink Cadillac for his mother (with the \$5,000).

14. *On January 10, 1956*, Elvis recorded "Heartbreak Hotel."

15. In the next fourteen months he made another fourteen records.

16. His hair was cut and thousands of women cried.

17. He married Priscilla *Beaulieu* (not Beaumont) on *May 1, 1967*.

18. By 1968 many people had become tired of Elvis.

19. He hadn't performed live since 1960.

20. But he recorded a new album, "From Elvis in Memphis," and became popular again.

21. He went to Las Vegas, where he was paid \$750,000 for four weeks.

22. He had been working too hard and eating and drinking too much for several years.

If the students can spot more than 33% (one third) of this information after the first listening, and more than 66% (two thirds) of it after one or two listenings, they are doing a good job. However, the teacher should keep in mind that some of the above items are more important than others. For example, the fact that "Elvis was surrounded by music from an early age (#6) and the sale of his Sun Records contract to RCA Records (#12) both played a crucial part in his career.

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## Announcements

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The twenty-first annual convention of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) will be held April 21-25, 1987 at the Fountainebleau Hilton in Miami Beach, Florida. For information contact TESOL, 1118 — 22nd Street, N.W., Suite 205, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. 20037.

TESOL and IATEFL (The International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language) are co-sponsoring a 1987 summer institute in Barcelona, Spain in collaboration with ESADE (Barcelona), Teachers College Columbia University (New York City), and the University of London Institute of Education. Course directors are John Fanselow, Peter Strevens, and H. G. Widdowson. For further information contact E. P. Mills, ESADE, Av. de Pedralbes 60, 08034 Barcelona, Spain (Tel. 93-203 64 04).

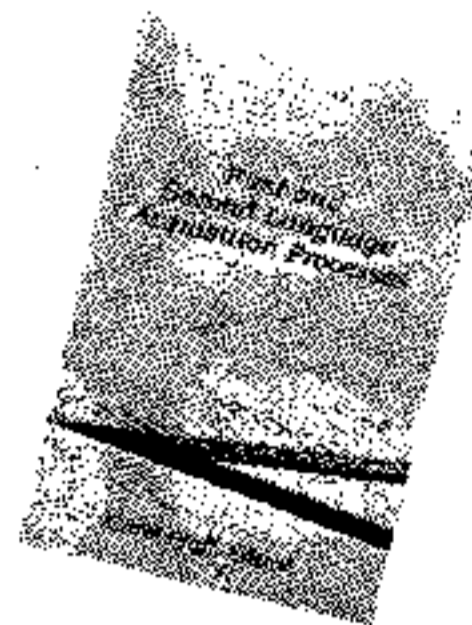
The SEAMEO Regional Language Centre in Singapore will hold its twenty-second regional seminar April 13-16, 1987 in the RELC Building. The theme of the seminar is "The Role of Language Education in Human Resource Development." Further information and invitations to participate in the seminar can be obtained by writing to the following address: Director (Attention: Chairman, Seminar Planning Committee), SEAMEO Regional Language Centre, RELC Building, 30 Orange Grove Road, Singapore 1025, Republic of Singapore.

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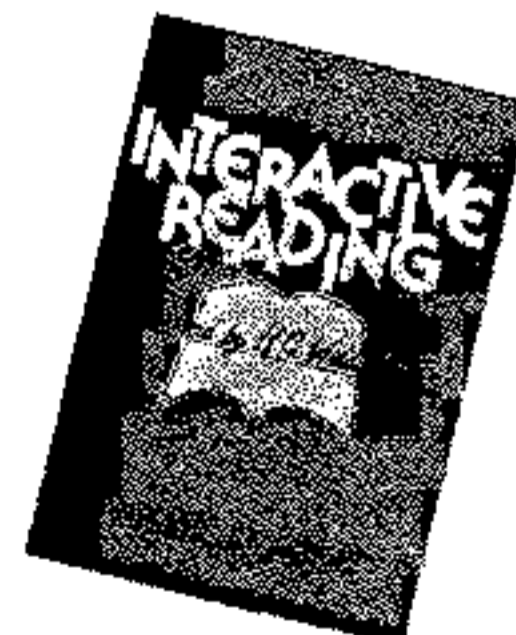
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