

More on Using a Telephone Directory to Teach English as a Second Language

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As an instructor at the Church College of Hawaii, I was endeavoring to find a provocative way of utilizing Jason B. Alter's telephone in the classroom techniques. My first step was to obtain out-of-date telephone directories from the telephone business office. I procured enough for every student in the class. The out-of-date editions were used to decrease the book mortality rate and also to allow the student to take the book home if he so desired.

Apart from the obvious classification value, the directories served as a catalyst for classroom game lessons. I was teaching one of our advanced writing groups and the game lessons listed below were excellent reinforcement activities to the classification material we were covering in homework assignments.

1. Divide the class into two teams, call out the name of an item such as a hammer, dress, car, watch, etc. Have the students race through the pages to see if they can find the classification section the item would be listed under and call out the page number. Mark a point on the blackboard for the team member.
2. Call out the name of a problem: car trouble, tooth ache, termites, hunger, etc. Have the students find the name and number of some business or person who can help, from the yellow pages. This can be done with class teams, or individually.
3. Have students pick out 5-10 words in the classified section, words which are new or strange to them. Have them look the words up and write a sentence using each word for a homework assignment. Discuss the definitions for reinforcement during the next class period.
4. Make a list of idiom expressions found in the classified section and develop a

class lesson or lessons from these lists: hang-up, party-line, busy tone, etc.

5. A listening lesson: have a student (or the instructor) pick any page in the telephone book and start reading the names while the others locate and identify the page while listening to the names being called out. (Teams can be used in this game for variety.)
6. A writing assignment: Have the students look up a business in the yellow pages, one which they would like to own, (travel agency, bank, real estate, car rental, etc.). Have the student describe in a paragraph why we should use their services, using the information given in the classified ad.

The above activity in the "telephone game" displayed the unique creativity of the class as commercial writers. Samples of some of their work indicate this talent:

"The payless U-Drive of mine has one of the lowest rates on the beautiful island of Hawaii. There is no mileage charge for you. You can use any of the following automobiles: strong Datsuns, beautiful Toyotas, or Volkswagons to satisfy your desire. Only the smartest people call for this free pick-up service. Why not YOU!? If you are smart now, just call our phone number."

"On behalf of myself and my staff members at the Hawaii State Employment Service, we would like to announce to all job hunters that starting today our office will open from 7:30 a.m. until 7:30 p.m. So if you aren't satisfied with your job and your salary now, bring your name in or call us. There is no application experience needed. All jobs are open for permanent, part-time and all other times. Remember, just write your name down and become an employee.

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Remember just put your hand on our list and you will never let go."

"Are you with no hair, or with hair that you don't like? If so, do hurry today to Fashion Wigs Imports, or ring us up for wigs and toupees, either wholesale or retail. Hairloom Royale is the latest invention, the world's most natural looking, most undetectable toupee. You may dance, swim

or sleep with it on. We give special discounts to the military. We are open every day so do not hesitate to call and receive the best service in Hawaii."

As the writing class came to a close it was generally agreed by the students and me that the telephone directory approach is valuable and has a permanent place in the English Language Institute writing program.