

# TESL

Teaching English as a Second Language

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Second Language

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## TESL AND MUSIC

BY CHARLOTTE K. DYKSTRA

The idea is not new. Plato suggested that music should be used functionally (as well as to move the spirit) in learning such subjects as mathematics. Many modern TESL materials do in fact include words and music of old folk songs, and there are even some collections of songs for use in TESL programs, notably one by Dodge and Lee.

There has remained a need, however, for some alternate treatments of the role of music and song in TESL materials. Perhaps there should be a series of songs specially written with difficulty of language content in graduated increments. Or perhaps a series that includes only language content that is being taught simultaneously in a correlated program of classroom materials. More interesting still is the possibility of preparing music to enhance the opportunities of learning English rhythms and intonation patterns.

Charlotte Kuenstler Dykstra has had wide experience in TESL here in the United States and abroad. She is currently coordinator of TESL Materials Development Project at the Hawaii Curriculum Center.

There is also a need to have more TESL-related songs available on inexpensive records. (Record players are more readily available than

are musically equipped classrooms or musically gifted teachers.) The language needs to be clearer than it is on most recordings. Students should be able to hear the words and to participate in the singing when ready. There should also be an opportunity for students to sing alternate verses whether pre-prepared for the students, or created by them. And the music should not be limited to folk tunes.

Songs incorporating some of these ideas were created and tried out in Pacific areas, as well as in North and South America, Africa, and Asia within the framework of the TESL

### CONTENTS

TESL and Music	
by Charlotte K. Dykstra	Page 1
Cultural Horizons and Language Usage	
by Jan Ocampo	Page 3
The Use of "How Much" and "How Many" in TESL Textbooks	
by Alice C. Pack	Page 5
TESL - An Undergraduate Major Program?	
by William D. Conway	Page 9

Materials Development Center. There were reports in some areas that "the TESL songs made the unofficial local hit parades" out of school as well as in. Subsequently there was a request from the Hawaii Curriculum Center to prepare a series that could be used locally in schools.

## Musical Features

These records include (1) a solo with musical accompaniment but with emphasis on clarity of the vocal part for listening and learning, (2) a chorus with musical accompaniment to encourage pupil participation in a sing-along manner, and (3) a separate section of musical accompaniment only, with one lead instrument playing the melody line, for use after pupils have learned the song.

Grammatical points of language are emphasized in some of the songs. In "I Have Two Hands" I is used in the first verse. The second verse switches to you with subsequent changes in language forms.

## Use of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is stressed in some of the songs. "All You Eat," for example, is a song about food.

All you eat, just think of all you eat:  
Think of all the bread you eat.  
fish  
fruit

The second verse changes to "drink" and more vocabulary substitutions are made.

Think of all the milk you drink.  
juice  
tea  
cokes

This song may also be sung to animals and things, with other substitutions.

To a bird: Think of all the seeds you eat.  
worms

To a shark: Think of all the fish you eat.  
plankton

To a guinea pig: Think of all the feed you eat.  
bread

To a sea turtle: Think of all the shrimp you eat.  
squids

To a car: Think of all the gas you drink.  
oil

## Use of Names

"What's Your Name" uses only two sentences and is used as a basis for practice with names and short forms of names.

What's your name?  
My name is Patricia. Pat!  
Keoki George!  
Anthony Tony!

"Tropical Birds" contains vocabulary of size and measurement (small, long, narrow, medium-size, heavier than...) and colors (red, green, bluish, ivory white, rainbow-striped, iridescent). The sound and form of these words can become the basis for introducing other grouped words: iridescent, opalescent; rainbow-striped, multi-colored.

## Teaching Colors

"Colors of the Rainbow" is a simple song about colors. Each color has a special identifying sound effect.

"Hello, Mary" is a dialogue between two pupils who exchange polite but informal greetings.

(Cont. on Page 4)

## TESL REPORTER

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Articles relevant to teaching English as a second language in Hawaii, the South Pacific and Asia, may be submitted to the editor through Box 127, The Church College of Hawaii, Laie, Hawaii 96762. Manuscripts should be double-spaced and typed, not exceeding three pages.

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(Cont. from Page 4)

Hello, Mary. How are you?

Very well, thank you. And how are you?

I'm well, too. It's good to see you.

It's good to see you.

## Dance Movements

"Make a Flower" combines imperative language with dance-like movements. It is the children who make the flower with movements and poses, add a sun, wind and rain, and make the flower grow. (A teacher's book that accompanies the records shows movements that go with the songs.)

The melody and rhythm of some of the music is written to illustrate intonation and rhythm characteristics of English.

## Flexibility

We hope there is flexibility possible in the uses of the recordings. The three segments of each song (solo, chorus, and music only) can be used for listening, singing along, and self-testing. Children are also encouraged to create original alternate verses which can be sung with the music-only segment. Work may be done individually, in small groups, or simultaneously with a whole class. Some students have varied the practice by singing along with all segments. Some have used accompanying movements from the beginning; others have presented "shows" to the class. One important flexibility allows learners to move from the original recorded version to alternate verses in the teacher's book, then on to various levels of "created" versions. An early level created version is the substitution of one word as illustrated in "Think of all the food you eat." More advanced ideas for created or original versions relate to phrases and larger units which may be deleted in favor of new ones. Beyond that the students come up with complete versions of parodies of their own.

The design seems, so far, to be useful in teaching English as a second language, and it may help to open further an enjoyable field.



*From enjoyment of music to creative language efforts. Mrs. Dykstra with children learning English as a second language.*

The series consists of 30 songs recorded on two sides of 15 discs (45 rpm). A teacher's manual accompanies the record set and contains instructions for use, plus the music for each selection arranged for piano, with guitar chords indicated.

### Rec.# Selection

- 1 A B C Chant  
Hello, Mary
- 2 Goodbye, John  
What's Your Name?
- 3 We're Friends  
I Like Pennies
- 4 Colors of the Rainbow  
Yellow Horse
- 5 Visiting the Doctor  
My Boat is Floating
- 6 Play with Us  
The Busy Workers
- 7 The Cat Song  
Freedomland
- 8 Mynah Bird  
Ice Cream Man
- 9 Think of All the Food You Eat
- 10 Two Little Mangoes  
To the Market
- 11 Pearly Shells  
I Have Two Hands
- 12 I Have Ten Fingers  
Someone's Watching Over Me
- 13 It's Raining, Isn't It?  
Cherry Tree
- 14 Make a Flower  
You're Four Feet Tall
- 15 Tropical Birds  
Christmas Tree

(Cont. on Page 8)



## **TESL and Music**

(Cont. from Page 4)

The series is available from Hawaii Curriculum Center, Section I, Wist Place, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.

The materials were written or adapted by Charlotte Dykstra and include selections by Alice Pack of Church College of Hawaii and Carol Roes of Honolulu. Recorded arrangements were by Dykstra. Piano arrangements in text version are by Harold Schramm.

Christi Menezes, 13-year-old girl soloist with the Honolulu Children's Opera Chorus, recorded 21 of the solos in the series. Other solos were given to Kim Chee, a Korean orphan; Debbie Lowe, daughter of guitarist Mundell Lowe; Kathy Merry, soloist with Sing-Out Hawaii; and Charlotte Dykstra. Choruses were provided by Miss Eileen Lum, Director of the Children's Opera Chorus, and the members of Sing-Out Hawaii, led by Miss Sharon O'Calvey.

1. Dodderage and Lee. **TIME FOR A SONG**. London: Longmans, 1959.

2. U.S. Office of Education Project HE-084, **TESL Materials Development Project**, Gerald Dykstra, Principal Investigator

3. The Hawaii Curriculum Center, the University of Hawaii and the Hawaii Department of Education. It is engaged in curriculum development over a broad spectrum of areas but with current focus on English language.