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Use a Raffle to Teach ESL? Crazy? No! Effective? Yes!!

Grace A. Blossom, Rio Salado Community College

It all started when a friend said, "Can you use this piece of material (two yards of new plaid suiting) in your class?" I took it and then wondered what I could do with it. The idea came to hold a raffle. It worked!! My students started speaking English enthusiastically. Here's how I did it.

Preparation

I told the class we were going to raffle the cloth and in order to get a ticket they must tell three to five things about the piece of cloth.

The speaking ability of the students ranged from almost nil to slight proficiency. A few had fairly good comprehension and some knowledge of grammar, but lacked the ability to express themselves in English.

Some of the students, of course, did not understand. The use of a raffle as a technique to learn to speak English was a completely new idea. It took this first raffle for them to fully understand, but after that we were off and running.

I listed helpful short sentences and useful verbs on the chalkboard. For example:

We are going to raffle the cloth

(If I win) (I am going to) (make a dress).

I am going to make shorts.

I am going to make seat covers for my car.

Verbs:

make	sell	give
keep	take	wash

Presentations and the Drawing

The first time it took two class periods to get the idea of the raffle and the presentations worked out. The following class period, after a few minutes of study, they gave their presentations. Almost every student read his or her presentation. Remember, this was the first raffle.

For the raffle numbers I cut up a page of an old calendar. I wrote the words, "I am the winner" on one number and folded them all ready for the drawing. This is the one and only time I prepared the tickets myself. Thereafter the preparation was in the hands of an able student.¹

The drawing itself was also conducted by a student and took only a few minutes of actual class time. Instead of allowing each student to reach in to take a ticket, she handed them out shaking the ticket box well each time.

Polishing the Procedure

The next class hour we started the second raffle. This time the prize was a baseball cap, the kind businesses give away for advertising. I listed useful sentences and helpful verbs on the board, and again the students set to work preparing their oral presentations in order

to get a raffle ticket. This time, however, the more advanced students did not read but spoke their presentations, and I realized that we needed an incentive to encourage speaking. To do this I told them that those who read got one ticket, but those who spoke in English without reading got two. It worked! By the fifth raffle only two in a class of twenty read their material.

Prizes

What can you raffle? Anything within reason. One only needs to look around the house, in the costume jewelry box. Or ask your friends and family. I often raffle paperback books which I buy from the used book shelves at the local library for ten cents a copy. We once raffled a porcelain dish and three pretty little ashtrays that were left in the materials cupboard four years ago. One student said, "If I win the ashtrays I am going to throw them in the garbage because I don't smoke." Fluency? Yes, indeed! When a student comes up with a sentence like that or a useful new phrase, I write it on the board for all to see.

Students fully understand that the object raffled is not important. The raffle is only a means to developing oral proficiency in English. The real value of the thing raffled is the amount of fluency developed.

Advantages

With each new raffle a new set of vocabulary items is developed and used.

As language fluency develops, the student is aware and the teacher is aware, and there is tremendous satisfaction for both. As time goes on, the students become more relaxed and self assured.

The raffle technique can be a part of almost any class. Any teacher can use it. It's effective! It leads to a student centered classroom. It requires no costly textbooks. And, of course, it is enjoyable!

Of all the innovative techniques I have used in my classroom, the raffle is the most successful. One reason may be that it breaks down the overwhelming task of learning to speak a new language into small, manageable bits. Or it may be because it is so concrete and practical. Whatever the reason, it works!

Note

1. I would change only one thing about the raffle tickets. Now, instead of making new ones for each raffle, we put numbers on little squares of oak tag and use them time after time.

About the Author

Grace Blossom has been a teacher of English as a second language for many years. She spent ten years with the Bureau of Indian Affairs teaching Navajo Indians, and one year as a Fulbright lecturer in Bogotá, Colombia. For the past several years she has taught in the Adult Division of Rio Salado Community College in Arizona.

Overcoming the "Classroomese" Syndrome

Sean McGovern, Setsunan University and
Paul Wadden, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies

Foreign Talk and Teacher Talk

Charles Ferguson (1971) was the first to identify "a kind of 'Foreigner talk,'" stylized speech used by speakers of a language when they address "outsiders who are felt to have limited command of a language or no knowledge of it at all." Foreigner talk is a sort of imitation, by the native speaker, of the way the language is spoken by the foreigner. As Ferguson notes, it resembles baby talk and Pidgin as a simplified language form. One prominent syntactic feature of foreigner talk is the absence of the copula, such as in the question, "Where () Susan going now?"

A related, but different form of native speaker/learner speech is known as "teacher talk" (Cazden, 1979), a simplified form of speech often used by language instructors when teaching beginning and middle level students. Although foreigner talk and teacher talk share some characteristics such as exaggerated pronunciation, simplified vocabulary, and frequent use of repetition and paraphrase, there exists an important difference between the two: teacher talk is grammatical, and therefore an appropriate model for the language learner, whereas foreigner talk is not.

Foreigner talk: "You go to party tomorrow night? You will enjoy."

Teacher talk: "Are you going to the party?"

The party's tomorrow night at 6 p.m. It'll be fun. I think you'll have a good time."

Teacher talk is frequently redundant ("night" and "pm," "fun" and "good time") and meets the language student halfway, reinforcing what he has already learned while leading him onward to more complex language constructions and more difficult vocabulary. Foreigner talk is a bare-bones, pidgin-like speech with numerous grammatical and usage errors. Frequent exposure to foreigner talk can put the EFL student in the position of not being able to recognize standard spoken English. Moreover, if students wish to progress in their language study, they must at some stage unlearn much foreigner talk that they have already absorbed.

Classroomese and Its Dangers

A third form of speech—related to, yet different from both foreigner talk and teacher talk—is "classroomese." Not yet identified by linguistics, classroomese is an impoverished form of speech that some teachers unthinkingly adopt in the classroom, and thus unthinkingly encourage their students to use. A few examples of this seemingly innocuous, but in fact, debilitating *lingua franca* are "Open your books," "Please repeat," "Next," and the all purpose student response of "I don't know."

Teachers use classroomese because it is expedient, and, of course, because they are in the immediate environment of the academic classroom. However, the aim of language teaching should be to introduce language as it is used in the "real world." The minimal vocabulary and speech patterns of classroomese deprive students of the chance to learn language as it is commonly spoken: classroomese strips from language a rich underplay of meaning and tone which is vital to communication.

Language Register

Each language contains a variety of linguistic styles called "registers," which shift depending upon the context of the speech. Formality, audience, and topic all influence the choice of register. For example, when the topic of a conversation is "religion," word choice and sentence structure differ markedly from that of a less sensitive topic such as sports. In a formal setting, "I beg your pardon" may be the appropriate phrase for asking that a question be repeated, while in an informal setting, "Sorry?" or even, "Huh?" may be the best response.

Yet many teachers tell a student to "Repeat" or "Please repeat" when they don't hear the student's answer. What they really mean is "Could you speak a little louder?" Worse yet, teachers turn a blind eye when students themselves adopt such phrases. To teach only one register shortchanges language and hobbles learning.

One prominent linguist, Dwight Bolinger (1975), used synonyms of the word "intelligent" to illustrate the wide range of registers. The following terms have the same semantic meaning but differ

widely from informal to formal registers: "on the ball," "sharp," "brainy," "smart," "intelligent," "perceptive," and "astute."

By choosing particular words, altering word pronunciation and intonation, and by sometimes omitting parts of a phrase, speakers move unthinkingly among various registers. Gestures, eye contact, distance between speaker and listener, and other forms of body language can also express differences in register. Although obviously not a simple task for the student, learning to use registers is inseparable from genuine language acquisition.

Cultures differ radically in their use of language registers. Americans, for instance, are recognized for being informal in settings where Japanese would be extremely formal. At a corporate meeting in America, the vice presidents may possibly address the president by his first name. In Japan, even company workers of the same rank tend to use only family name when talking to each other.

Teaching Registers of the Target Language

Although mastery of registers poses one of the greatest challenges to language students, students can in fact be taught to distinguish registers by learning how to key on cue words and by practicing different registers in succession.

The first step is to make students aware of registers. An instructor can explain at the beginning of class which general registers will be used during the lesson. For example, in a class devoted to more formal registers, appropriate responses could be written on the blackboard and contrasted with informal registers. Part of

the teacher student dialogue in the class might run something like this:

"Mr. Lee?"

"Yes, sir?"

"Would you please answer number seven?"

"I'm sorry. I don't know the answer."

"Ms. Chang, would you please answer that question?"

In a class emphasizing the more informal registers of speech one might hear this kind of exchange:

"Fernando?"

"Yeah?"

"Take number seven."

"Okay."

Repeated speaking and listening practice will help students to learn to sense the registers. In the process, they should be instructed in which setting a given register is likely to be used, such as at a faculty colloquium at a university, a football chalk talk, or a club meeting to plan a school dance.

Contrary to what many teachers expect, introducing the registers into the classroom does not usually bog the students down. In fact, since students can better visualize the supposed context of their communication, the quality of their speech often improves rapidly as their inhibitions drop and their imagination is brought into play. As students begin to recognize registers in English, they will naturally reflect on the registers in their first language, which in turn will help clarify their conception of registers in the language they are studying.

Avoiding Classroomese

Classroomese is one of the archenemies of register discrimination and language fluency. How are students to learn basic language distinctions, for instance, when the teacher uses the catch-all phrase "Any questions?" to mean "Do you think you understand the material we've just covered?"; "Would you like more examples?"; or even "We're finished."

Squelching classroomese eventually offers the students the opportunity to learn to more accurately express themselves. "I don't know" may not actually be what the student wants to say, but rather, "I'm not sure," "I'm not prepared," or even "What question are we on?"

With time and patience, the instructor may come to hear dialogues such as this:

"What's the answer, Ali?"

"I'm not really sure."

"Go ahead and guess."

"The answer might be 'C.'"

"That's a pretty good guess, but I think the answer's different. What do you think Fatima?"

"I think it's 'A.'"

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Conference Announcements

The twenty-third annual convention of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) will be held at the San Antonio Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas March 6-11, 1989. Contact: Richard Orem, Convention Chair, TESOL '89, TESOL Central Office, 1118 22nd Street, NW, Suite 205, Washington, DC 20037.

California Teachers of English as a Second Language (CATESOL) will hold its twentieth annual state conference in Long Beach April 21-23, 1989. In addition to presentations on various aspects of second language teaching, CATESOL will offer twenty hours of training to Amnesty Program teachers with little or no previous experience. Amnesty teacher training enrollment is limited to sixty. For general information on the CATESOL conference, contact Kent Richmond, 4812 Coke Avenue, Lakewood, CA 90712 (Tel. 213/420-3105). For specific information on the Amnesty teacher training workshop, contact Gretchen Bitterlin, 2908 Curie Street, San Diego, CA 92122 (619/230-2969).

The TESL Canada Summer Institute will be held July 3-August 13 at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario. The focus is on ESL methodology, syllabus, and curriculum. Courses to be offered include "The Second Language Classroom," "Curriculum Design in ESL," "TESL: Methodology," "Practicum in TESL," "Second Language Acquisition," "Theories of Language and Language Acquisition," "Practice of ESL in the Classroom," "Sociolinguistics and Multiculturalism" and "Curriculum Design." Some last three weeks and others four. Credit will be awarded by Carleton University and the University of Ottawa. Contact: TESL Canada Summer Institute, 215 Paterson Hall, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6, Canada.

"Ho'omake'aka: Laughter in Paradise" the Seventh International Conference on Humor will be held at Brigham Young University—Hawaii April 18-22, 1989. Contact Margaret P. Baker or Jesse Crisler, CLA Division, BYUH, Laie, HI 96762.

Using Cloze Passages for Instructional Purposes

Alan Hirvela, Chinese University of Hong Kong

Among veteran teachers of English as a second or foreign language, the cloze test is likely to be a familiar tool of the trade. Originally developed by Taylor (1953) to measure the readability of prose texts used in teaching English courses for native speakers of the language, cloze tests have since become a staple in TESL.

Taylor himself (1956) first suggested their possible use as an index of second language proficiency; in 1959, Carroll et al conducted the first TESL research involving the cloze test. Subsequently, despite an ongoing debate over the validity of the cloze procedure, cloze testing expanded at such a rate that Oller (1973), a leading figure in the development of cloze testing, commented:

Cloze tests are deceptively simple devices that have been constructed in so many ways for so many purposes that an overview of the entire scope of literature on the subject is challenging to the imagination not to mention the memory. (105)

Today, 35 years after Taylor's initial research, cloze tests are regularly used in the assessment of prose readability and second or foreign language proficiency, particularly in terms of reading and writing skills.

Definition

Oller and Inal (1971) provide a succinct

description of the cloze procedure at its simplest level: "A cloze test is constructed by systematically or randomly deleting words from a passage of prose. Examinees are requested to restore the missing items by filling in the blanks" (315). In line with this no frills approach, Aitken (1977) defines a standard cloze test as one in which every seventh word is deleted from a passage of prose approximately 375 words in length, while fifty deletions within a consistent random deletion pattern are considered the ideal number for testing purposes.

However, as Jonz (1976) indicates, cloze tests are amenable to considerable variability:

Alteration of the basic cloze procedure has continued quietly and steadily for some years now. Most alterations involve such considerations as variations of blank size, deletion pattern, deletion rationale, subject matter of the text to be used, difficulty level and source of material, as well as variation in response mode such as multiple choice. (256)

Appeal of the Cloze Procedure

Cloze tests are popular in TESL for three major reasons. The first is their relative ease of construction, which allows TESL practitioners to develop their own tests without having to confront all the

complexities and controversies of language testing, though sensitivity in test construction is still a necessity. Second, as Porter (1976) points out, cloze tests provide measurement of a wide range of relevant concerns, including reading and listening comprehension, language proficiency, knowledge of vocabulary, and the relative difficulty of passages of prose. Third, as Oller (1979) notes, cloze tests demonstrate a high degree of validity relative to other language proficiency tests in the measurement of global skills, thus providing teachers and researchers with reliable and useful data in the assessment of learners.

An Alternative View of the Cloze Procedure

For all that can be said in favor of cloze tests as tools of measurement, there is another application of the cloze procedure which, curiously, is generally unexploited in cloze and TESL methodology: the use of cloze passages as a tool of instruction rather than assessment. In this scenario, cloze passages are perceived, and quite possibly constructed, as cloze exercises designed to enhance, rather than test, learners' knowledge of and ability to manipulate the target language. In short, the cloze exercise is a teaching device.

This approach is made possible by the fact that a cloze exercise designed for instructional use taps the same skills measured by a cloze test, with the added benefit of allowing for development or practice of those skills through appropriate instructional strategies. Certain advantages inherent in the cloze procedure complement instructional requirements perfectly.

Advantages of Cloze Passages

Brown (1980), in discussing the advantages of cloze tests, states:

the ability to supply appropriate words in the blanks requires a number of abilities which lie at the very heart of competence in a language: knowledge of vocabulary, grammatical structure, discourse structure, "expectancy" grammar, and reading ability, to name some. (214)

Oller (1973, 1979) reinforces this perspective when he observes that a learner taking a cloze test must use both productive and receptive skills, test his/her grammar of expectancy, and apply his/her knowledge of linguistic and extralinguistic context. In other words, completing a cloze passage is a highly integrative activity in which the learner's various linguistic resources and capabilities must be flexed to the full in order to satisfactorily fill in the blanks. Geffen (1979) outlines the process in the following way:

Thus a cloze passage is far more than a completion exercise: it is an aspect of controlled composition (oral and written) and demands of a learner a more creative approach to language learning and language use as well as an involvement with the passage as a whole—since the missing word at one slot may be anything from an indefinite article to an abstract noun, while the choice of filler at any one slot influences and is influenced by choices at later or earlier slots. Hence, language has to be seen as an integrated whole, going beyond the sentence to a kind of discourse analysis. (123)

Instructional Use of Cloze Passages

Given the nature of the cloze task and the sophisticated degree of negotiation between learner and text it requires, the cloze procedure is ideally suited for instructional purposes in that all four language skills can be employed in the process of completing the blanks, depending on how the passage is used. In fact, few TESL instructional tools offer such an opportunity for the application of the full range of language skills. When cast in the mold of an exercise rather than a test, the cloze procedure becomes a catalyst for the integrated use of reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

The easiest, and quite possibly the best, use of a cloze exercise is in a discussion format. For instance, students are assigned a cloze exercise to complete outside of class (allowing them to utilize their skills in a more deliberate, focused manner than the test format allows for; however, completion of the exercise in class also works well). In the next class session the passage is reviewed in depth, from one blank space to the next, with students asked to share their choices for the particular blank space being discussed.

The relative merits of the possible choices are then debated, with the teacher providing as much or as little guidance as desired or required. While in some cases the missing item will be an obvious one, especially where function words are concerned, numerous opportunities for consideration of more than one possible choice will occur, particularly for spaces requiring content words. In many cases the selection of the best among several acceptable choices will have to be made.

Discussion of the distinction—semantic and syntactic—between these items is extremely useful, and generally quite lively. This can also occur in discussion of function words in terms of explaining or reviewing the complexities of necessary grammatical considerations. Throughout this process students are, in my experience over the past several years, quite actively involved in the ongoing discussion, including the otherwise more reticent members of the class who usually are reluctant to emerge from their protective shell.

Student designed cloze exercises where the deletion pattern is not the every nth word approach normally used in cloze construction also serve instructional purposes well. Students can work in groups, for example, preparing cloze exercises which the rest of the class will later complete and discuss under the guidance of the group which constructed the passage. Asking students to discuss the answers to a cloze exercise within small groups also provides an opportunity for meaningful use of language skills.

Numerous other variations are likewise possible. Radice (1978), for example, has written of ways to use cloze passages in teaching business English (writing business letters, explaining and examining special terminology in fields such as commodities markets, banking, and so on) and has described possibilities for student participation in the review of the passages.

Benefits of Cloze Exercises

The benefits of using cloze passages for instructional purposes are neatly illustrated by Harris (1985):

By focusing their attention on a written text, cloze passages help students learn more about how language works—the interaction of vocabulary and syntax, the subtle influence of diction on style, the important grammatical relationships between words in a sentence, and the equally important logical relationships between sentences in a paragraph. (107)

The benefits described by Harris are enhanced by the use of the discussion format described earlier.

Jonz (1976) notes the potential of cloze passages as a "learner-centered teaching device" (255). Cloze exercises, with their emphasis on student participation in not only the completion but also the review of the passages, utilize this potential, and in the process serve TESL's general shift towards learner centered methodology (Stern 1983). As this occurs, particularly in the case of discussion of an exercise, students are, as noted previously, employing all four language skills. Reading and writing skills are necessary for completion of the passage; listening and speaking skills are put to use in the review of the exercise. Such an approach usually produces a spirited, stimulating classroom atmosphere which stands in delightful contrast to the dead world of drills and structured learning which Brumfit (1985:xi) calls "the trivialization of language teaching." For various reasons, students seem to revel in this kind of classroom interaction. This results in a greater degree of interest on their part, thereby enhancing their motivation to engage the target language and increasing the chances for improvement or refinement of their skills.

In keeping with this emphasis on learner centered methodology, the use of cloze exercises also helps to break down the restrictive formality of the traditional teacher student relationship. In my experience, the rigorous and open give-and-take between teacher and students during the review of the passages creates a sense of warm collegiality which is often transformed into a greater willingness on the part of students to ask questions and to engage in conversation outside the classroom. This is especially helpful for those who teach students with backgrounds in which the teacher is perceived as an authority figure who must be kept at arm's length as a show of respect and deference.

In support of the points raised in praise of cloze exercises, I might note an interesting and, I think, significant carry-over effect which has occurred on several occasions in skills courses I have taught: students moving on to literature courses I also teach have frequently asked that the use of cloze exercises in the discussion format be continued. This suggests that students both enjoy and feel they benefit from such exercises.

Conclusion

None of this is meant to suggest the elimination of the cloze procedure for testing purposes. Rather, the intention is to demonstrate the full value of the cloze procedure by describing its instructional properties, which for the most part have been bypassed in cloze-related literature, as a complement to its traditional assessment function.

Remarkably easy to construct, especially minus the pressures of testing considera-

tions, and of considerable benefit within the instructional milieu, cloze passages used as an instructional device deserve a greater standing in TESL methodology than they have hitherto been afforded.

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About the Author

Alan Hirvela is an instructor in the English Department at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He teaches language and literature courses and is primarily interested in the use of literature in language teaching.

Principles of Course Design for Language Teaching

Review by Justiniano L. Seroy, Visayas State
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PRINCIPLES OF COURSE DESIGN FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING. Janice Yalden. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. pp. 207. Paper: \$9.95

With the dearth of quality materials about teaching a second language, particularly in developing countries, this book is indeed a very useful guide for both experienced and relatively new teachers in designing language courses and preparing a new set of language teaching materials.

The text is logically arranged into four parts. The introductory section presents the importance of course design for language teaching and synthesizes various language and language teaching theories that may provide a good background for one who is plunging into developing study guides for language classes. The need for identifying a language teaching theory based on experience from learners and teachers is certainly useful and indispensable, and therefore such a theory according to the author must be "accessible to teachers who may be working in all kinds of different educational concepts and teaching any second language to learners of any age."

The second part, which comprises three chapters, poses some theoretical questions that are of paramount importance in the discussion of current issues on language teaching and applied linguistics, namely: the concept of proficiency in a second

language, the pragmatics of language use, and the field of discourse analysis.

The third part, (also three chapters), gives a critical discussion on the problems in language course design that are a blend of theory and practice. It likewise explains new varieties of communicative language teaching approaches, such as the functional syllabus, the negotiated syllabus, the subject-matter syllabus, and the task-based syllabus.

The last section, (four chapters), vividly presents the notion of frameworks. This is the most meaty portion of the text.

A framework, as the book suggests, is a skeletal diagram or outline of teaching-learning concepts which can be expanded into full-blown language lessons in response to the needs of the learners. It also refers to a general plan of study about teaching a second language for interactive or communicative purposes, and is usually mapped out before any teaching of a language begins in the classroom. A framework reflects the teaching context, the cultural considerations for teaching a language, and the objectives upon which language lessons can be specified. It is flexible since it can be modified, substantiated, and enriched by language teachers who are going to use it.

The book clearly suggests that before one can construct a framework, one has to

conduct a needs survey analysis of the learners. On the basis of observations, discussions with learners, and gathered information through the questionnaire and interview techniques, one will know the learners' background qualities, their learning styles and preferences, as well as their language needs. With all these data, the teacher is now ready to pursue the task of constructing frameworks to design language courses.

Furthermore, readers will find the topics on principles for designing a proportional syllabus very stimulating, as follows:

- a) the selection of a language syllabus,
- b) maintaining a balance of teaching contents: linguistic form and communicative functions of language,
- c) the teaching of meaning in contrast to form, and
- d) establishing proportions between teaching formal and functional components of language.

A proportional syllabus, as the term implies, maintains the balance of teaching between the grammatical structures and the communicative functions of language.

Likewise, the text discusses adequately the general principles for designing frameworks, namely:

- a) the design should be conducted with as much consultation as possible with those involved,
- b) it must necessarily be kept lean; that is, users of a given framework can still create relevant or related teaching units out of its general contents,
- c) the framework must be written so that it may be adapted easily, and
- d) the framework should take into account available resources.

The author justifies the use of frameworks by saying that learners require opportunities to communicate in the target language and the frameworks are used to prepare such opportunities.

The book demonstrates a proper sequencing of topics from the beginning chapter to the last. The earlier chapters introduce readers to the rationale for designing language courses and some background theories which have been synthesized and simplified for the convenience of those without any knowledge of descriptive linguistics. The later portions of the book then point out, as mentioned earlier, some current issues on language teaching and classroom approaches to language teaching-learning. With such background information, the book gradually guides the readers towards the discussion of its central theme: that of using and constructing frameworks to design language courses.

The book does not show a complete set of language lessons or teaching materials that evolves from the sample frameworks illustrated in the appendices, but does show various models of skeletal teaching guides, such as

- a) frameworks for teaching units on reading information,
- b) frameworks for opening and closing encounters in a variety of settings, and
- c) frameworks for communication needs courses.

It also suggests steps to transpose or translate the frameworks into more specific language lessons.

Finally, this book addresses itself not only to language teaching practitioners and

specialists, but also to school administrators and supervisors who are involved in the planning, designing, and implementation of language programs in their own school districts. Indeed, it is a most welcome addition to the list of professional materials that ought to be read. I recommend this book without qualification.

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Publications of Interest to ESL Teachers

The *Athelstan Newsletter* provides comprehensive coverage of the use of technology in the teaching of ESL and foreign languages. Published four times a year, it focuses on using technology for developing the four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It presents ideas on the place of computers and hyper media in language teaching and also describes developments in the use of CD-ROM, video, and videodisc in language teaching. Much of the newsletter's content consists of new hardware and software product information. The *Athelstan Newsletter* is sent free of charge to teachers on the Athelstan mailing list. Individuals in companies who wish to subscribe to the newsletter may do so for only \$10 (U.S.) per year. Contact: Athelstan, P. O. Box 8025, La Jolla, CA 92038-8025.

A new handbook that can enable teachers to help adult refugees cope with social pressures and adjustment problems in the USA is now available from the American Council for Nationalities Service. *Primary Prevention and the Promotion of Mental Health in the ESL Classroom* was originally developed by ESL and mental health professionals J. Donald Cohon, Moira Lucey, Joan LeMarbre Penning, and Michael Paul. It is based on a teacher-training project conducted by the authors for the American Council for Nationalities Service. Methods and materials were developed in conjunction with workshops attended by 110 teacher/participants in an eight-state area. Student populations covered most of the various refugee ethnic groups and all instructional levels. The handbook provides a theoretical background for 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 curriculum. Sample lesson plans and materials are also included. For more information about the project and the handbook, contact Michael Paul at International Institute of Rhode Island, 421 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, RI 02907 (Telephone: 401/461-5940). Copies of the handbook can be purchased for \$6.50 each (pre-paid only) from ACNS, 95 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

Individuals planning to live in another part of the world are usually curious and eager to learn about the place and people where they will be staying. Yet these same people are

often at a loss when it comes to knowing where to begin in order to find adequate basic and readily available area- or country-specific materials to help plan their activities. A cross-cultural trainer's job is to help people prepare themselves to adjust successfully and function effectively in new environments. It is for these two groups—individual sojourners and cross-cultural trainers—that *A Select Guide to Area Studies Resources* was prepared. The resources and references it contains will also be useful to others, such as those who host international visitors or foreign students, or foreign students themselves as they wish to share pertinent information about their home areas. *A Select Guide to Area Studies Resources*, authored by L. Robert Kohls and V. Lynn Tyler, contains information on databases (on-line and print), books and other print media, films, videos, slides, microfiche, maps, public services, institutions, and libraries pertinent to area studies. Areas of focus represent most of the world: Africa, America, Antarctica, Asia, Baltic, Caribbean, etc. Topical descriptors range from natural resources and geography to babysitting arrangements and clothing sizes. Copies of *A Select Guide to Area Studies Resources* are available from the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies, 280 Herald R. Clark Building, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602 (Telephone 801/378-6528).

Teaching Opportunities in the Middle East and North Africa lists job descriptions, necessary qualifications, benefits, and application requirements for over 140 institutions in the region. Opportunities range from those in nursery classes to universities and include positions for teachers, professors, technical/vocational trainers, and educational administrators. This comprehensive book, published by AMIDEAST, also provides information on placement agencies, recruiting conferences, fellowships, publications, and other sources of information on teaching overseas; helps you through the application process and myriad of logistical preparations; presents ideas for curriculum materials; offers suggestions for minimizing the cultural adjustment period; and provides an annotated bibliography of suggested introductory readings. To order a copy of *Teaching Opportunities in the Middle East and North Africa* send a check or money order for \$14.95 (U.S.) to AMIDEAST Publications, 1100 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036. (Allow three to four weeks for delivery. Price includes fourth class postage and handling in the U.S. and Canada. Add \$2.00 for overseas addresses.)

Jobs in Japan, a "guide to living and working in the land of rising opportunity" written by the former director of a Tokyo English school, provides valuable information for those who wish to take advantage of the thousands of positions available to native English-speaking instructors in Japan. Travel tips, how to find affordable accommodations, non-teaching employment possibilities, even entertainment options are all included in this fully illustrated 264-page book. Not intended merely for tourists or for those already familiar with Japan, *Jobs in Japan* is designed to show the educator with no background in Japanese language or culture how he/she can find plentiful and well-paying work in Japan. To this end, the book also includes a directory of private English schools in Japan (675 in all). *Jobs in Japan* can be purchased by special order through bookstores (for \$9.95) or directly from the publisher (for \$8.95): The Global Press 2239 East Colfax Avenue, Suite 202, Denver, CO 80206 (Telephone: 303/393-7647).

Using Bulletin Boards

(Continued from page 20)

1982). Illustrations of proverbs from *Poor Richard's Almanac* also make interesting bulletin board displays. One famous example is: "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

Riddles

These perplexing questions, which provide insight into the world of English humor by showing how puns work, are always popular with ESL/EFL students. The old familiar riddle "What has four eyes but cannot see?" (Mississippi) never fails to delight; even beginners are able to grasp the wit involved in this word puzzle and sometimes enthusiastically generate an assortment of riddles from their own linguistic traditions.

Information about English-Speaking Nations

Giving students an understanding of the various cultures that use English as a first or as an official language can broaden their vision of the world. Because a great many textbooks have a heavy bias toward the culture of the United States or the United Kingdom, a project exploring other English-speaking nations can provide a more balanced cultural approach by enlarging the scope of the students' learning experience. Furthermore, this type of project supplies a strong rationale for learning English—a language representing a multitude of populations around the world.

Posters, maps, brochures, and other information about English-speaking na-

tions can be obtained readily by writing to embassies or cultural affairs offices in the capital city of the nation where your school is located. Obvious embassies to contact are the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia. Do not, however, overlook other nations which use English as an official or semi-official language: Singapore, India, Jamaica, Kenya, the Philippines, and so forth.

Seasonal Boards

Holidays and seasonal events serve as natural themes for bulletin board displays. Pictures showing activities and costumes associated with these kinds of celebrations can generate interest in the culture of the target language and provide motivation for further learning.

Some popular holidays during the year in the United States are New Year's Day, Washington's Birthday, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, April Fool's Day, Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Father's Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Halloween, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Information about the Learners' Country

Because comprehensible input plays an important role during the language acquisition process, "known material" presented in English is a proper strategy for cultivating language growth. Teachers should also promote cultural ideas familiar to their students' lives—local celebrations, historical events, or nearby places which attract tourists—and this can easily be accomplished using bulletin board spaces.

Literature Lesson Supplements

Bulletin boards with biographical displays of the novelists or poets whose works are being studied in literature classes stimulate student interest. Photographs of these writers, their families, and their homes, as well as pictures of people and places described within the stories and poems can effectively introduce the world of distant times and places.

Student-Produced Materials

Public displays of student projects are always popular. Writing that has traditionally been limited to the scrutiny of one teacher can be shared with a much wider audience using bulletin boards. Students' confidence is boosted when their works are posted; furthermore, these model documents guide others in developing their composition skills. An additional benefit to showing student writing is that it allows other members of the faculty to appreciate work being done by their colleagues.

Newspaper Clippings

A bulletin board devoted to short articles and captioned photographs from newspapers allows students to interact with journalistic conventions without being overwhelmed by large quantities of print. Human curiosity about sports statistics, cartoons, and advertising copy can lure students into the newspaper reading process. This initiates them into

the world of journalism and helps to prepare them for the challenges of understanding a daily newspaper.

English Across the Curriculum

Language acquisition can be supported with bulletin boards which integrate learning that is occurring in other discipline areas—history, social science, geography, and so forth. Bulletin board exhibits which exploit these themes help to develop the relationship between linguistic and communicative skills; they tap layers of student interest that may otherwise go unnoticed in traditional language classrooms. A useful resource volume relevant to this area is *What's What: A Visual Glossary of the Physical World* by R. Bragonier Jr. and D. Fisher (New York: Ballantine, 1981).

About the Author

David Wardell is an instructor at the University of Pittsburgh English Language Institute in Tokyo. He received a master's degree in TESOL from Portland State University and is currently completing his doctorate in post-secondary education. He spent five years teaching EFL in Thailand and has also worked in Iran and the People's Republic of China. In addition, he has coordinated a program for Indochinese refugees and served as an instructor at several colleges in Portland, Oregon.

Using Bulletin Boards in Language Classrooms

David Wardell, University of Pittsburgh ELI Japan

Bulletin boards are found in virtually all schools, but language teachers frequently overlook these potentially useful tools for stimulating and reinforcing learning within institutional settings. Too often these display spaces serve only as catchalls for notices, schedules, and general announcements—cluttered jumbles of paper that attract merely cursory attention from passersby. While the need to designate one bulletin board on the school premises for administrative purposes may be necessary, other bulletin boards throughout the school, particularly those in classrooms and in areas where students tend to assemble during their free time, ought to have their pedagogical potential exploited much better than is normally the case. This article suggests some effective ways language teachers can

utilize bulletin boards as learning instruments in their schools.

Idioms and Proverbs

Bulletin boards which graphically illustrate idioms or proverbs help to fix this type of information in the memory of students. "Hot under the collar," "blow one's top," "straight from the horse's mouth," or "beat around the bush" are examples of idioms that offer opportunities for visual interpretations. Collections of idioms are available from a number of publishers. Two examples are *A Dictionary of American Idioms* by M.T. Boatner and J.E. Gates (New York: Barron's, 1975) and *Illustrated American Idioms* by D. Curry (Washington, D.C.: USIS,

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