

Part II**The Use of "How Much" and "How Many" in TESL Textbooks**

BY ALICE C. PACK

In the winter edition of the TESL Reporter a recommendation was made that teachers critically examine their English Second Language texts and if they do not contain a teaching unit on "How Much" and "How Many" with the verb "be", they might introduce such a lesson. If there is a teaching unit but nothing more follows, they might supplement the text by incorporating some dialogs or review exercises in their teaching of English.

Lesson Summary

Following are two suggested lessons of this type which have been developed for students on the intermediate level of learning English as a second language. Both are based on two single dialogs in which vocabulary items are limited so that focus is in the teaching points.

In Lesson No. 1, conversation No. 1 teaches the use of "How much _____ is there?" for amount of mass noun and "How many _____ are there?" for number of count nouns. Conversation No. 2 teaches the use of "How much is _____?" for the price of mass nouns and "How much are _____?" for the price of plural count nouns, "How much is _____?" for singular count nouns. The difference in meaning between "How much are _____?" and "How much _____ is there?" and between "How much are _____?" and "How many _____ are there?" is taught by using the words in context in two contrastive conversations.

Lesson No. 2 teaches beginning composition through controlled steps beginning with copying, then con-

tinuing through converting conversation to single statements using past, present, and future time, combining simple statements into compound sentences, free composition based on previous work, and ending with original composition based on the student's own experiences.

**Named Director**

Alice C. Pack, Assistant Professor of English and TESL at The Church College of Hawaii, has been named to succeed William D. Conway as Director of the English Language Institute and Coordinator of BATESL.

The student is already familiar with the material as he has had the exercises in Lesson No. 1 or something similar.

Teaching "How Much"

CONVERSATION NO. 1

Amy: How much milk is there?

Betty: I think there's enough for lunch.

Amy: How many cartons are there in the refrigerator?

Betty: There's only one, but there are two bottles of pop. I'll go and buy some milk.

Amy: Take the change from my purse.

Betty: How much is there?

Amy: Two dollars. By the way, how much bread is there?

CONVERSATION NO. 2

Betty: How much is milk?

Clerk: It's fifty-five cents for a half-gallon.

Betty: Oh, that's too big. How much are these small cartons?

Clerk: They're only fifteen cents.

Betty: I'll take six, and a loaf of bread, please. How much is my bill?

Clerk: The loaf of bread is thirty cents and six cartons of milk are ninety cents. That's \$1.20, plus tax.

Lesson 1

Exercise No. 1. Asking Questions.

A. Review these mass nouns and count nouns and make a question using "How much _____ is there?" (mass nouns) and "How many _____ are there?" (count nouns). Remember to use the plural form of the count noun in the question even if the answer is only one or none.

Mass nouns

bread

butter

milk

coffee

sugar

Count nouns

a loaf of bread

a pound of butter

a quart of milk

a cup of coffee

a bag of sugar

Example: How much is there?

How many loaves of bread are there?

B. Make some questions using "How much _____ is there?" or "How many _____ are there?" using the following list of nouns.

a banana

tea

flour

a cake

a sandwich

bacon

C. Write two sentences using nouns from Conversation No. 1. One should follow the pattern "How much _____ is there?" and the other should follow the pattern "How many _____ are there?".

Example: How much money is there in the bank?

How many loaves of bread are there on the shelf?

Exercise No. 2. Answering Questions.

Answer the questions in Exercise No. 1 using the amounts indicated below in Sections A and B.

Usually the singular answer to the count noun question "How many _____ are there?" is "There's only one." Answers to questions of mass nouns "How much _____ is there?" are made with relative amounts such as a little, a lot of, enough, etc. or by amounts measured in count nouns such as five pounds of, one cup of, etc. A simple negative answer to the count noun question is "There aren't any." and to mass nouns "There isn't any."

- A. bread (a little)
butter (none)
milk (a glass)
coffee (a lot of)
sugar (two sacks)

and "How Many"

a loaf of bread (two)
 a pound of butter (one)
 a quart of milk (three)
 a cup of coffee (four)
 a sack of sugar (none)

Example:

There's a little bread.
 There are two loaves of bread.

B. a banana (two)
 tea (none)
 flour (five pounds of)
 a cake (one)
 a sandwich (three)
 bacon (one pound of)

C. Answer your own questions with any amounts you desire and again with none for your answer.

Exercise No. 3.

A. Answer the following questions from the two conversations. Please use full sentences for your answers.

1. How much milk did Betty buy?
2. How much was milk?
3. How many loaves of bread did she buy?
4. How much was bread?
5. How much money was in Amy's purse?
6. How many items did Betty buy?
7. How much were the small cartons of milk?

Example: Betty bought six cartons of milk.

B. Fill the blanks from the word list at the right. Use each word only once.

How many _____ are there? milk
 How much is _____? loaves of bread
 How much are _____? cartons of milk
 How much _____ is there? bread
 There's a lot of _____, two pounds of butter
 There's a little _____, coffee
 There isn't any _____, cakes
 There aren't any _____, flour

There are _____, sugar
 How much is _____? a loaf of bread

Lesson 2

Exercises in Beginning Composition

Exercise I. Copy Conversation No. 1 as it occurs.

Example: Amy asks, "How much milk is there?"

Betty replies, "I think there's enough for lunch."

Exercise II. Change Conversation No. 2 to statements in the simple present tense.

Example: Betty asks how much milk is.

The clerk replies that it's fifty-five cents for a half-gallon.

Exercise III. Write about Conversation No. 1 as though it happened yesterday. Use simple statements in the past tense.

Example: Yesterday Amy asked how much milk there was.

Betty replied that she thought there was enough for lunch.

Exercise IV. Pretend that you can see what will happen at the store when Betty goes there. Write about it as it will happen in the future.

Example: Betty will ask how much milk is.

The clerk will say that is fifty-five cents a half-gallon.

Exercise V. Rewrite No. III combining your simple sentences with compound sentences.

Example: Yesterday Amy asked how much milk there was, and Betty replied that she thought there was enough for lunch.

Exercise VI. Using your own words write a paragraph about the two conversations.

Example: Yesterday while prepar-

ing lunch Amy wondered if there was enough milk so she asked Betty how much there was.

Exercise VII. Write an original paragraph based on your own experiences in shopping for groceries.

Bibliography

Editor's Note:

Because of the length of the bibliography, books examined by Mrs. Pack have not been listed in the TESL Reporter. However, a copy will be mailed to anyone interested upon request.