TESL REPORTER

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY — HAWAII
Volume 20, Number 3 • Laie, Hawaii • July 1987

TESL Reporter
BYU-Hawaii Box 1830
Laie, Hawaii 96762-1294

ISSN 0886-0661

A quarterly publication of the Communications and Language Arts Division
Brigham Young University—Hawaii

Subscriptions are available on a complimentary basis to individuals and institutions involved in the teaching of English as a second/foreign language. Requests for new subscriptions and change of address notification for continuing subscriptions should be sent to the circulation manager.

Manuscripts relevant to teaching English as a second/foreign language, bilingual education, intercultural education and communication, and teacher-preparation in these areas are welcomed and should be submitted (in duplicate) to the editor. Manuscripts dealing with classroom aspects of teaching are especially encouraged.

Manuscripts should be typed and double-spaced throughout, generally not exceeding ten pages. Each manuscript should be accompanied by a cover sheet with the title; author's name, position, and address; and a short (less than 50 words) bio-data statement. Identifying information should not appear elsewhere in the manuscript in order to insure an impartial review.

It is expected that manuscripts submitted to the *TESL Reporter* are neither previously published nor being considered for publication elsewhere.

Reviews of recent textbooks, resource materials, tests, and non-print materials (films, tapes, or computer software) are also invited. Potential reviewers who indicate a particular area of interest to the review editor will be contacted concerning recent titles in that area.

Advertising information is available from the business manager.

Abstracts of articles published in the *TESL Reporter* appear in *Language and Language Behavior Abstracts*.

The opinions and statements expressed by contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors or of Brigham Young University—Hawaii

Poetry in the ESL Classroom: Focusing on Learner Objectives

Mary Ann Christison, Snow College

Within the ESL/EFL teaching profession, there are many teachers who integrate poetry in their lesson planning and classroom activities. This is evidenced by the increased number of papers on poetry at TESL conferences as well as the recent popularity of teacher resource books written on the subject. The stimulus for this article is based on concern for why teachers choose to include poetry in their lessons as well as what methods and techniques they use to present poetry in the classroom.

Arguments for Poetry Use

There are several arguments teachers can use to justify the inclusion of poetry in the ESL class. Two of the most prominent arguments can be summarized in terms of either literary elitism or practical strategy.

The literary elitist view of poetry in the language classroom has been that good poetry is part of a vast body of literature that represents the best the English language has to offer. The prestigious position that such literature occupies in our society and the implied relationship between literature and the TESL profession seem to be justification enough for including poetry in the ESL curriculum. This argument centers on the value and importance of the poetry itself.

Supporters of this argument have usually been trained in the literary tradition—they have mastered the terms and techniques of literary criticism.

The second argument represents the practical side. It states that poetry is a useful tool for second language acquisition, providing the learner with opportunities for discussion and language development. This point of view seems to focus more on the learner than on the poetry itself.

Adherence to one point of view over another can lead teachers to value poetry in the ESL classroom in two very different ways. This is true regardless of the method or technique being used. Let me give an illustration.

Two Examples

These two points of view were clearly, yet unknowingly, demonstrated by two presenters at a recent ESL conference. The presenters shall remain anonymous. (My intention in providing a brief overview of the two presentations is not to criticize or praise either presenter, but rather to demonstrate how the two points of view characterized above ultimately affect the way the poetry is presented in the classroom.)

Both presenters used a cloze technique. The first presenter used a short poem about a visitor. She began by explaining that she had selected the poem not only because it was a favorite of hers, but also

because her students had been talking about visitors. Some of them had had out-of-town guests or were expecting family from home countries to visit them in the future. As the subject was of high interest to her students, the poetry activity naturally complemented their previous discussions. The presenter gave us a cloze version of the poem, leaving out certain key words. We were told to discuss what words we thought would best fit in the blanks. There could be more than one correct answer and many different answers were expected. The discussion with our colleagues and the reasons for selecting the words were most important. After the small group discussion, we shared responses with the large group. The presenter stated that she had been delighted with the response to the poem in her class: three students subsequently, wrote unsolicited poems in English to share with the class.

The second presenter also used a cloze procedure, but in a slightly different manner. To begin with, this presenter did not provide us with any rationale for the selection of the poem aside from the fact that it was considered a great poem. Certain key words had again been left out of the passage. We were asked to decide which word to place in each blank. There was only one specific word for each blank, the correct choice being based on elements of literary criticism. We were not asked to work in small, cooperative groups to share possibilities, but instead were asked to offer our individual ideas to the presenter in the large group. As a group, we were not very successful in supplying the correct word: we failed to pay attention to alliteration, cadence, rhyme, scheme, meter, etc. After a few minutes, the presenter stopped asking for our ideas and simply lectured and explained why the words the author had used were the best ones according to the methods of literary criticism. Each choice was carefully examined. The presenter did not comment on how his students had responded to this activity.

An Analysis of Differences

After the presentations were over, I attempted to analyze where they had differed. There was, of course, the obvious difference in the fundamental point of view regarding poetry in the language classroom. One cloze activity had supported the literary elitist viewpoint. I do not remember the content of the poem he used, but I do remember explanations about alliteration, meter, rhyme, scheme, etc. That was, I am sure, what he had intended. The other presenter held to the practical strategist viewpoint with the cloze activity, using the poem to draw out the language and gather personal opinions and ideas. I remember almost everything about the content of this poem. This was also what she had wanted me to gain from the activity.

We could say that both teachers had set very definite teaching goals and had also apparently met them. However, teaching objectives are only one-half of the teaching/learning paradigm and only one side of successful teaching. If good teaching is also characterized by helping learners progress toward their own objectives as quickly and efficiently as possible, then there are other questions that good teachers must ask themselves: What are the learners' objectives? Are the teaching objectives consistent with the learners' objectives? If they are not, what options do I give the learner in the

classroom situation to control the content to be learned? The answers to these questions provide the crux of the difference between these two approaches: the difference was a focus on the learner. Is the use of poetry in the classroom with the chief objective being to teach literary criticism limited from the learner's perspective? If we look at learners' objectives, we will find, most likely, that there are few students in ESL for whom literary criticism is a primary goal. Because the presenter mentioned nothing about his students with regard to either the selection of the poem or their reaction to the poem, we were led to believe that we were participating on the teacher's terms. Our task was to follow the teacher's directives. The learning adjusted to the teaching.

The approach of the first speaker was much broader in scope. She focused on presenting and using poetry in the ESL classroom as a means of building comprehension and developing oral and written skills by relating the poetry to the students. Building comprehension and developing oral and/or written skills are goals for all language learners. Because the learners were considered in both the selection and reaction in this activity and were also given freedom to control and content, we were participating on our own terms. The teacher only facilitated the learning process. Teaching adjusted to the learning.

Literary criticism in the ESL classroom can also be limiting in content. Choosing poetry on the basis of its literary worth often entails a preference for the obscure and highly-symbolic, and can exclude the literature many teachers have found most effective in the ESL classroom. This includes the works of those who are not literary critics and who are not members of the literary elite, such as the working-class writer, and contemporary poetry of women or blacks and other ethnic groups.

Conclusions

Because ESL is such a diverse profession with students from different language groups and teachers in different teaching environments, it is impossible to mandate for everyone what is correct or incorrect classroom procedure or choice of content. However, one point remains clear in my mind: As good teachers, we must continue to ask ourselves questions that involve the learners' needs and goals if we are to strike a more careful balance between teaching and learning, between teacher objectives and learner objectives, between teacher control and learner control, i.e.,

1. Are the students interested in the subject matter of the poem? How can I use the poem to tie in with a previous discussion?

2. Does my work with the poem help to build comprehension? Does it develop oral or written skills that my students will need?

3. Will the learners value the concepts I am addressing in the poem, e.g., discussion on visitors vs. a lecture on various elements of literary analysis?

4. How can the poem be related to the students' lives, past experiences, and personal values?

5. Are the needs of my students being met? How do I know?

6. How can my students share in selecting content for their lessons?

Our choice of poetry is only justified if it meets in some way the needs and goals of our students. Of the two arguments presented in this paper as justification for including poetry in the ESL classroom, only the argument for practical strategy considers the learners' objectives in a major way. Literary criticism can only be an acceptable ESL classroom activity when it, too, considers the learners' expressed needs and objectives. In other words, it must be an expressed need of the learners.

ESL students enjoy poetry and can benefit from the inclusion of poetry in the classroom. When teachers select poetry and choose methods of implementation with their learners' world in mind, they not only give students the best the English language has to offer, but also utilize one of the most valuable tools we have for language acquisition.

*The author would like to thank Sharron Bassano for her comments on the ideas presented in this article.

About the Author

Mary Ann Christison is an associate professor and director of the ESL program at Snow College in Ephraim, Utah.

Record Enrollment of Foreign Students in U.S.

Paced by record numbers of Asian students, the United States' foreign-student population grew 1.7 percent in the 1986/87 academic year, to a new high of 349,609, according to figures released by the Institute of International Education.

Students from South and Southeast Asia continue to represent the largest and fastest-growing segment of the foreign student population. The overall increase of 1.7 percent is overshadowed by an increase of 8.8 percent in students from South and Southeast Asia. A total of 170,700 of these students enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities this year, as IIE's *Open Doors* publication of foreign student statistics shows.

The People's Republic of China, for the second straight year, showed the largest rate of increase, up 43.3 percent to 20,030 students. The largest group (25,660) came from Taiwan. Malaysia was second with 21,640, and China was third. The growth in Asian student enrollment contrasts with declining representation from developing nations in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Over 75 percent of foreign students received primary funding for their educations from sources outside the United States, the IIE study shows.

Copies of *Open Doors*, a 150-page statistical report with explanatory text, are available from IIE. Send a check or money order for $29.95 to the Institute of International Education, Publications Service, 809 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017.

When Silence Isn't Golden—Teaching Learners to Use Conversational Fillers

Ruth Wajnryb, University of New South Wales

Arguably one of the most important contributions of linguistics to language teaching in recent years has been the research into the differences between written and spoken modes of communication. We now no longer apply the rules of written communication to spoken. We no longer view spoken English as a "cheaper," "sloppier" somehow less-than-legitimate version of the highly veneered and respected written mode. We now recognize that there are two broad categories or modes of communication—written and spoken—each characterized by its own rules, norms, conventions and patterns of usage—in fact, by its own grammar. Consequently, we now teach listening skills using materials that reflect our understanding of spoken language (Carroll 1978, Brown 1977, Brown and Yule 1983, Chamberlain 1986).

The fact that each of these two categories—spoken and written language—may be subdivided into a range of mode types, (Gregory and Carroll 1978: 47) need not concern us here. What is important is to re-assert the legitimacy of the spoken mode, and this is being done plentifully by all the recent work completed in the field of discourse analysis, conversational analysis, and speech acts. (Halliday 1985, Goffman 1981, Coulthard 1977, Goody 1978, Crystal and Davy 1975, Denham 1978, Larsen-Freeman 1980, Edmondson 1981, Gumperz 1982, Saville-Troike 1982, Stubbs 1983, Basso 1970).

Running the risk of gross over-simplification, we may summarize some of the essential differences between the two modes in four areas (see Fig. 1).

Theory and Practice

Regretfully, however, there seems to be a "time warp" existing between the current state of research into linguistics and the practice of language teaching (Wajnryb

WRITTEN	SPOKEN
highly organized	apparently chaotic
linear	circular
economical	highly redundant
explicit	often implicit

Fig. 1. Differences between spoken and written modes of communication (Maley 1978)

1985). Teachers still use the language of postcards as input for a listening lesson. There are still those who hand out written copies of the spoken text to "help" their students, either in the lab or in class. Many coursebook writers still fail to stipulate that listenings should be unaccompanied by tapescripts. There are still course books very much in use which present language of the written-meant-to-be-read mode as listening input (e.g. *Streamline English Connections*, Unit 68).

The Learner's Attitude to Spoken Language

If some teachers and coursebook writers are lagging behind, then the learners themselves are, in the main, miles off the mark in their understanding and appreciation of what understanding spoken language entails. In fact, many language learners might well be considered to be the most conservative of species! Their linguistic conservatism may be summed up under three headings: ignorance, background and prejudice.

Ignorance

Most language learners are ignorant of matters linguistic, that is, they are laymen in the face of a highly specialized discipline. This is inevitable, as inevitable as the lay patient in the face of the professional medical practitioner. They therefore inevitably think that "English is English" and writing is speaking and are not at all aware of the different patterns that characterise the two modes.

Background

Many language learners hail from an educational and cultural background in which the written language is veneered as the (only) language model. Their learning style naturally tends to derive from this background. Hence, for example, most Japanese and Polish learners of English have had extensive exposure to written English but usually pitifully little to the spoken word.

Prejudice

Given ignorance of linguistics and different cultural and educational models, it is almost inevitable (despite the advent and primacy of the audio recorder) that learners bring to their learning context a great deal of prejudice agaist spoken language.

This article will focus on only one of many characteristics of spoken discourse, that is, the use of conversational fillers.

The prejudice against such fillers that I have encountered in teaching is quite astonishing. Many learners interpret them to be overt indicators of a wide range of phenomena, such as low education, sloppy habits, working class status, poor self-esteem, lack of respect, among others.

They fail to recognise the fact that fillers are an inherent part of spoken language, absolutely integral to the process of spontaneous encoding. They fail to recognise the functions fillers serve in allowing a speaker time to encode, to improvise, to plan the subsequent utterance, to draw attention and lay emphasis, to implicate the interlocutor, to hold the floor while "thoughts are being gathered." Nor do they appreciate that if native speakers have this need, how much greater is the need of the non-native speaker? They fail to realise that often the only alternative is silence, and that silence in conversation is

culture-specific and semantically valuable in that it carries a meaning and conveys a message to one's interlocutor (see, for example, Basso 1972). They fail to realise that "far from being superfluous, these forms have a practical utility and represent a significant part of linguistic behaviour" (Sharma 1987: 22).

Eroding the Prejudice

If learners are going to begin adopting better learning habits in regard to speaking and listening, and if they are going to be more receptive to the linguistically-aware language teacher's approach, then we need to consider ways by which we can erode their prejudice against the spoken word so as to facilitate better learning. A crash course in linguistics is, of course, an unrealistic option, but there are other ways to achieve this goal. Three techniques that I have used with success are outlined below.

Sensitization

One technique I have tried with success is to sensitize learners to the nature of the spoken word by having them "listen-for-a-purpose" to tapes of spontaneous language, usually conversational dialogue. Traditional comprehension-type questions are kept to a minimum. Instead, attention is directed to such phenomena as fillers, pauses, repetitions, false starts, changes in speed and volume, etc. Continued exposure to real spoken language, combined with continued attention focused on its real characteristics will considerably aid learners' sensitization process.

"Shock" Exposure

Another technique I have used is to record learners engaged in verbal interactions, transcribe snippets of the discourse, and subsequently expose the learners both aurally and visually (through the written transcript) to the reality of their language. During the analysis stage, attention is drawn to places in the interchange where fillers should have been used, or were used but inappropriately, or where silence carries an unintended (perhaps hostile) message. This technique is more "shocking" to the learner, but when used alongside the sensitization approach outlined above, can be a very effective tool.

Self-awareness

The third technique is actually an offshoot of the second. Close analysis of the learners' tapescripts usually yields the somewhat ironic finding that learners are using fillers but often the wrong ones.

Sometimes what happens is that learners translate an L1 filler into its English counterpart: thus the Spanish-speaking learner who uses "but" not as a contrast marker but as a filler; and the Russian-speaker who uses "so" not as cause-effect marker but again, as a filler. What such students need to realise is, firstly, that they do use fillers in their native language and that it's fine to do so; and secondly, that fillers, being equally functional in English, must be English-based, not first-language translations.

Then again there is the learner who overuses "ums", "ahs", "ehrs" with which he holds the floor and so contributes, if unwittingly, to his interlocuter's rising irritability level. Such a learner needs to be made aware of his need for more appropriate (less monopolizing) conversational strategies.

Teaching Conversational Fillers

Apart from employing sensitization and "consciousness-raising" exercises such as those described above, we also need to *actively* teach learners to use conversational fillers accurately and appropriately. In other words, we can't stop at having given our learners a conceptual grasp of the functions of fillers and a positive, receptive attitude towards them. We also have to provide linguistic input and opportunity for practice and correction. What follows below is the outline of a lesson I have used after I have eliminated—or rather, eroded—ignorance and prejudice. Its purpose is to provide input, opportunity to try out language, and corrective feedback for efforts made.

Input

In the first step, I write up on the blackboard a list of the most common conversational fillers (see Fig. 2 for some samples). Then I go through the list with the students with a number of purposes in mind: to see if the terms are familiar to them, to drill where necessary the correct phonology ("sorta", not "sort of"), to explain where necessary the difference between the terms as fillers ("That man, you know, will be visiting us today") and as semantically loaded lexemes ("The man you know will be visiting us today"), and to check for incorrect use of fillers ("d'you know" for "you know"; "isn't it?" for "is that right?").

Practice

Following the input phase, I make available on a central table a pile of cards on each of which is written one topic, which is both interesting and difficult,

- I think
- you know, you know what I mean,
- you see, do you see what I mean?
- um, eh, ah
- sort of, sort of thing
- well
- then, and then
- what I mean is
- O.K.
- right
- really

Fig. 2. Some conversational fillers

such as opera, electricity, nuclear physics, mushrooms, (see Fig. 3 for a list of these). A student is called upon to come and select a card at random (the topics are not on view). He returns to his seat, reads the card, and then announces to the class the topic he has drawn. His immediate task then is to speak spontaneously for one minute on his topic, relying on the

opera
electricity
nuclear physics
mushrooms
bicycles
pornography
housework
Chinese
adolescence
bush-walking
bees
plumbers
vegetarianism
youth hostels

Fig. 3. Some topics
for one-minute monologues

fillers on the blackboard to help him out. He might start off something like this:

> Um, electricity is not really um the sort of thing that I really know ah—a lot about, you know. Of course, I use it, like really, well, everyone does, but I don't really know a lot about it, sort of thing.

Comment

Quite obviously the topics listed are ones that most would not be very familiar with. In fact, it would be unfortunate if an opera buff picked up the "opera" card, as we are relying on the need for fillers to "use up" the one minute's talking time.

The teacher should not correct the learner "midstream" through the talk, but make notes of the most important aspects of the "filler use" (e.g., mispronunciations, over-use of certain terms, inappropriate use etc.). At the end of each talk or towards the end of the lesson, the teacher should provide the necessary individual feedback to the learners.

This lesson could be re-scheduled a number of times throughout a course to allow for more practice opportunities. (Change the topics if they become too familiar). The goal is to have the students using fillers more efficiently and expertly each time.

Limitations

There is no denying that this exercise in the use of fillers is characterized by a great deal of artificiality. This is so primarily because the opportunity to practice the language in question occurs in a monologic context whereas, as the title of this article suggests, our ultimate aim is the effective use of conversational fillers. Clearly here, in the practice of this exercise, we have none of the contingencies of an interactive or dialogic environment—such as, turn-taking, turn-yielding or any other discourse factors that require a speaker to take into consideration his/her interlocutor(s).

Nonetheless, despite the artificiality of the exercise and its obvious limitations in simulating conversational reality, I still feel that it offers an effective first step towards the breaking down of inhibitions about the use of fillers as well as providing some practice in the actual use of them.

Summary/Conclusion

This article has concerned itself with the real nature of spoken language, focusing specifically on one small aspect of English conversation, the use of conversational fillers. The need to confront learners' ignorance and prejudice in this subject has been discussed, and suggestions have been made as to how this might be achieved.

It is the writer's hope that as more research explores the domain of natural spoken English, and as more application to classroom methodology is made known, language teachers will begin to see the limitations of traditional dialogue teaching as a pedagogic vehicle for the exposition of grammar, lexis and phonology, and will begin to explore ways of teaching the essentials of communicative conversational behaviour.

References

Basso, K. H. 1972. 'To give up on words": silence in western Apache cul-

ture. In Giglioli P. (ed.), *Language and social context.* London: Penguin.

Brown, G. 1977. *Listening to spoken English.* London: Longman

Brown, G., & Yule, G. 1983. *Teaching the spoken language.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chamberlain, A. 1986. *Semi-scripted dialogues—a technique for producing authentic listening materials.* University of New South Wales, School of French.

Coulthard, M. 1977. *An introduction to discourse analysis.* London: Longman.

Crystal, D. & Davy, D. 1975. *Advanced conversational English.* London: Longman.

Denham, P. 1978. Utilizing redundancy features: strategies for advanced comprehension of speech. In Ingram & Trim (eds.), *Language learning in Australian society.* Australia International Press and Publications.

Edmondson, W. 1981. *Spoken discourse: a model for analysis.* London: Longman.

Goffman, E. 1981. *Forms of talk.* London: Basil Blackwell.

Goody, E. (ed.) 1978. *Questions and politeness. Strategies in social interaction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gregory, M. & Carroll, S. 1978. *Language and situation: language varieties and their social contexts.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Gumperz, J. 1982. *Discourse Strategies.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Halliday, M. A. K. 1985. *Spoken and written language.* Geelong, Victoria, Australia: Deakin University Press.

Halliday, M. A. K. 1985. *An introduction to functional grammar.* London: Edward Arnold.

Larsen-Freeman, D. 1980. *Discourse analysis in second language research.* Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House.

Maley, Alan. 1978. The teaching of listening comprehension skills. *Modern English Teacher,* September.

Saville-Troike, M. 1982. *The ethnography of communication.* London: Basil Blackwell.

Sharma, R. S. 1987. Dialogue and dialogue teaching. *English Teaching Forum 25* (1): 21-24.

Stubbs, M. 1983. *Discourse analysis.* London: Basil Blackwell.

Wajnryb, R. 1985. Why teachers are conservative. *TEA News* (Sydney) *3* (1).

About the Author

Ruth Wajnryb is the head of teacher training in TESOL at the Institute of Languages, University of New South Wales, Australia where she trains teachers, provides professional development workshops, and teaches migrants. Her TESOL experience has involved teaching adults in Australia, Europe, the Middle East, and South America.

Picture Cards as Language Teaching Tools

Peter Duppenthaler, ECC Foreign Language Institute

Using picture cards is an excellent way to develop a relaxed, productive classroom atmosphere, and to encourage students to work together in groups to accomplish a task. In addition, picture cards can be used to practice vocabulary items (especially nouns), describe things, practice transactional language, and to develop listening comprehension skills.

Best of all, picture cards can be adapted and extended to fit a variety of EFL/ESL teaching situations. Young children can learn and practice simple vocabulary and sentence structure. Adults, in general English courses, find using picture cards enjoyable because the cards add visual interest and the activities using them can almost always be extended in challenging ways. Students in ESP classes (e.g., Business English) find using picture cards an interesting and relatively painless way to learn the names of such things as office equipment. One further application of picture cards is testing pre-literate students for placement or admission purposes.

Sources of Picture Cards

Ready-made sets of picture cards are often available in toy stores or from EFL/ESL publishers dealing in children's materials. Alternatively, teachers can make their own cards, or make this a class project by inviting students to contribute drawings or pictures of items which they would like to know the names of. Additional sets can then be copied as needed. Young learners enjoy coloring their own cards, which gives them a chance to learn the names of the colors and practice some transactional English in the process. Having the students contribute items ensures higher student interest and a continuing source of new cards as newer items replace older ones.

This article describes three picture card activities which I have used and found to be successful. Older learners enjoy all three activities—played one after the other during the same class. These activities are also very adaptable—the only real limitation being the imagination of teachers and students.

Take the Card

Level: Beginning

Materials: A set of picture cards, one item to a card. If the class is large, divide it into groups of about ten with each group receiving an identical set of cards.

Procedure: Present the vocabulary items on the cards, one by one, to the students. Once the class is familiar with the words, spread the cards picture side up on a table.

With a small class, have everyone sit around a table (or desks pushed together) so they can see all the cards. The teacher (later one of the students) calls out the word that matches one of the picture cards. Students recognizing the picture try to be

the first to take that card. After all the cards have been taken, the student with the most cards is declared the winner and becomes the next caller.

I usually do not penalize students for taking the wrong card. They simply have to return the card to the table and play continues. If you wanted, you could penalize a student by making him/her lose one turn, but with large classes I have found that this is more trouble than it is worth.

With large classes, divide the students into groups of about ten each. Each group gets its own set of cards and gathers around a different table. The teacher acts as caller and then holds up the card so that each group can verify that the correct card has been taken. The student in each group with the most cards is that group's winner and becomes that group's next caller. Continue play for three or four rounds. If you do not have enough cards, you can have one group perform while the other students (non-performers) gather round and act as onlookers.

Descriptions

Level: Elementary and intermediate

Materials: Same as in "Take the Card"

Procedure: The procedure is the same as in "Take the Card," except that the caller gives a description of the pictured item or talks about it without saying the name of the actual item itself. For example, if the card were a picture of the moon, the caller could say, "I can see this at night. It's very bright." If the card were a picture of a red apple, the caller could say, "It is red and delicious."

As a listening activity this game is ideal for enabling students to realize that they do not have to understand every word in order to be able to "guess" what is being described. They are in fact able to guess the correct item even when they do not understand every word the caller says. In countries where traditional grammar-translation methods are emphasized in the school system, this activity gives students a rare chance to practice "guessing" strategies.

Making a Story

Level: Intermediate and above

Materials: Same as in "Take the Card"

Procedure: Each group of students gets one set of cards equal to the number in the group plus one (i.e., five students would receive six cards). They must use all but one card to make a story together.

Intermediate level students should only be required to use the "word" that the picture illustrates. Advanced level students can be asked to use not only the word but any other information that they can glean from the picture (e.g., A picture of a blue bag with a shoulder strap would require only the word "bag" from intermediate level students but "bag", "blue", and "shoulder strap" from advanced level students).

Each member of the group must give one sentence of the group's story, each sentence containing one of the words on the cards. The stories are presented to the class and points awarded for "creativity." Continue play for three or four rounds. The group with the most points is the winner.

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, Osaka, Japan. Current interests include: teacher training, curriculum design and development, and the relationship between age and learning.

Incorporating Literature in ESL Instruction

Review by
Frances Webb, Hostos Community College, CUNY

INCORPORATING LITERATURE IN ESL INSTRUCTION. Howard Sage. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1987. pp. 92. paper $7.00.

Incorporating Literature in ESL Instruction is a resource/textbook for teachers who know there is a better way, a more "real" way, to teach English to their non-English speaking students than hit or miss dialogues and false "situations." This book is for teachers who are moving from pattern practices and these dialogues to contextual meaning in their classroom approach. It is for ESL teachers who love literature and want that to be the medium of learning and want to know how to go about making it the medium.

The book has six chapters, beginning and ending with a discussion of the role of literature in ESL teaching and the rationale for using it, and includes two extensive chapters, one on teaching poetry and the other on teaching short stories. The final chapter is a most helpful discussion on how to select the literature to use--what language traits and cultural content the selections should have, and what to make sure the selections don't have.

The two central, and also the most meaty, chapters, those on poetry and short fiction, discuss the rationale in more specific terms. Also included are a general reaction of students to learning English through literature, criteria for selecting literature for ESL instruction, and a "how to" section, plus detailed guidance for classroom activities.

Aside from illustrating points with a variety of poems and poets, the author discusses in depth the various "entry points" of one particular poem, possible questioning techniques and possible student responses. After this overview, guidelines are given in the context of a seven-point class discussion plan, leading into a model lesson complete with student responses to the suggested interpretations. A worksheet is included. Divided into 1) narrative base, 2) speaker, 3) form or structure, 4) language, rhyme and rhythm,

5) character and 6) theme, this worksheet provides specific questions to ask and suggestions for projects. This section ends with criteria for choosing poems, including subjective check-points and precise post-discussion activities, such as sentence-combining, doing cloze exercises, writing "found" poems and, of course, writing poems.

The short fiction chapter follows a similar format, with the model worksheet highlighting plot, structure, background, pace, length, style, character, theme, tone, and visual view ("Sketch the final scene. What would compose the foreground? Background?")

Well-researched with frequent references, this text implores, persuades and convinces us that, since "inherent in literature is (the) function of conveying knowledge", we can enrich our students' total learning environment by exposing them to English in this way. Also, the student has the "opportunity to experience a unique kind of discourse" by learning the language in a literature context.

Frances Webb, co-author of Worksheet: Business-Based Grammar and Writing Guide, *teaches at Hostos Community College, City University of New York, Bronx, New York.*

Conference Announcements

The 22nd annual convention of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) will be held in Chicago, Illinois, March 8-13, 1988. TESOL members will receive further information by mail. Non-TESOL members may write to TESOL, 1118—22nd St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

The 22nd annual conference of IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language) will be held jointly with TESOL Scotland April 11-14, 1988 in Edinburgh, Scotland. For further information write to the IATEFL Office, 3 Kingsdown Chambers, Kingsdown Park, Tankerton, Whitstable, Kent, England CT5 2DJ.

The 8th Second Language Research Forum (SLRF) will be held in Honolulu, Hawaii March 3-6, 1988. For further information write to SLRF '88 Registration, Dept. of ESL, 570 Moore Hall, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.

Michigan State University will host two important gatherings for linguists during the summer of 1988. The 15th International Systemics Congress will be held during the week of August 7 (Contact Peter Fries, Box 310, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858), and the 15th Annual LACUS (Linguistic Association of Canada and the United States) Forum (Contact Valerie Makkai, LACUS, P. O. Box 101, Lake Bluff, Illinois 60044).

The Hawaii Association of Language Teachers and the Hawaii Council of Teachers of English will hold their third annual international joint conference in Honolulu, February 6, 1988. Contact Teresita Ramos, Dept. of Indo-Pacific Languages, Spaulding Hall 459, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.

Sharing the Stock Market

(Continued from page 60)

responses acknowledged understanding and a desire to know even more.

In the essay, an example was given of a couple, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, who invested $500 in the Ward Pencil Company. They bought 100 shares at $5.00 each, and every three months they received a dividend of $1.00 per share. After a year, the Smiths sold their shares of stock for $6.00 a share. When I asked the class if the investment was a good one, it was clear that visions of dollar signs were dancing in their heads. As some students explained their calculations, I put these on the board, and the entire class concluded that it was good investment because the Smiths invested only $500, but they received about $1000 from the sale of the stock and the dividends they had been sent throughout the past year. Some students went on to figure out the annual percentage rate of interest the Smiths got on their money from this investment and compared that to the average interest rate on a savings account. I hardly knew where to stop...should I go into mutual funds?

I ended the first day of class by asking, "Suppose you had $1000 to invest in the stock market. What companies would you invest in?" Japanese students spontaneously suggested none other than Sony, Hitachi, and Honda, while others mentioned familiar American companies, such as Coca Cola and Wendy's. After these responses, I asked students to bring 35 cents to class the next day for a newspaper because they would have the opportunity to invest $1000 in some companies on the New York Stock Exchange. In the meantime, I encouraged students to find out from Americans what some major companies were that they could invest in.

Procedures: The Second Day

The next day, students were given a list of fifteen companies, ranging from Walmart to IBM and from Exxon to Squibb. Briefly, I explained what kinds of products the various companies produced, but I offered no information on the companies' financial status. With the financial section of the newspaper in hand, students were asked to find out how these fifteen companies were doing by looking up the current price of a share of the stock and finding out if it was up or down from the previous day. Students learned how to read the columns of information, and using their own intuitive knowledge of investing, were asked to purchase $1000 worth of stock either in some of the companies on the list or from any other companies selected.

The only piece of financial advice I volunteered—which was the only fairly safe advice I was capable of offering—was, "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." In other words, "Diversify your investment portfolios." This would require a broadened scope of reading participation in market research and follow-up analysis.

After I explained the conversions of 1/8, 3/8, 5/8 and other fractions in terms of price per share, each student filled out an individual purchase form that I had prepared which asked for the name of the stock purchased, the price per share, the number of shares purchased, and the total cost. As I circulated around the room, I was pleasantly surprised to find out the

extent to which they were being diverse. Some students were buying as many as six different kinds of stocks, and if $7.75 was left, they were looking for any stock that was cheap enough to allow them to use every cent they had. When students completed the forms, I collected them. I also kept a copy of the financial page in that day's paper for future reference when students sold their stocks. I also used it to check students' papers to be sure that their calculations were accurate. Finally, I urged students to go to the library periodically to check the newspaper and find out how their stocks were performing.

Since the idea for this activity came to me rather late in the term, students were only able to keep their stocks for three weeks. (It would be better to allow them a longer period to hold their stocks before selling in order to increase the chances for changes in prices, thus adding to the excitement.) Students were given the specific date, which was the last class day before final exams, on which they were to sell their stocks.

Procedures: The Last Day

The day arrived. I provided three or four newspapers, returned the students' purchase forms, which I had checked very carefully, and corrected any errors. Students then worked in groups looking up their stocks and calculating how much money they had made or lost. The group experience helped students see what companies some of their classmates had invested in and how well or poorly their investments compared to their own. What an exciting day for a few as they discovered their profits! However, as is often the case in the real world of Wall Street, losers far outnumbered gainers.

Benefits

Needless to say, the three days devoted to the stock market produced many positive results, the primary one being the opportunity for students to practice a variety of reading and communicative skills in a meaningful, cultural context while having fun. From the teacher's perspective, the satisfaction received from hearing the class discussions, observing the exuberant interaction among students, and sharing a vital part of American culture that too often we just assume international students already know made this experience very rewarding.

Variations and Adaptations

Using the stock market as a culture-based springboard, teachers may provide students with challenging and exciting activities in all the various skill areas.

In reading class, students not only become comfortable with market terminology, but they also practice a variety of scanning skills as they search the Nasdac symbols on the financial page of the newspaper to find their own stocks. In addition, they learn how to scan columns horizontally and vertically for particular information they need. Once they become "caught up" in the market, they begin analyzing and drawing conclusions about a plunge or a surge in the Dow. Using their own knowledge of the economy, the value of the dollar (of vital interest to all foreign students), and the national deficit, more advanced level students may arrive at very logical reasons for the Dow's movement.

Listening and speaking skills can be practiced by having students listen to the "Nightly Business Report" or the stock market report on the television or radio news and take notes. This activity could be done every night for a week, or one specific night a week for a longer period. Students could keep a journal of market ups and downs, and at the end of the study, they could chart the movement of the Dow on a graph. Following this, they could form groups in class, compare their graphs, and talk about their findings.

The stock market essay in Horning's book could be presented in writing class as a stimulus for a brainstorming activity. Ideas about investing in the market will be interesting and controversial, thus leading to some challenging composition topics, such as "Pros and Cons of Investing in the Stock Market."

Even lower-level classes easily develop an interest in the stock market, especially if activities involve competition. Guide each student to choose a different blue-chip stock in the same price range, for example $30-$40. Allow students to make periodic checks of their stocks, and after several weeks calculate to discover which student's stock advanced the most. In the process, students are learning comparatives and getting practice using whole numbers and fractions.

High teacher-interest in the market, together with the availability of current media, can spark students' enthusiasm for this integral part of the American business world. Getting students involved as participators in the stock market allows for natural learning of the vocabulary needed to practice numerous English skills. The extent and difficulty of involvement depends on the ability level of your students and your creativity as a teacher.

About the Author

Judy A. Cleek has taught ESL in the Intensive English Program at The University of Tennessee at Martin for the past six years. She did her graduate work in English at Memphis State University, and in Linguistics and TESOL at Georgetown University. In 1983, she was the recipient of the "Outstanding Instructor Award" from International Programs at UTM.

Preventive Mental Health in the ESL Classroom

Primary Prevention and the Promotion of Mental Health in the ESL Classroom is a handbook designed to enable teachers to help adult refugees cope with social pressures and adjustment problems in the U.S.A. Produced by a group of ESL and mental health professionals and published by the American Council for Nationalities Service, it provides a theoretical background for the promotion of mental health and the effects of migration on refugees. Other areas addressed are student needs assessment, the role of the teacher, and community resources, all of which can assist teachers in adapting existing curricula. Sample lesson plans and materials are also included. Copies may be purchased for $6.50 each (pre-paid only) from ACNS, 95 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

Sharing the Stock Market with ESL Students

Judy A. Cleek, University of Tennessee at Martin

In an effort to introduce intermediate ESL reading students to various aspects of American culture, I perused a multitude of texts seeking interesting articles and essays about American food, the family, male and female roles, dating customs, the educational system, and other cultural topics. When I discovered an essay in Alice Horning's *Readings in Contemporary Culture* (McGraw Hill, 1979) entitled, "The Stock Market," my own personal interest, though not necessarily success, in investing in the market urged me to share the information with my class. The class of fifteen students was composed of both males and females ages 19-35 from Korea, Japan, Thailand, and the Middle East. The results of my attempt were more than surprisingly successful.

Procedures: The First Day

The first day I introduced the reading by asking the class this question: "If you have some money, and you want to use the money to make more money, how can you do it?" Several students mentioned a savings account at a bank, while others suggested buying gold. When the latter idea was mentioned, I asked, "What if the price of gold goes down?" When smiles appeared, I seized the opportunity to explain the term *risk*, and moments later they were into other Wall Street terms such as *investor, shares, stocks, stock exchange, broker*, and *dividend*. Little did they know that they were in the middle of a crash course in the stock market, and I, as their teacher, was having a ball playing Louis Rukeyser.

With interest high from both student and teacher perspectives, students were given copies of the essay "The Stock Market" to read and comprehend as much as possible. They were asked several questions about the content of the article when they finished reading, and generally their

(Continued on page 57)

TESL Reporter
Brigham Young University—Hawaii
Box 1830
Laie, Hawaii 96762-1294

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
LAIE, HAWAII
Permit Number One

Address Correction Requested