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Improved Reading Through Writing

Cheryl L. Champeau de López,
Universidad Simón Bolívar

Throughout the history of language teaching and certainly at the present time, there has been a great deal of variety in focus and underlying psychological and linguistic principles and methodology. Nevertheless, most teachers and methods have one thing in common—they recognize four distinct language skills and present each in a particular way and order.

In the years I have been teaching, a significantly different idea has become more and more clear to me. The four skills are not or should not be separate and distinct. Each of the skills can be used to help fulfill the objectives of a course basically focused on the development of one of these skills. Because of the intrinsic interrelation of the four skills, each can and should be used to reinforce the others.

For some time now, my colleagues and I have been introducing the spoken language into the reading classroom through the oral analysis and discussion of the texts as well as specially prepared laboratory programs which include films, slide projections and tapes related to the reading texts. All of these oral activities are carried out in English with as little recourse as possible to the native language. The emphasis in these activities is on *communication* in English and encouraging students to think in English rather than translating back and forth from the native language. Errors in grammar and pronunciation are therefore not always corrected if they do not interfere with the communication of the idea. The increase in motivation and favorable attitudes from the students alone have convinced us of the effectiveness of this method.

However, the lack of time, the size of the classes, and our teaching load have prevented most of us from integrating writing into our classes to any great extent. I have attempted to remedy this situation over the past few months.

Integrating Writing into the Reading Class

When I speak of writing in an advanced reading class, I am not referring to fill in the blank or complete the sentence type of exercises. I am not even referring to the lists of so called "comprehension" questions, so common in textbooks, which simply call for identifying and copying specific details from the text. (After all, who really cares how many oranges Mrs. Smith bought at the supermarket.) These types of exercises tend to focus on individual words and scattered ideas rather than on the integration of these ideas into a whole. I have found the most effective exercises to be those which require the student to process and restructure the information, infer ideas, interpret concepts, predict, conclude or imagine. The more involved the reader is with the text, the better his comprehension and retention become.

The following are some examples of writing exercises which can be used with

any reading text at the different stages of reading:

I. Before reading:
   1) Looking only at the title, write five questions you think will be answered in the text.
   2) Write a description of a table, graph, or picture accompanying the text.

II. While reading:
   1) Write a one sentence summary of each paragraph.
   2) Draw a table, graph, or outline, and fill in the main ideas and supporting details from the text.

III. After reading:
   1) Try to write the answers to the questions you wrote before reading the text. (Remember, the text may not have answered all of your questions.)
   2) Write the main idea of the text in one sentence.
   3) Write the purpose of the author. Why did the author write this text? What is the author trying to do?
   4) Write one new thing you learned from this text.
   5) Looking only at the outline you wrote while reading, write a one paragraph summary of the text.
   6) Write your conclusions after reading this text.
   7) Write your opinion of the text. Do you agree with the ideas put forward? Why or why not?
   8) After reading this text, what new questions occur to you that you would like to find answers to?
   9) If the text is an extract rather than a complete article, how do you think it continues?

If you find your students seem to be suffering from "writer's block", you might begin by using George Jacobs' technique of "quickwriting". Write the general topic of the reading text on the blackboard and tell students to start writing and continue until you tell them to stop. They are to concentrate on content and not worry about form. If they cannot think of anything to write, they should repeat the last word or phrase or just write "I can't think of anything to write" again and again until they think of something. Jacobs says this technique helps writers develop new ideas and encourages them to think in the target language.

Why Write to Improve Reading?

There are a number of good reasons for incorporating writing into a reading class.

1) To monitor comprehension and recall.

As all teachers know, the best way to find out if a person really understands something is to have him explain it to another. Writing this explanation encourages the person to organize his thoughts and present them in a structured, logical format. Sandra Stotsky, in her review of research dealing with the reading/writing relationship, reported that almost all of the studies in which writing activities were used specifically to improve reading comprehension and recall found significant gains.

2) To clarify ideas and facilitate analysis.

As the writer transforms the ideas presented in the text into his own words and format (an outline, graph, table, chart, etc.), the relationship between these ideas becomes evident. It also becomes much easier to identify any ambiguities, errors

or omissions present in the original text. As Jeannette Veatch states in *Key Words to Reading* (1979), "Writing, by its very nature, is an analytical skill or ability. Therefore, the sooner a child can write independently, the sooner he can read independently."

3) To emphasize certain rhetorical concepts basic to reading comprehension.

Students given practice in writing topic sentences, concluding statements, definitions, steps in a process, hypotheses vs. facts, etc. are much more likely to be able to identify them later in a reading text.

4) To increase vocabulary.

As students write, they will ask or look for words. Since it is well known that meaningful ideas are best remembered, it follows that students will more easily remember words they ask for.

5) To encourage creativity.

Ever since Goodman's famous description of reading as a "psycholinguistic guessing game," we have become more and more aware of the need for creativity in efficient reading. Since this involves a certain amount of risk taking, encouraging students to try to predict ideas and recreate texts through private writing exercises rather than oral statements made in front of the whole class may produce better results.

6) To provide time for reflection.

A foreign language reading class in which the text analysis is being carried out orally in the foreign language means that an enormous amount of concentration is needed on the part of the students to process the oral language and relate it to the written text. There comes a time when everyone, especially the slower students, simply needs a break. A short, individual writing exercise is excellent for this. It gives students time to think quietly and organize their ideas. I have also found that slower students who rarely volunteer in oral discussions will ask me to check what they have written, then are the first to want to read their exercises aloud to the class. Being able to read what they have written gives them the self confidence they need.

A Final, Very Important Point

These writing exercises should not be graded. Many of them will not even be corrected by the teacher. If any credit is given for them, it should be on the basis of ideas, logic, completeness, and not on form. Some of them may be shared with other students in groups or the teacher may walk around the room to get a general idea of common mistakes to point out to the class. Sometimes students may volunteer to read their ideas or write them on the board. But they should not feel the pressure of grades on their written work. They should feel free to put their ideas down on paper, and then share them or not as they wish, since the basic premise underlying this type of exercise is that the writing process itself will improve reading comprehension. The objective of this course is reading comprehension, not writing. Writing is used as a means to reach that goal.

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About the Author

Cheryl Champeau de López has taught advanced ESP reading courses to science students at the Simón Bolívar University in Caracas, Venezuela since 1970. She has published several articles in English Teaching Forum, English for Specific Purposes, *and* TESOL News.

Conference Announcements

The National Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language, Ireland (NATEFLI) is co-hosting the 24th International Conference of the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Langauge (IATEFL) in Dublin, March 26-30, 1990. With an attendance of over 1,000 from more than 55 countries, this is truly an international gathering. For further information contact: IATEFL, 3 Kingsdown Chambers, Kingsdown Park, Tankerton, Whitstable, Kent CT5 2DJ, England or NATEFLI, P. O. Box 1917, Dublin 2, Ireland.

The Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT) will sponsor its Fifteenth Annual International Conference on Language Teaching/Learning under the theme "Bridging the Gap: Theory and Practice" at Notre Dame Seishin University, Okayama, November 3-5, 1989. Over 2,000 people from Japan and abroad are expected to participate. Contact: JALT, Lions Mansion Kawaramachi #111, Kawaramachi Matsubara-Agaru, Shimogyo-ku, Kyoto 600, Japan (Tel: 81-75-361-5428. Fax: 81-75-361-5429).

SPEAQ will hold its annual convention At Le Centre Sheraton in Montréal, June 15-18, 1989. Contact: SPEAQ, 600 Fullum, 6th floor, Montréal, H2K 4L1, Canada (Tel: 514/521-9421).

Oral Dialogue Journals: Spoken Language in a Communicative Context

Marguerite G. MacDonald, Wright State University

It is often difficult to provide opportunities for ESL students to practice realistic oral communication with native speakers. Trying to pair these students with native counterparts can create scheduling problems. For low level students and students from some cultural backgrounds, face to face exchanges with a stranger may prove intimidating. There is, however, a solution—the oral dialogue journal.

Just as written dialogue journals have proved successful in helping students develop writing skills, oral dialogue journals can aid the development of spoken language skills. The oral dialogue journal provides a transition from the monitored security of written language to the spontaneity of spoken communication with native speakers, while allowing flexibility in scheduling. As with written dialogue journals, the oral dialogue journal can benefit the mentor as well. This article discusses the oral dialogue journal and its use in a short term, non-intensive English language program for Japanese students visiting the United States.

Written Journals

Written journals have been hailed as a panacea for language problems, and in many ways they appear to be just that for developing skills in reasoning and writing (Staton et al. 1982, Fulwiler 1987). In particular, journals are an important tool in improving writing ability.

The written dialogue journal is a special kind of journal which pairs a student and a mentor, usually the teacher, who then correspond in a conversational manner. The dialogue journal provides an interaction that can encourage scaffolding (see Vygotsky 1978, Cazden 1979), a process which enables the student to build on the cognitive processes of the mentor (Staton 1984). The mentor facilitates the student's development of new concepts and strategies, which the student then incorporates in future communication (Staton 1984, Kreeft 1984). The dialogue journal is also valuable for the mentor, who is able to more fully understand the needs of the student.

Dialogue journals also have proved to be useful in the ESL classroom (Gutstein 1987, Popkin 1985, Davis 1983, Spack and Sadow 1983). Their value in international settings is the focus of the April, 1988, issue of *Dialogue*, a newsletter about dialogue journals. The dialogue journal provides exactly what the ESL teacher is looking for: real language in a communicative context.

Oral Dialogue Journals

Journals have traditionally focused on the written medium. However, writing is often not the skill presenting the greatest difficulty for the second or foreign language learner. For the nonnative speaker of a language the written medium can provide security. When writing, the second or foreign language student has the

opportunity to try to remember or to look up words and expressions, to alter grammatical structures, and to reorder the text, while proofing the material as many times as necessary. All this can be done in a private environment without an audience. In contrast, speaking involves immediacy, with no chance to take back what has already been said. In order for there to be native input and feedback, the novice speaker of a language must perform under the watchful, often intimidating gaze of the fluent native speaker.

Spoken language can, however, receive the same kind of transitional help that the written dialogue journal provides for the writing process. By taping an oral dialogue journal, language students retain many of the benefits of the written medium while developing oral strategies and fluency. Students can listen to a dialogue repeatedly in the same way they can read passages over and over. They can pause whenever they wish and use dictionaries to aid both comprehension and production. Students can listen to their own speech as well, rerecording if necessary. All this is possible without the intimidation of a listener being present. The oral dialogue journal also helps alleviate the embarrassment of face to face contact by providing more neutral conditions under which to get to know the conversation partner, a benefit that Staton (1980) has likewise attributed to the written dialogue journal.

Students produce an oral dialogue journal by taping messages on an audio cassette recorder back and forth with a partner. The taping can be done as part of the class if language laboratory facilities are convenient or as an outside assignment. The partner can be the instructor, as often occurs with the written journal, or a target-language peer. Peer dialogue journals provide several benefits. Dalle and Hall (1987) have pointed out that peer journals require less commitment of time on the part of the teacher and allow a wider range of mutually shared topics. While the Dalle and Hall (1987) study involved ESL children exchanging written journals with native English-speaking children, the same benefits apply to the use of peers in the exchange of oral journals.

The Oral Dialogue Journal Project

In our ESL program we use both written and oral dialogue journals with our ESL students and those American students enrolled in linguistics courses. We first experimented with oral dialogue journals in 1987 during a summer program for visiting Japanese college students. As part of an annual exchange between our school and a Japanese university, these students spent two weeks on our campus, attending English class for two hours every morning. After the class, they participated in activities on campus and took field trips to places in and around the community. Following their two weeks on campus, the students spent an additional two weeks in homestays with families in the area. Although the Japanese students had studied English for several years, their oral fluency was very limited. The English classes were therefore devoted to activities which improved spoken English skills.

In previous years, during their first two weeks the students had interacted almost exclusively with each other. They had few opportunities to talk with Americans before their homestays and were thus unprepared for contact with native

speakers. The Japanese students would sit silent and embarrassed at the welcome dinner and two weeks later act much the same at the farewell luncheon. Reports also came back that these scenes were repeated when the students entered their homestays. To address this problem, we devised a way to promote interaction with Americans that would provide a transition to face-to-face conversation.

To begin the project, we gave American students in an introductory linguistics course cassette tapes and told them to prepare at home a two to five minute message. They were to think of the tape project as a pen pal experience, telling their partners about themselves and their families and asking similar information of their partners. The Japanese, who had been divided into two roughly equal classes of eleven and twelve students respectively, were to respond to the messages. The first group was given the taped messages at the end of the third class; the other group began taping the fourth day. Both groups of Japanese students were told during their initial classes that they would each be corresponding with an American student. They would need to answer the American students' questions and ask questions of their own. They should talk about their own lives and families while learning about their partners. One group of students was not permitted to write out anything before listening to the tape but were allowed to take notes while listening. The other group could also write out material ahead of time and bring it to the recording sessions.

During their English class, the Japanese students developed communication skills and discussed topics relevant to their conversations with the American students. For the last half hour of the class period every other day each group listened to the dialogue tapes and recorded a message back. These tapes were given to their partners the afternoon of the same day. The American students then took the tapes home, recorded back, and returned their messages the following afternoon so that the Japanese could receive them the next morning. This procedure continued for the remainder of the two weeks. At the end of this period there was a party at which the partners met in person.

The Results

At first the Japanese students had considerable difficulty understanding the American students and spent most of their time repeatedly rewinding and listening to the tape. They replied with a brief set speech about themselves and their families that had little to do with many of the questions their partners had asked. As a result, the American students simplified their speech, speaking more slowly with less complex vocabulary and sentence structure.

In the second taping, the Japanese spent a little more time actually recording. Some answered specific questions from their partners but most elaborated on the information provided in their first recording. The fact that one group had prepared material ahead of time did not appear to alter the quality of the dialogue. Both while listening and recording, the Japanese frequently pushed the pause button, taking notes and using bilingual dictionaries. Often the students would talk to each other, trying to find a word or expression. Sometimes students listened to each other's tapes. However, by the

third recording most of the Japanese had begun to answer the questions from the Americans and to ask their own.

The American students were anxious to share information about themselves, their families, and friends. After the initial recordings, pictures were sometimes inserted in the cassette container. On occasion other members of the family spoke to the Japanese students, and several students reported that their whole family listened to the tape. By the fourth and last set of messages both sides expressed eagerness to meet each other.

Although there was some shyness at the party during the initial face to face encounters, the room was soon buzzing with conversation. Some American students brought family members, and most of the students exchanged gifts and home addresses. In their student evaluations, many of the Americans mentioned the dialogue journals as being the highlight of the course. The Japanese students likewise indicated that the oral dialogues were both enjoyable and beneficial.

The Limitations

The project was not, however, without some difficulties. Unlike pen and paper, a tape recorder requires more elaborate conditions for use. Background noise and volume adjustment can be problematic. The oral dialogue journal also carries with it one of the disadvantages of written language: a lack of reinforcement through nonverbal clues such as gestures, facial expressions, and other body language. At times even the American students found it difficult to be spontaneous without an audience present. Since then we have suggested to students that they make a list of subjects to discuss, much like people do when calling long distance to friends and relatives.

Conclusion

Because of the success of the original project, we have made the oral dialogue journal a regular part of the ESL spoken language curriculum. Nonnative English speakers are paired with American students in various linguistics courses. The response to this project from both sides is always very enthusiastic. Recently one international student explained to me that the dialogue journal was her favorite part of the ESL course because she had the opportunity to learn so much more English than she encountered in the classroom. Like written dialogue journals, for both native and nonnative students oral dialogue journals provide a valuable communicative experience.

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About the Author

Marguerite MacDonald is an assistant professor of English at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. She teaches linguistics and directs the programs in TESOL and ESL.

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Are you looking for information about currently available EFL/ESL videos for use in your program? Have you produced videos available for purchase or loan? The ESOL Video Materials Directory, a database of existing videos for EFL/ESL instruction and teacher training, has been created by the TESOL Video Interest Section as an on-going project and service to members of TESOL and its affiliates. Information about videos currently available worldwide may be obtained, or submitted for inclusion in the database, by contacting Peter Thomas, Department of International Studies, University of California Extension X-001, La Jolla, CA 92093-0176 USA. Telephone (619) 534-0425.

Activities for Raising Teacher Awareness

Jerry G. Gebhard, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Recently there has been renewed interest in teacher training activities which aim at providing ESL/EFL teachers with awareness about their teaching so that they can make informed decisions about what and how to teach. The objective of this article is to point out the kinds of activities which are used in this pursuit and to emphasize the need for research into how effective these activities actually are.

Teacher Training Activities

As Ellis (1986) points out, teacher training activities are similar to the kinds of activities classroom teachers use with ESL/EFL students; however, the emphasis is on awareness and acquisition of teaching, rather than on the acquisition of language skills. As with designing an ESL/EFL activity, the teacher needs to consider materials, kinds of tasks, and the procedures that will be used to conduct the class (Ellis, 1986), and there are a wide range of materials, tasks, and procedures.

A survey of articles on what teacher trainers do (Alatis, Stern, and Strevens, 1983; Ellis, 1986; Fanselow, 1987, 1988; Fanselow and Light, 1977; Gebhard, Gaitan, and Oprandy, 1987; Gebhard, 1986; Richards and Crookes, 1988) provides insight. Materials used for teacher training purposes include video and audio recordings of lessons, transcripts of lessons, readings, textbook and other teaching materials, realia, lesson plans, and samples of students' work. The kinds of tasks which teacher trainers do with these materials vary greatly, but some include having teachers compare, prepare, evaluate, describe, adapt, listen to, select, rank, characterize, relate, complete, rearrange, and test. Trainers structure activities through lectures, group work, pair work, workshops, individual work, demonstrations, whole class discussions, and teacher trainer elicitation.

This list represents only a partial understanding of teacher training activities, and in order to present a fuller understanding of how teacher trainers combine materials, tasks, and procedures in creative ways, four different kinds of teacher training activities are presented below, including: (1) microteaching, (2) observation, (3) investigative projects, and (4) humanistic exercises.

Microteaching

As reported in Richards and Crookes (1988), microteaching was originally based on the idea that teaching is a complex set of behaviors that can be broken down into isolated skills which can be practiced. A microteaching experience is very short, usually about two to five minutes in length in which the teacher practices predefined teaching behaviors (for example, wait time, giving clear instructions, putting students in groups or pairs). The other teachers act as students, and teaching materials are often used, such as a textbook exercise, realia, information

gap activities, and so on. The interaction is video taped, the whole class views the tape after the microteaching, suggestions are made by the teacher trainer and classmates, and the teacher then practices the same set of behaviors, again following the suggestions.

Observation

Observation of teaching provides indirect experience for teachers. According to Fanselow (1988), observation affords teachers chances to see their own teaching in the teaching of others and provides a multitude of ideas about what and how to teach. Observation is done either in a classroom (or observation room) or through audio and video tapes of classes. Teachers observe each other or "master" teachers.

In order to make observation more systematic, observation systems are sometimes used, such as Allen, Frohlich and Spada's (1983) COLT (The Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching) or Fanselow's (1977, 1987) FOCUS (Foci on Communication Used in Settings). Such observation systems have categories through which to selectively observe different aspects of teaching, such as who or what the source of communication is (teacher, student, text, other), what kinds of pedagogical moves are being made (structuring, soliciting, responding, reacting), what mediums are being used to communicate content (linguistic visual-print, linguistic aural-speech, paralinguistic, nonlinguistic, silence, and so on. Observation is also done through the use of categories originally for research purposes. For example, some teacher trainers have used Rowe's (1986) concept of "wait time," originally used in her research on the consequences of having teachers wait several seconds after asking a question and repeating the question or asking another student the same question. For teacher training observation purposes, teachers duplicate her research to see for themselves what the consequences are of waiting longer than usual periods of time.

Observations done through audio and video recording are sometimes shared by teachers. Teachers code the communication in small groups, describe patterns of teaching, and offer alternative ways to teach. Small group and whole class discussions based on observations of each other's or "master teacher's" teaching provide teachers with content through which to process their own teaching ideas.

Investigative Projects

Based on Fanselow's (1977, 1987) ideas, Gebhard, Gaitan, and Oprandy (1987) provide a means through which teachers can research their own teaching. The aim of the project is to provide teachers with opportunities to gain new awareness of the interaction going on in their classrooms as well as to consider how they might approach teaching a lesson differently. Teachers select a topic they are interested in investigating, such as how to make language comprehensible to students, how to keep students on task, the consequences of using classroom space in different ways, how to treat students' errors, or the effects of setting different kinds of tasks for students to work on. Teachers are asked to (1) video or audio tape classroom interaction which centers on the aspect of teaching they are investigating, (2) make transcripts of parts of the interaction and code/study them (through an observation

system such as FOCUS) for specific behaviors, consequences, and patterns, (3) decide on small changes in their teaching which might give them insight into the topic they are investigating, (4) implement the changes in the next lesson they teach while video/audio taping this lesson, (5) make transcripts, code/study again, and (6) compare the behaviors, patterns, and consequences in each teaching experience.

Humanistic Activities

Humanistic activities aim at providing teachers with "self knowledge". The idea behind the activities is that the more teachers understand themselves as human beings and teachers, the easier it is to make informed decisions about teaching.

Teacher trainers who work with a humanistic concept do activities such as "Real and Ideal Teacher" (Curwin and Fuhrmann, 1975). The objectives of this activity are to express a metaphorical model of ideal teaching, express a metaphorical model of current teaching, and to identify ways to move toward the ideal. The teachers are asked first to draw a picture of an ideal teacher (art work not important). After completing the picture, they are asked to list the characteristics that apply to the creation. Next teachers show each other their pictures and have a question-answer period, emphasis being on sharing ideas. The teachers then sit down with crayons in hand to draw a picture of themselves as they currently see themselves as teachers, and once completed they show their pictures and again have a question-answer period. After the two pictures have been completed and examined, teachers lay them down and take a sheet of paper and place it between the two completed drawings. They then consider what steps they might take to move from the drawing of the current teaching self to that of the ideal.

Other humanistic activities include role plays in which the teachers become students in settings where the students have problems with the teacher's behavior and values, problem solving activities in which the teachers have to make decisions about who they would hire for a job from a list of candidates, sensitivity exercises in which teachers are asked to get in touch with their feelings about certain behaviors and attitudes, observation exercises of body language and its consequences, and much more.

Do These Activities Work?: A Need for Research

As interesting and informative as teacher training activities appear to be, there is little proof that the activities which teacher trainers use result in awareness of teaching and provide the skills for teachers to make informed decisions about what and how to teach (Fanselow, 1983; Stern, 1983). There is, in fact, a paucity of research in ESL/EFL teacher education in general, and it cannot be overemphasized that teacher trainers need to research the effects of teacher training activities on the teachers who participate in them, both from a short term and long term perspective.

The little research that has been done does not look promising. Some researchers suggest that teachers do not easily change their teaching behaviors, that decisions about teaching are not based on training, and that teachers are not necessarily aware of their teaching after

their training has ended (Long et al., 1976; Shapiro-Scrobe, 1982). On a more positive note, in my own research (Gebhard, 1985) I discovered that teachers change their teaching behavior, at least when they have opportunities to process self-selected aspects of their teaching through multiple activities, investigative projects, and readings (and when they are given a break from one teaching setting and afforded the chance to teach in a different one).

In conclusion, there are many possible uses of materials, tasks, and procedures to conduct teacher training activities. But, it is not enough simply to provide these activities. The question teacher trainers need to ask (and research) is "What are the short term and long term consequences of using teacher training activities on the teachers who participate in these activities?" As with any teaching-learning setting, the more informed we become through research efforts, the more educated we can be in making decisions about which teacher training activities to use in a particular training context.

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About the Author

Jerry Gebhard is an assistant professor of English in the Graduate Program in Rhetoric and Linguistics and the director of the American Language Institute at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He is presently the chair of International TESOL's Teacher Education Interest Section and is interested in providing the means through which teachers can know how to make their own teaching decisions.

Overhead Transparency Slides Ahead

(Continued from page 40)

slides. Inserted in slide frames which cost only a few cents each, the finished slides are quite inexpensive. Paper copies of the "master" sheet prove useful for teacher preparation, for homework assignments, and for absent students.

Nonphotographic slides offer language teachers working with minimal or no equipment a unique way to enhance their teaching and student learning. This article describes ways to produce these slides as well as ways to use them for teaching reading and writing skills, grammatical concepts, lexical items, and dialogues as well as in language games.

Simple and Inexpensive Production Techniques

Slide Sizes

Slides come in two sizes—35mm or the larger "superslide" mount. Contrasted with

a rectangular 35mm slide, the superslide's square image will project about a third more material. The square "superslide" image also projects artwork (like the round, Aztec Calendar) which does not fit the rectangular format of conventional 35mm film.

The Master Sheet

The 8 1/2" x 11" master has thirty squares marked out in which small pictures can be glued or taped in place. The "superslide" mount accepts a transparency about 1 5/8" square. Thirty of these squares fit on one page. This sheet with thirty small pictures is then photocopied onto transparency film. Each square picture is then cut out and mounted either in a 35mm rectangular slide or square "superslide" mount.

Sources of Small Pictures

The yellow pages of the telephone book provide thousands of action pictures. Newspapers, magazines, comic books and advertisements also provide artwork of the correct size. Magazines provide miniature color pictures of people and food, a good source for color lift slides described later.

There are many other, sometimes unlikely sources for pictures. A cereal box may include a toy in a printed plastic bag which can be cut out and mounted in a slide frame to project unusual reading material. The writer has made slides in Spanish and Japanese from plastic sugar packets. Mimeograph stencils can be typed on (without the ribbon) to produce title slides for either 35mm color slides or nonphotographic slides. Photographic film (developed or undeveloped) can be scratched with a needle for stick figures or scenes. One teacher inscribed the word "Peace" on a color slide of a church to create a beautiful title slide.

Adding Color to Slides

Most nonphotographic slides are black and white or, if color transparency material is used, a single color. Add color to these slides by drawing on them with marking pens. To add a single color to an entire slide, sandwich a piece of cellophane or colored page protector with the clear transparency. Transparencies for use in copy machines are available in a rainbow of colors, and provide a black image on a colored background. Some thermal transparencies also produce a negative image with colored lines against a black background—an interesting change of pace.

Color Lift Slides

Pictures printed on "clay coated" paper can be used to make lovely color transparencies. Color lift slides can be made using a square of two-inch wide, clear tape (e.g. 3M #3750). Place the tape on the small magazine picture, rub it down thoroughly, trim, soak in water, and then pull away the paper. Then wash the plastic tape (with the picture) on the back gently to remove the clay. When it is clear, stick this tape to a 2" square piece of rigid, clear plastic. Alternatively, the back of the tape can be sprayed with hair spray (to eliminate the stickiness) and mounted in cardboard or plastic slide mounts.

Color Photocopy Slides

The new color photocopiers can produce transparencies of superb quality to make color slides whose projected image rivals that of 35mm photographic slides.

Because these copiers typically offer size-reduction capabilities, an enlarged "master" sheet can accommodate a much greater range of colored pictures. (The square of this 11" x 17" master sheet are 2 1/2" rather than 1 5/8".) The master sheet is color copied at 65% to produce a sheet of color transparencies, each exactly the size to fit a "superslide" mount.

Slide Mounts

Several companies produce the 2" x 2" inch "superslide" mounts recommended. Both cardboard mounts (heat sealed with an iron) or snap-together plastic mounts are available. One company makes sealed plastic slide mounts, ready for one-side chip insertion. Old 35mm plastic slide mounts can be enlarged with knife or scissors, then resealed using finger nail polish remover or plastic model cement.

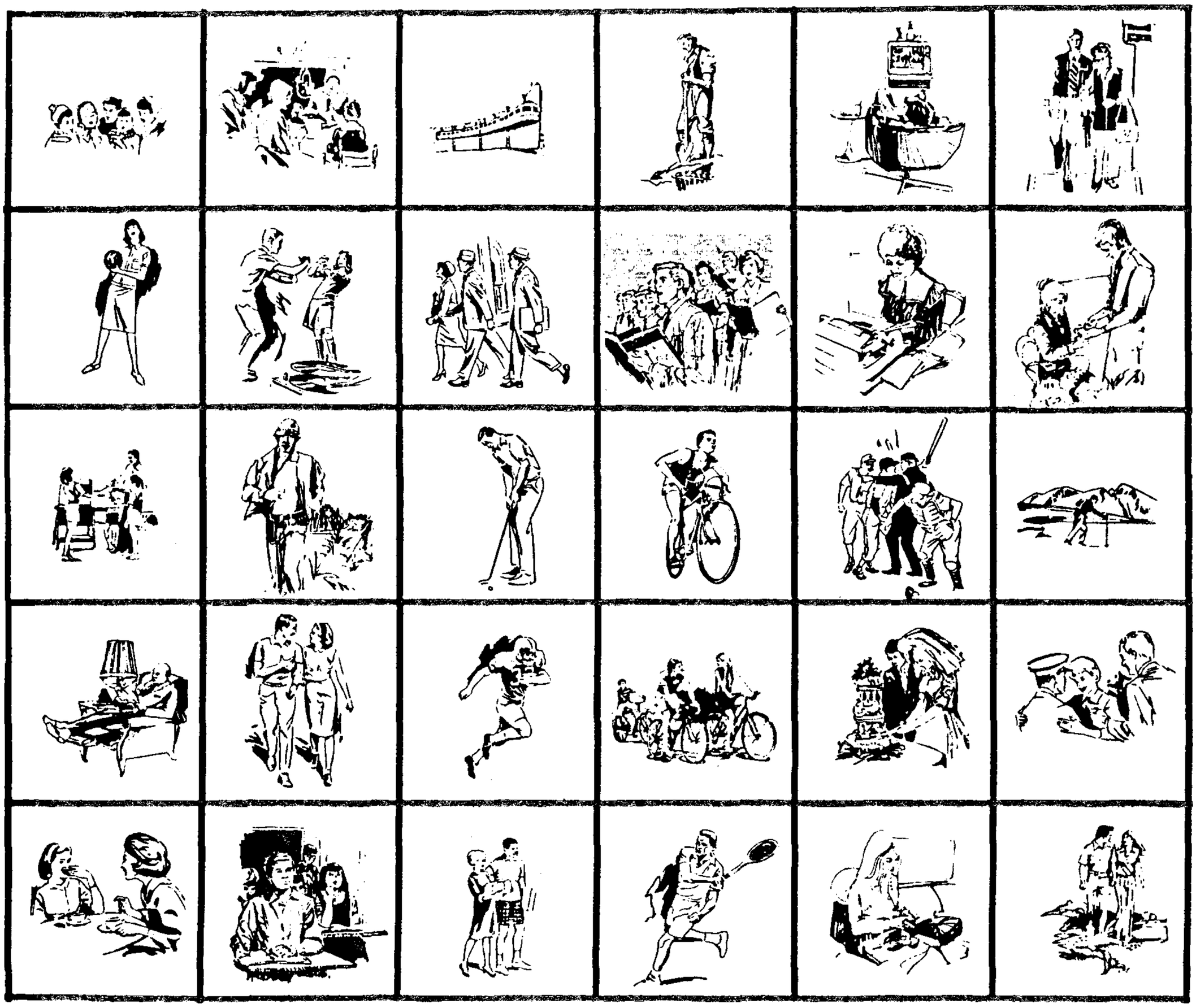
Many Uses

Once prepared, these slides will serve for years to come and can be used to support classroom activities which today's visually oriented students find stimulating. Many slides will prove useful for different classes. Pictures of objects can be used for presenting or practicing lexical items (a popular use for these slides) in any class. Examples are articles of clothing, food, and parts of the body as well as people doing things or expressing emotions.

With the slide projector set up and ready for use, nonphotographic slide activities can be used in short five or ten minute blocks of time. For example, with a few minutes left, project a series of slides with clocks showing different times. Concepts such as verb tenses or comparatives can be practiced with slides. A person running can illustrate the progressive tense vividly. Show pictures of two people, one "taller," one "thinner," then a slide of three different sized people. Color key difficult concepts like the subjunctive or irregular plurals. Illustrate sentences which are visually but not aurally distinct. *Se despertó*. vs. *lo despertó*. (*He woke up*. vs. *He woke him up*.) Slides can also illustrate minimal pairs, like *bite* vs. *bike*. Project words frequently misspelled using color to highlight those letters prone to error. Vivid color helps students recall difficult words, like *popular* in Spanish. You may also want to color code different uses which prove troublesome to students like the verbs *ser* and *estar*. Some of the best language teachers keep students motivated with occasional language games. "What is missing in this picture?" gets student attention.

Copy machines with reduction and enlargement capabilities can be used to produce nonphotographic slides of current, high interest reading material for your classroom. Motivate students by bringing in slides with reading material they find interesting. Better yet, ask them to bring articles from newspapers or magazines. The square, "superslide" format will project several paragraphs of content. Pictures also can provide cognitive support for stories being heard in the classroom or lab. Even if used only once or twice with the introduction of new material, students tend to recall the images when subsequently hearing the audio only.

Nonphotographic slides are easy to make, inexpensive, and offer language teachers a remarkably simple yet versatile method to illustrate linguistic concepts or create classroom activities which are enjoyed by both teachers and students.

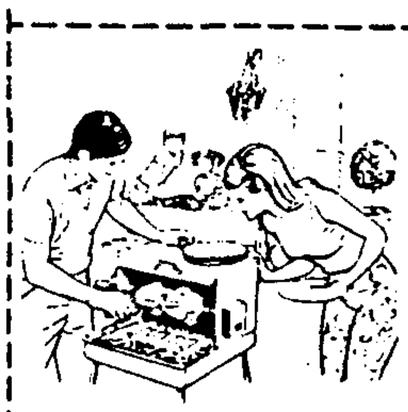


Master Sheet

PASTE ON SMALL PICTURES

1 5/8"

Master Sheet



2 1/2"

Master Sheet

Overhead Transparency Slides Ahead

Mark W. Seng, The University of Texas at Austin

Language teachers like the overhead projector for many reasons. It is easy to use and reliable. They can teach facing their students in a lighted classroom. Plain paper copiers make professional-looking transparencies at the push of a button. But overhead transparencies can be used in a different way—to make slides which require no photographic skill, camera, film, or processing.

For example, place a page of classified ads from a target-language newspaper on a photocopy machine loaded, not with paper, but a transparency. (Note: Be sure to use transparency film made for your machine.) The emerging transparency shows dozens of ads in tiny print, too small for the overhead. But, cut out one ad (perhaps for an apartment), then insert this small transparency into an ordinary 35mm slide mount. Projected in a slide projector, the image fills the screen. The remaining dozens of want ads can be used to make additional slides.

Without using photographic techniques and in minutes, teachers can create slides like these by copying either the original material or a "slide master" (which consists of miniature pictures pasted to one sheet of paper) for projection in a lighted classroom. Using a remote control or a "short" slide projector lens, the teacher can remain in the front of the classroom, as with the overhead. Slides offer other benefits as well. Sequenced in slide trays, they can be projected with rapidity to ensure fast paced, lively classes that keep students attentive. That single, twenty-five cent overhead transparency of want ads, when cut, yields film for thirty

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