MOTHER GOOSE AND ESL

by Ted Plaister

What can an ESL teacher do with a class of twenty sophisticated young adults who know a considerable amount of English, yet who are still weak in auding[1]; who need practice in making decisions from information which they hear (rather than see); and who are somewhat hesitant when it comes to speaking? My suggestion is to teach them Mother Goose Rhymes. Before you stop reading in disgust, which is what I would have done a few years ago, consider what can be accomplished with these simple rhymes.

To explicate this, let me detail for you an account of the procedures which I followed in using Mother Goose Rhymes with a class of twenty Japanese university graduates, average age about 28 years, some of whom were being groomed for very important positions with some of the largest companies in Japan.[2] While I have no empirical data to show evidence of effectiveness of this technique, on the basis of teacher judgment and student reaction, I nonetheless feel that significant improvement occurred in their ability to understand English spoken at normal speed.

Before teaching by means of Mother Goose Rhymes, the students must accept that "childish" materials are being used only as a means to an end. I had anticipated a problem, but in actual practice, there was none. These students were highly motivated to learn and to them, "the end justified the means". The students understood clearly that I was using the rhymes in order to help them improve their understanding of spoken English.

The actual procedure I followed stems, in part, from a technique suggested by Harnadek for use in critical reading.[3] What

CONTENTS

I have done is adapt it for teaching auding to non-native speakers of English. The first step in the teaching procedure is dictation. The rhyme is dictated line by line at *normal conversational speed.* If it is NOT done then the overall effectiveness of the procedure is seriously diluted. After all, the intent is to improve auding. At no time during the dictation does the teacher give a word in isolation. The lines of the rhyme are repeated over and over in their entirety. One very effective device is, before the dictation, to tell the students the number of words in a given line. In this way they can check the number of words they have written down with the actual number of words as given

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them by the teacher. For example, let us take a line from *Little Miss Muffet.* The teacher says, "This line has five words in it." The line is then dictated: "There came a big spider." Quite often students will be observed to have written only four words:

There came big spider, omitting *a* which in a normal reading of the line would be said under weak stress. Let us say that the teacher has spoken the line several times and notices that the students will have only four words -- a situation which occurred in my class on many occasions. A great temptation exists for the teacher to tell the students that they have omitted the word *a.* However, I feel it is much better to remind the students that they are missing a word, that they should listen for the missing word, and further, that they should apply what they know about English grammar to help them solve the problem of the missing word. With this kind of prompting, some students will suddenly "hear" the missing word.

Others will still not be able to figure out what is missing. In these cases, the suggested technique is for the teacher to point to the place in the sentence on the student's paper where the word is missing -- in our example between *came* and *big* -- and tell the student to focus his listening on that "space". The student is not told what is missing; he must listen for it. Quite often this much help suffices. In some cases, though, this still isn't enough. Here one can isolate the words *came a big* and say only this portion of the sentence over and over until the student realizes what is missing. Again, let me emphasize that the three words should be said at perfectly normal speed so that *a* comes out as a reduced vowel blended smoothly in between *came* and *big.* If this is not done, the value of the dictation exercise is lost.

Seating the students so that the teacher can circulate among them facilitates checking on the accuracy of each student's work. As the teacher walks around he can point out with a pencil or finger where errors occur. For example, a common error will be the spelling M-a-f-f-e-t or M-o-f-f-e-t for M-u-f-f-e-t. These spellings reflect, for the most part, phonological interference. At this point the teacher can call on a student to spell the word and as he does, the teacher writes it on the board. Now the teacher says the word repeatedly, indicating that the spelling is incorrect and that the reason for the wrong spelling is mishearing. The teacher then leads the students to discover where the error is. (This is one instance where minimal pairs used on the spot can be effective; i.e., one could set up the name, *Moffet,* as a minimal pair with *Muffet* and give a quick discrimination drill.

Once the entire dictation is complete and the students have the complete rhyme written down, a word or two can be said about the proper form for a short verse -- indented lines, etc. The students might then quickly recopy their verse in the correct form. After the students have a perfect copy of the rhyme, questioning can begin on individual vocabulary items which the students do not understand, e.g., *tuffet* in our example. The teacher will want to draw out of the students that, without ever having seen one, they actually know from the context a lot about what a tuffet is. The meaning of the lines of the verse, or indeed, the entire verse, should be discussed after individual vocabul-

THE INSCRUTABILITY OF CHINESE NAMES, FAMILY AND GIVEN

by Jason B. Alter

Five million Chinese could be Wong, or Huang, or Hwang, of Ng, or even Wee; all of these being variant spellings or pronunciations of the same Chinese character. The teacher of English as a second language naturally seeks to get to know his students' names as soon as he can. Currently in Singapore, on leave from the University of Hawaii, and having spent eight years teaching ESL in Taiwan, I would like to report in

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brief on the vagaries of Chinese names--vagaries that may tend to feed the stereotype that the Chinese are inscrutable.

In any Chinese environment, the Chinese family name is stated first: "Au Jye Sheng". Chinese characters (not words) are all monosyllabic. The practice in Singapore is not to hyphenate the given name. For example, in the name above, "Au" is the family name, while "Jye Sheng" is, in effect, a two-part given name. The "Jye" is definitely not thought of as a middle name.

In Taiwan this same name would appear as either "Au Jye Sheng" or as "Au Jye-Sheng". There would be a hyphen, and the first letter of the last part of the name might or might not be capitalized.

In Singapore, a cosmopolitan crossroads, there are many people who also have an English given name; staying with our example, we would then have "Jake Au Jye Sheng" with given names bracketing the family name.

For married women, the plot thickens, since in business and professional circles they often retain their maiden name and add the English title of 'Madam'. Thus, Mr. Au's wife would be "Madam Sz Mei Li" with "Sz" being her maiden name. Or the same woman might choose to be recognized as "Mrs. Mary Au Sz Mei Li"; here the four characters represent her husband's family name, (and her own married name), her maiden name, and her two-character given name.

The following are the major varieties of Chinese spoken in Singapore: Hokkien, Teochew, Hakka, Cantonese, Hainanese, and Mandarin. Mandarin is taught as a second language in the English-stream schools and as the first language in the Chinese-stream schools. The name "Tan" is among the most common in the 1973 Singapore Telephone Book. Here is how "Tan" would be read or pronounced in the above varieties: Hokkien - 'Tan'; Teochew - 'Tan'; Hakka - 'Chin'; Cantonese - 'Chan'; Hainanese - 'Tan'; Mandarin - 'Chen'. The point is that the multi-dialectal factor adds another complication.

Where English uses "John Doe", Chinese uses "Jang San, Li Sz" (Jang three, Li four). In Singapore it is not uncommon for a person to have an alias. In the recent graduation program at Nanyang University, I noticed several cases listed, with both variations given.

Next we should mention the matter of the romanization system used to transcribe the Chinese names. The Wade-Giles system uses apostrophes, for example to indicate aspiration, while the Yale system and the Pin-yin systems do not; the systems vary in other

THE TENSE CARRIER IN NEGATIVE SENTENCES AND TAG-QUESTIONS

by Yao Shen

The importance of identifying the tense carrier and its positional relation to the subject of the sentence in simple affirmative statements and simple affirmative yes-no questions has been pointed out in a previous article (*The TESL Reporter*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Fall, 1973). This article demonstrates the significance of identifying the tense carrier in the formation of simple negative statements, simple negative yes-no questions, and tag-questions.

In simple predicates, expanded or unexpanded, the tense carrier (T) occurs only once. In an affirmative statement, it occurs after the subject (S) of the sentence: S+T. In a negative statement, this arrangement is observed. The addition is the negative function word which occurs after the tense carrier. This negative function word may be in the free form, *not*, or in the bound form, *n't*. In the case of *n't*, it is bound to the tense carrier. Such linguistic behavior may be seen in the following examples of negative statements.

S	+	T	
Henry	didn't	come
Carol	hasn't	been cooking
Juliet	wasn't	being told
The car	couldn't	have been fixed

S	+	T	
Henry	did	not come
Carol	has	not been cooking
Juliet	was	not being told
The car	could	not have been fixed

In simple affirmative yes-no questions, the tense carrier occurs before the subject of the sentence: T+S. In simple negative yes-no questions, this arrangement is observed. The

addition is one where the bound form, *n't*, together with the tense carrier, precedes the subject.

T	+	S	
Doesn't	Henry	come
Hasn't	Carol	been cooking
Wasn't	Juliet	being told
Couldn't	the car	have been fixed

The free form, *not*, continues to occur after the tense carrier. However, in relation

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to the subject of the sentence which follows the tense carrier, *not* may precede or follow the subject.

T	+	S	
Does not	Henry	come
Has not	Carol	been cooking
Was not	Juliet	being told
Could not	the car	have been fixed

T	+	S	
Does	Henry not	come
Has	Carol not	been cooking
Was	Juliet not	being told
Could	the car not	have been fixed

Two arrangements of tag-questions are most frequently referred to.

1. *Negative statement followed by affirmative question.* In the negative statement, the positional relation of the free form, *not*, and the bound form, *n't*, to the tense carrier, and their relation to the subject of the sentence remain the same as described. In the tag (yes-no) question, the positional relation of the tense carrier to the subject of the sentence also remains the same as described.

S	+	T			T	+	S
Henry		does	not come		does		he
Carol		has	not been cooking		has		she
Juliet		was	not being told		was		she
The car		could	not have been fixed		could		it

S	+	T		T	+	S
Henry		doesn't	come	does		he
Carol		hasn't	been cooking	has		she
Juliet		wasn't	being told	was		she
The car		couldn't	have been fixed	could		it

2. *Affirmative statement followed by negative question.* In the affirmative statement, the positional relation between the tense carrier and the subject of sentence remains the same as described. In the negative tag (yes-no) question, the positional relation of the bound form, *n't*, to the tense carrier, and their relation to the subject of the sentence remain the same as described.

S	+	T		T	+	S
Henry		comes		doesn't		he
Carol		has	been cooking	hasn't		she
Juliet		was	being told	wasn't		she
The car		could	have been fixed	couldn't		it

The free form, *not*, in the negative tag (yes-no) question frequently occurs after the subject rather than before it.

S	+	T		T	+	S
Henry		comes		does		he not
Carol		has	been cooking	has		she not
Juliet		was	being told	was		she not
The car		could	have been fixed	could		it not

The occurence of *not* before the subject, nevertheless, is not wrong.

S	+	T		T	+	S
Henry		comes		does not		he
Carol		has	been cooking	has not		she
Juliet		was	being told	was not		she
The car		could	have been fixed	could not		it

The tense carrier in relation to the subject in the statement and the tense carrier in relation to the subject in the tag-question may be represented by S + T, T + S is affirmative; if S + T is affirmative, T + S is negative.

Statement		Tag-question	
S + T	(negative)	T + S	(affirmative)
S + T	(affirmative)	T + S	(negative)

The bases remain in the distinction between S + T for statements and T + S for yes-no

questions.

Statement	S + T
Question	T + S

It seems that a knowledge of the tense carrier in simple predicates is essential to teachers and students of English as a second language. The significance of the tense carrier in the formation of simple affirmative statements and simple affirmative yes-no questions has been pointed out in a previous article. This one further demonstrates its importance in the formation of simple negative statements, simple negative yes-no questions, and two kinds of tag-questions.

Note:

"The Tense Carrier in Two Kinds of Wh-Sentences" will appear in a following issue of this journal.

References:

Yao Shen, "Supplementation of Opposites in Simple Predicate Expansion," *TESL Reporter.* Vol. 4, Nos. 1-4 (Fall, 1970-Summer, 1971).

Yao Shen, "Co-occurrence and Non-co-occurrence of Tense Carrier and Verb in Simple Predicates," *TESL Reporter,* Vol. 5, No. 3 (Spring, 1972), 6-7,10.
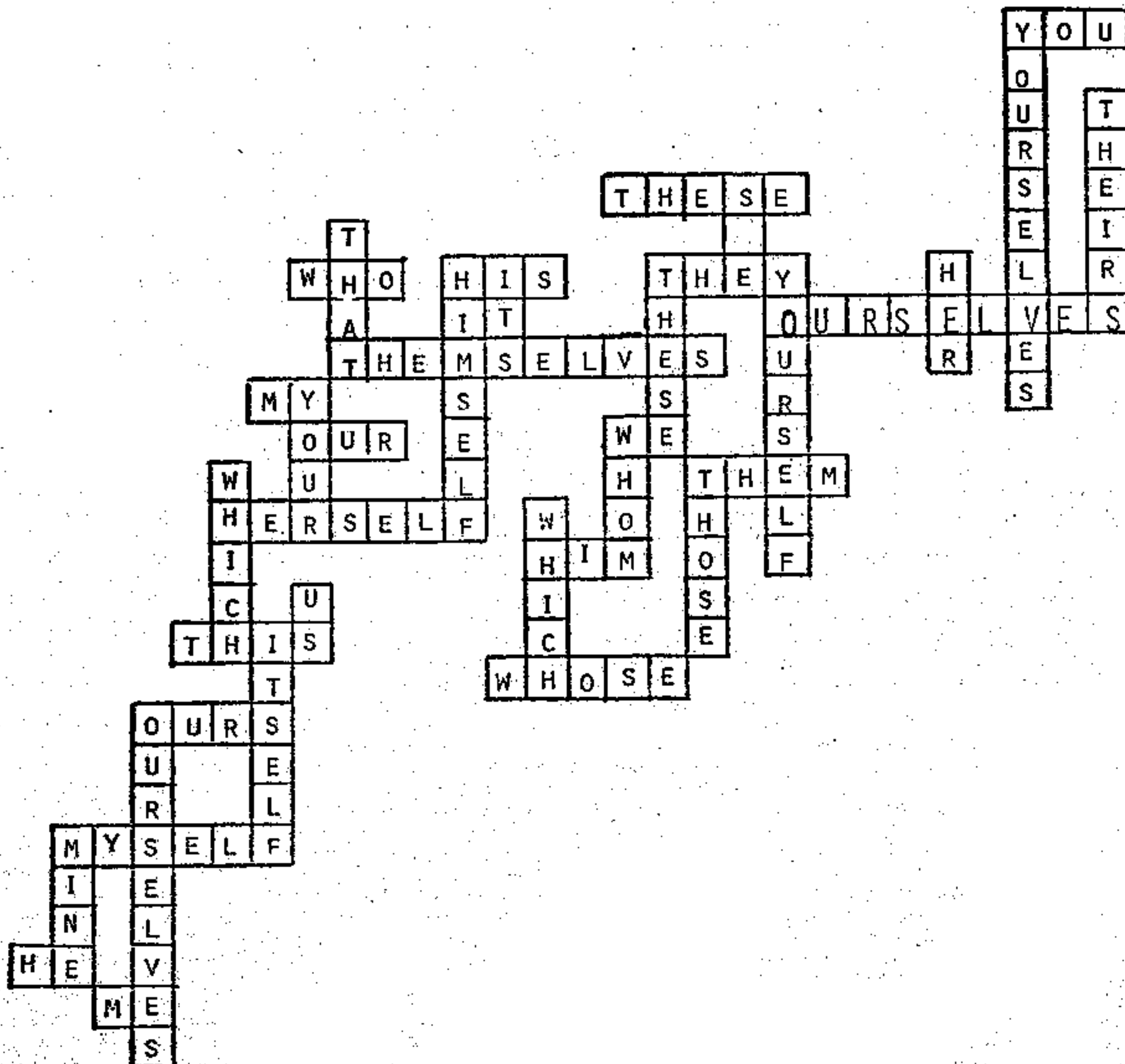
Yao Shen, "Some Distinctions Among Four Grammatical Items in English," *The Hawaii Language Teacher,* Volume 15, Number 1 (March, 1973), 23-30.

PRONOUN ACROSTIC SOLUTION

The Pronoun Acrostic appeared in the Fall 1973 issue of the TESL Reporter

THE FUNCTIONS OF HAVE IN ENGLISH

by Alice C. Pack

Present forms			Past forms	
He (She, It)	has		He (She, It)	had
I (You, We, They)	have		I (You, We, They)	had

1-A   HAVE as the main verb:

1. Verb Alone.   (The verb HAVE takes a noun object).

Subject	Verb	Object
He	has	a car
She	has	a cold
They	had	a fight
I	have	the books
They	have	money

2. With a modal and verb.   (Use base form of HAVE after a modal).

Subject	Ver		

Subject	Modal	Verb - HAVE	Object
He	may	have	a car
She	might	have	a cold
I	should	have	the books
They	must	have	money
They	will	have	a fight.

3. With the auxiliary HAVE. (Use past participle form of HAVE (had) after the auxiliary HAVE')

Subject	A	Auxiliary HAVE	Verb (P'P.)	Object
He		has	had	a car.
She		has	had	a cold.
I		have	had	the books.
They		have	had	money.
They		had	had	a fight.

4. With a Modal and auxiliary HAVE (Use base form of auxiliary HAVE after a modal and the past participle form of the verb after HAVE).

Subject	Modal	Auxiliary HAVE	Verb (P.P) HAVE	Object
He	might	have	had	a car
She	could	have	had	a cold.
I	should	have	had	the books last week.
They	must	have	had	money.
They	could	have	had	a fight.

A REPORT ON THE
NEW READING CL

by Jay Fox

After a full semester in a new reading facility, students and faculty members at CCH report a marked improvement in motivation to work in the College's developmental reading program. The reading clinic was previously housed in a women's dormitory far from the center of regular classroom activity and the hike to it dampened the interests of nearly everyone. Now the rooms are located at a prime location in the classroom area of campus and the services of the program have been brought back into the mainstream of academic activities.

Enrolled students are usually at or below the 40% on standardized tests, although occasionally more proficient students enroll to simply increase their reading speed. Classes are limited to less than twenty students.

The reading program has a wide variety of activities. The selection varies somewhat from semester to semester depending upon the needs of the students. After various diagnostic tests to determine the needs of the students, the instructor plans his course. We use materials from the Perceptual Development Lagoratory Program, the Educational Developmental Program, Science Research Associates, the Craig Reading Program, plus a wide variety of other materials.* The current text is *Improving Reading Ability, 3rd Edition* by Stroud, Ammons, Bainman.

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*The program uses the Perceptual Development Laboratory reading program and films used in connection with the PDL Persceptoscope. Also used are pacers, Craig readers, and language master machines with accompanying audio-visual materials.

**Students work with individual pacers**

INIC AT CCH

The basic activity in the classroom is simply paced reading. The daily schedule of activities is usually something like this: 20 minutes doing exercises and short readings with comprehension tests from the text or from the daily newspaper, fifteen minutes reading longer printed materials with comprehension tests from the PDL or EDL. Interspaced are study skills, exercises on library, dictionary, bibliography, textbook reading, outlining, organization, thesis sentence, vocabulary and other language art skills. Outside the class a student selects books from a prepared "high interest" reading list. He must read 1500 pages to pass the course with a "C" grade, 2500 pages for an "A". He may also read books not on the list if approved by the instructor. His outside reading is checked by a writing assignment and an oral interview with the instructor.

It is a policy in the program that students who do not achieve 70% comprehension at 250 words per minute on 10-12 grade material, receive an X for the course and must successfully repeat the course again in order to receive a regular grade.

Most students more than doubled their reading speed with marked improvement in comprehension. Statistics from last semester show that the average improvement in speed was 72% with 52% improvement in comprehension. An occasional student increased 300 to 400%.

Upper left: Individual work with the Craig Readers
Middle: Class exercises using the perceptoscope
Below and Lower left: In class timed recognition exercises
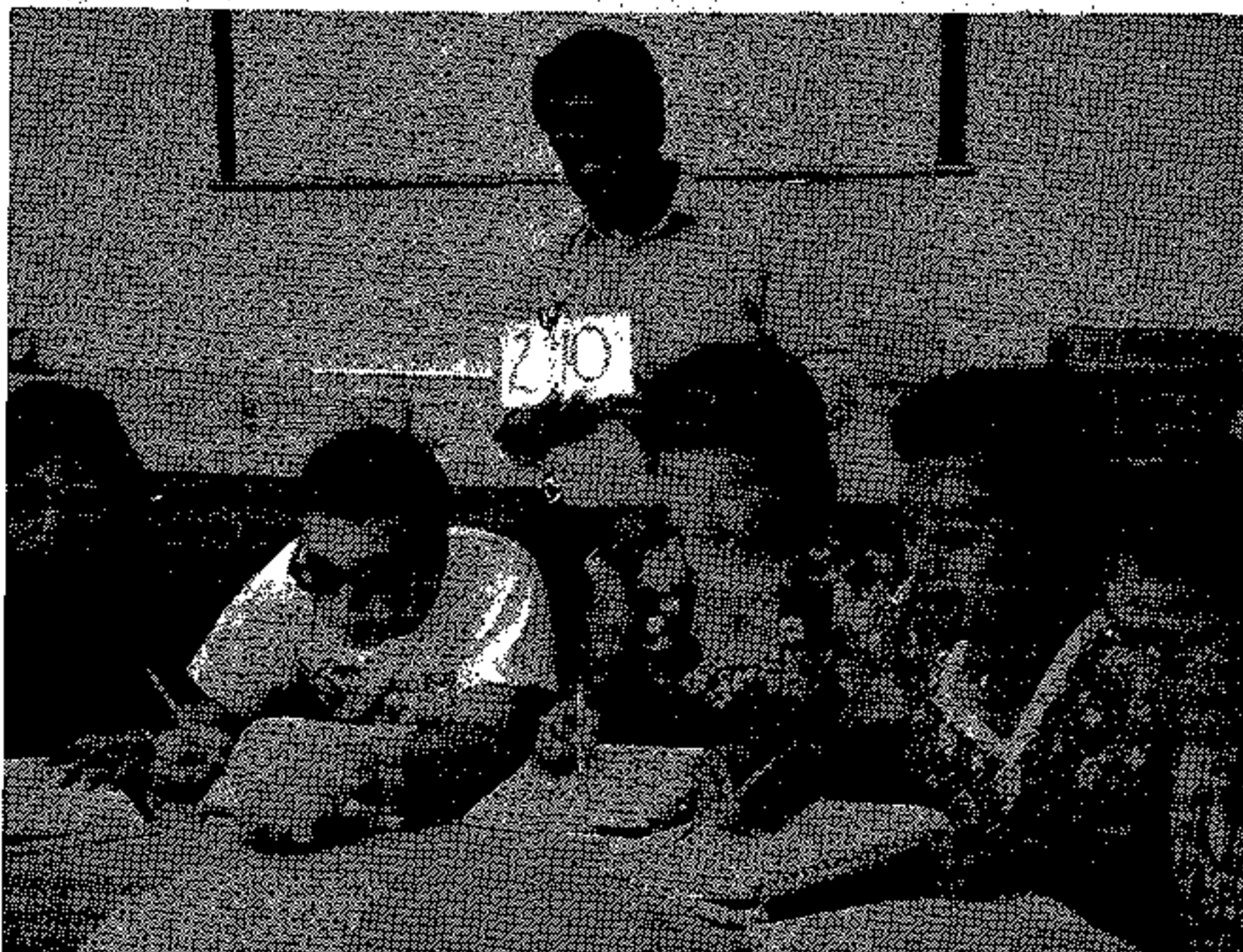
The Functions of Have in English

(continued from page 7)

5. With auxiliary BE. (Using form of verb (having) after BE.

Subject	Be	(-ing form)	Object
She	is	having	a good time.
He	is	having	a haircut.
We	are	having	a party.
They	are	having	trouble with their car.
They	are	having	a fight.
We	were	having	fun.

6. With modal and auxiliary BE. (Use base form of BE after a modal, -ing form of HAVE after BE).

Subject	Modal	Auxiliary BE	Verb-HAVE (-ing form)	Object
She	could	be	having	a good time.
He	should	be	having	a haircut.
You	must	be	having	a party.
They	might	be	having	trouble with their car.
They	could	be	having	a fight.
They	will	be	having	dinner here.

7. With auxiliaries HAVE and BE. (Use past participle of BE (been) after HAVE and -ing form of verb (having) after BE).

Subject	Auxiliary HAVE	Auxiliary BE (P.P)	Verb - HAVE (-ing form)	Object
She	has	been	having	a good time.
They	have	been	having	trouble with their car
He	has	been	having	a party every week.
They	had	been	having	a fight.

8. With modal, auxiliaries HAVE and BE. (Use base form of HAVE after a modal, past participle of BE (been) after HAVE, and -ing form of verb after BE).

Subject	Modal	Auxiliary HAVE (P.P.)	Auxiliary BE (P.P.)	Verb (-ing form)	Object
She	could	have	been	having	a good time.
He	could	have	been	having	a haircut.
They	might	have	been	having	trouble with their car.
You	must	have	been	having	a party.
She	might	have	been	having	her dinner.
They	might	have	been	having	a fight.

II. HAVE as an auxiliary:

1. HAVE as an auxiliary is always followed by the past participle of the verb which follows.

Subject	Auxiliary	Verb (p.p.)	
He	has	read	the book several times.
We	have	finished	our work.
You	haven't	done	your assignment.
I	have	completed	the task.
I	had	attended	school in my own country before I came here.

A LESSON ON SYNONYMS, ANTONYMS, AND HOMONYMS FOR ESL STUDENTS

by Kelly Harris, Jr.

This lesson may need two class periods depending upon the speed of the students to grasp the points.

In any language that is being taught as a second language, there is a need for teachers to use drills that will reinforce various concepts, meanings, or usage patterns. The following lesson plan attempts to give a method of reinforcing the concept that *sounds and meanings of words are most important in the English language.* This particular lesson is geared for High School Students who have had exposure to English previously, but this method is flexible and may easily be adapted to younger or more inexperienced students, as will be demonstrated by the short and simple example following the data for the lesson plan.

MAIN IDEA: Sounds and meanings of words are most important in English.

(a) Introduce students to three words that indicate distinct categories of words which illustrate the main idea.

> i.e. HOMONYMS - words sounding the same
> SYNONYMS - words meaning the same
> ANTONYMS - words with opposite meanings

(b) For HOMONYMS, point out that spelling becomes a very important aspect of learning as does an awareness,

(b) For HOMONYMS, point out that spelling becomes a very important aspect of learning as does an awareness of context, particularly where reading is used extensively as a mode of teaching.

> e.g. I *see him* every day.
> I sing a *sea hymn* every day.

(c) With SYNONYMS, it may be necessary to use visual aids to teach the several names that things may use or be known by. ANTONYMS may also be handled this way.

> e.g. (S) eraser - duster   (hold up the item used for clearing the blackboard)
> (S) slipper, shoe, sandal   (show various types of footwear)
> (A) boy - girl   (have a boy and a girl stand)
> (A) break - fix   (demonstrate both)

(d) Issue the following list of words to the students for an orally conducted exercise. The object is to have students recognise or understand the categories into which the pairs fall.

(a) Antonym   (b) Synonym   (c) Homonym

here	there	join	connect	stop	halt
here	hear	join	disconnect	halt	cease
their	there	join	mate	odour	smell
their	they're	holy	wholly	odour	scent

zero	nought	holy	sacred	scent	sent
zero	nil	holy	unholy	scent	cent
nil	nothing	teach	preach	up	down
male	female	preach	exhort	commands	rules
man	male	preach	lecture	demands	commands
woman	man	minor	miner	orders	rules
horse	hoarse	minor	major	moor	more
course	coarse	minor	petty	more	less
course	rough	important	major	more	beside
coarse	smooth	alarm	excite	never	not ever
better	worse	bitter	sweet	weather	wether
seen	noticed	mist	fog	weather	whether
scene	picture	mist	missed	brake	break
join	unite	beast	creature	break	fix
voyage	trip	beast	animal	earthly	worldly
trip	tour	consume	devour	worldly	terrestrial
tour	journey	devour	eat		

NOTE: Have each student in turn try to answer a pairing. If necessary open the choice to the class. Difficult pairings may need further illustrating by mime, visual aid, or still further words.

A variation could be that the students would indicate by a *hand to an ear* (sounds alike - HOMONYM); *hands together* (meaning the same - SYNONYM); or *hands apart* (opposites - ANTONYMS), what they feel are correct answers.

(e) When the above exercise is completed hand out the crossword that follows. All answers to the puzzle are included in the exercise list. Allow students to work in groups if they wish, but each student should try to have his individual copy completed for homework.

The following is a much less complicated list of homonyms, synonyms, and antonyms that could be used by beginning adults or on the elementary level; words might be originally introduced as opposites, sound alikes and same meanings.

to	two	you	ewe	by	near
two	couple	I	eye	sea	see
two	too	mane	main	sea	ocean
too	also	die	dye	see	view
one	won	birth	death	hot	cold
good	bad	east	west	by	buy
in	inn	north	south	buy	sell
meet	meat	up	down	he	she
no	know	under	below	be	bee
		below	beneath	beat	beet
				wear	where

An example of a crossword that could be used for this level:
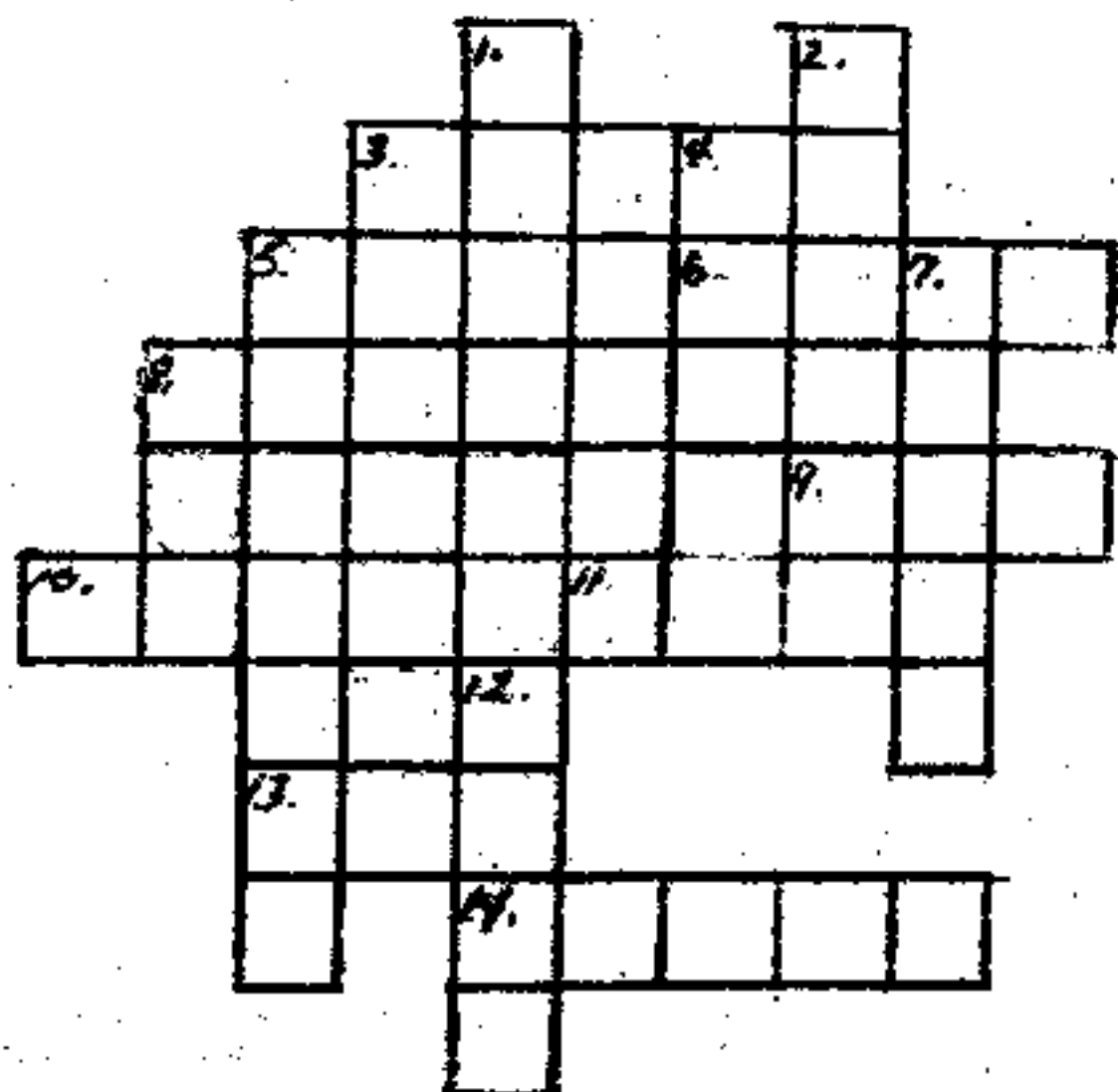
CLUE:

Across:

3. Opposite of birth
5. Near.
6. Antonym of east
8. Sounds like meat
9. Sounds like by
10. See
11. Sounds like beat
13. Also
14. Homonym of wear

Down:

1. Opposite to she
2. Opposite to he
3. Sounds like die
4. Couple
5. Under
7. North and ------
9. Sounds like bee
12. Up and ----

Authors's Note

Having taught in New Zealand for several years, and used this type of exercise in slow, average, and above-average classes, I know that students enjoy this kind of challenge. The benefits are also very easily seen in social and classroom conversation.

All spellings used correspond to British forms because I will continue to teach in British speaking countries.

COMPLETED CROSSWORD:
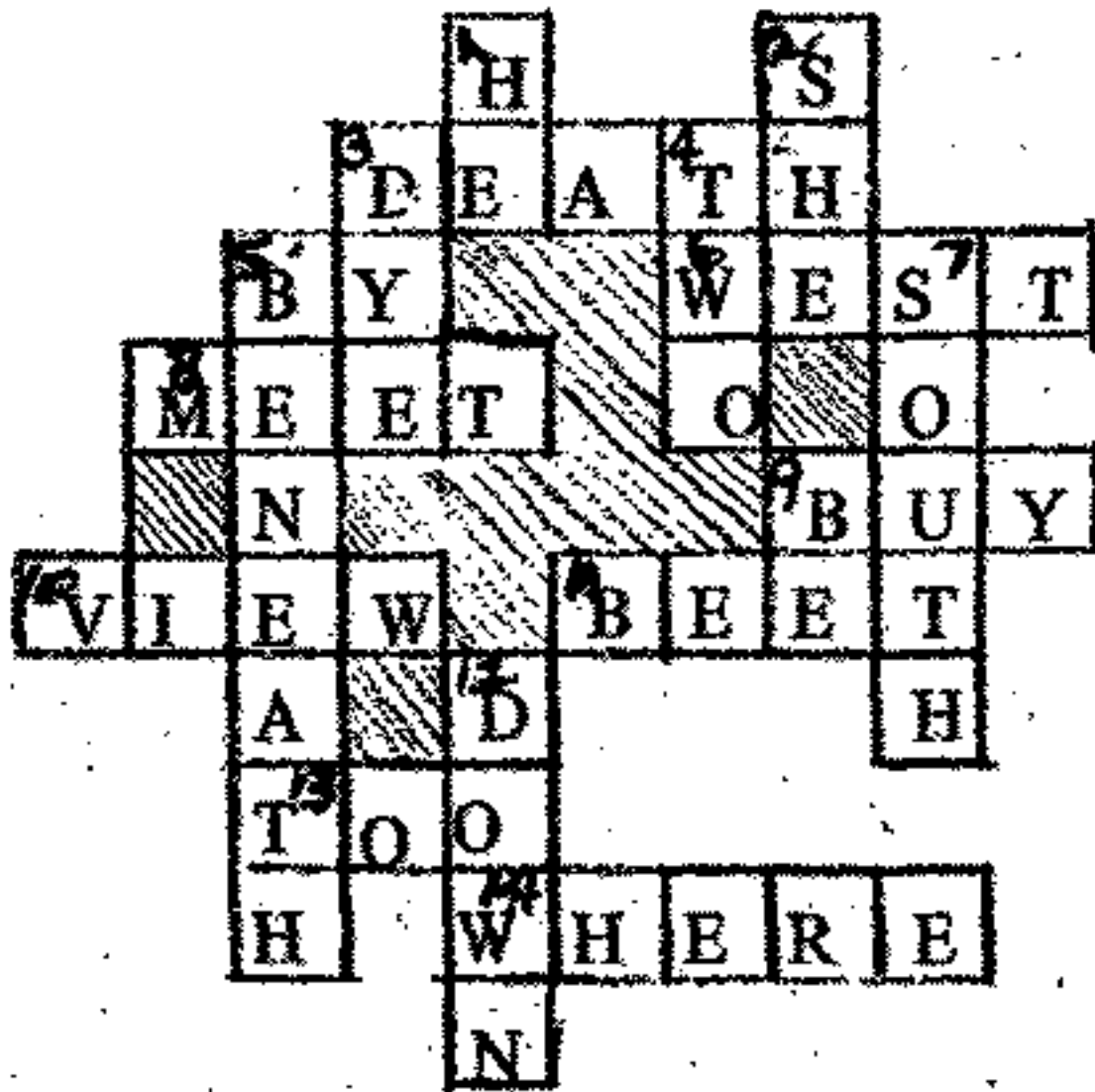
CHINESE NAMES

ways as well. Then, according to Wade-Giles "Tan" would be more correctly spelled "T'an".

Above we stated that most Chinese names, family plus given, consist of three characters; but occasionally you find a one-character given name. This semester, in my class of twenty-two students, I have one such example.

The other day I had a conversation with a lady named Mrs. Wu, whose husband is of Shanghai origins. When she took a trip to Hong Kong, people there wondered why she didn't spell her name "Ng", which is the Cantonese equivalent of this name, which happens to mean "Five". Thus there seems to be some nebulosity even among the indigenes.

BOOK REVIEW

Julia S. Falk, *Linguistics and Language.*
Xerox College Publishing Company. 1973   paperback $5.95

One of the most helpful and best organized of the recent rash of books on the 'newest' thinking' in the expanding field of linguistics.

Falk includes a good introductory overview of modern linguistics and, in the succeeding sections, covers such topics as dialect and slang usage, language change, and how all the components of a complete grammar work together to produce sentences in a given language.

Of special interest to language teachers are the two sections on language acquisition and teaching, covering possible application of psycholinguistic findings to language teaching. The presentation of language and literature in the primary, secondary, and college levels is discussed. However, in these sections the author loses some of her earlier objectivity. In the discussion of language acquisition theories she is clearly persuaded by the rationalist view that exposure is a more important factor in learning a language than are drills of any sort.

Furthermore, her summaries often fall short of the anticipations one expects from the evidence she introduces. And, on a minor note, some of the works cited in the body of the text fail to appear in her bibliography.

Nevertheless, *Linguistics and Language* is highly recommended. Any dedicated language teacher could read this book without any linguistic background. All new terms are set off in bold face type and are clearly explained. The fields of linguistics and language are well covered and done in an interesting and easy to follow manner.

by William Gallagher

MOTHER GOOSE

ary items have been explained.

The next step in the procedure is where practice in making decisions enters in. To play the game, however, the students must have a clear understanding of the rules of the game. First of all, the verse is considered "data" for the purposes of the game. Seconddly, *all* and *only* the information contained in the nursery rhyme may be used to make decisions based upon statements the teacher will make about the rhyme. Students may not reach out into the real world for answers, but must stay within the confines of the "data".

To set the stage for the kind of interchange which ensues, let me first reproduce here our example rhyme:

Little Miss Muffet
Sat on her tuffet
Eating her curds and whey;

There came a big spider
Who sat down beside her
And frightened Miss Muffet away.

The rhyme, as noted above, constitutes a closed corpus of data. All statements by the teacher are based upon it, and must be responded to by the students in accordance with it. A further stipulation is that the information contained in the rhyme is true and not open to interpretation or question. The teacher then begins the questioning, which takes the form of statements by the teacher about something in the rhyme. The student answers "true" if the statement is true according to the rhyme; he answers "false" if the statement is false; and he answers, "I can't tell" if the statement is neither true nor false from the facts.

Here are some examples:

1. *Little Miss Muffet was married.*
        (I can't tell)

Note that *was* is the key word here. Perhaps she was at one time and got divorced.

2. *Little Miss Muffet is married.*
        (False.)

If she were married, her name would be Mrs. Muffet.

3. *Little Miss Muffet enjoyed eating curds and whey.*
        (I can't tell)

Actually Miss Muffet may have disliked curds and whey, but ate them because there was nothing else to eat.

4. *The spider bit Miss Muffet.*
        (I can't tell)

The rhyme says nothing about the spider biting Miss Muffet.

5. *Maybe the spider bit Miss Muffet.*
        (True)

Maybe the spider did bite her, so this is a true answer.

6. *Miss Muffet was afraid of the spider.*
        (True)

Notice here the use of a synonym, *afraid* for *frightened* in the original.

The students in this particular class found this decision-making a real challenge. It is rather difficult to convey this feeling of challenge (and fun) on paper. At first, the students were jumping to conclusions in their decisions. For example, in *Old Mother Hubbard* I made the statement that the dog was hungry. One student replied, "true". I rejoined that we had no evidence that the dog was hungry. Quickly he said, "false". Again, I said he was incorrect. He then returned to his original stand and said that the dog was hungry because dogs are *always* hungry! This exchange brought a good laugh from eveyone which indicated to me that something was happening to their auding ability inasmuch as this incident occurred after about a week's daily work and if something similar to this had happened the second or third day of class there would have been little or no reaction—only a lack of understanding. Of course, the student had 'broken' the rules of the game, but the exchange of language and obvious understanding was exactly what I was after.

The interjection of the word *maybe* presents a new challenge. *Maybe,* obviously, throws a whole new light on the interpretation of the 'facts' and is an example of something which can be used to foster

careful listening on the part of the students.

A variety of things can be taught either directly or indirectly by means of this technique. Suppose that in using *Little Red Riding Hood* (in this case our medium is a very short story rather than a nursery rhyme), we say that *Little Red Riding Hood* didn't like her grandmother. This is totally incomprehensible to a particular culture. In such a case, cultural pressure would most likely force an incorrect answer rather than one according to the 'facts'.

At first, it took a considerable amount of time to get through a single nursery rhyme. Boredom was never a problem, however, beacuse of my pacing. The students knew the pressure was on them. This was evident from the speed of my dictation--the lines of the nursery rhyme poured from my mouth at a really rapid pace. Fumbling attempts were made to take down my dictation; eventually, the constant dinning of the words became more understandable, and they got the gist of what I was saying. Then my pencil or finger pointing to their omissions focused their ears on blank spots in their auding. Improvement in dictation was obvious over the few weeks this particular class met. Answers to my statements in the beginning were often wild guesses, but the keen motivation to understand me soon changed these wild guesses to reasoned answers with a high degree of accuracy. Spot reviews of previously covered materials demonstrated clearly that I couldn't 'fool' them anymore. The material was understood and understood well.

The cultural value of Mother Goose Rhymes for highly-educated young business executives is probably close to nil. Yet, I found the students were interested in the rhymes themselves and were interested to know something about them and their place in American culture, a side-effect which I had not anticipated. This side-effect caused discussion in class and all of this language exchange was extremely beneficial for the students.

A teacher might want to use materials other than the Mother Goose Rhymes and apply the same techniques. One could argue that using current materials would be more relevant, yet I felt that the very novelty of the rhymes was one of the most appealing features. The fact that improvement in auding could be brought about through the use of such seemingly simple materials was intriguing to these sophisticated students.

An important point which experienced language teachers have recognized over the years and one which needs emphasis from time to time is that the teacher's attitude towards the materials being used is an extemely important variable in the whole teaching process. This is made dramatically clear in this particular instance. My attitude towards the Mother Goose Rhymes and the attitude I instilled in the students undoubtedly contributed significantly to the success of this technique.

Footnotes:

[1] I prefer this term to aural or listening comprehension in that it forms a parallel series with speaking, reading and writing.

[2] The class was a volunteer class held in the evening.

[3] Anita E. Harnadek. *Critical Reading Improvement.* (New York: Mc-Graw-Hill, 1969).

International Communication Seminar

A one day International Communication Seminar will be held on the campus of The Church College of Hawaii in Laie, Hawaii on March 28, 1974.

Peter Strevens, Professor at Essex, England, visiting consultant at the East-West Center in Honolulu, will deliver the keynote address. Dr. Strevens is an internationally known ESL expert and author.

Dr. Larry Smith, coordinator of the ESOL Training Project at the East-West Center, will also participate.

Afternoon workshops in several areas will permit all interested persons to participate. An invitation is extended to all who would like to attend this seminar.

Inquiries should be addressed to

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HAVE IN ENGLISH

2. If the auxiliary BE is used with the auxiliary HAVE, the past participle of BE is used following the form HAVE. (The -ing form of the verb follows BEEN).

Subject	Auxiliary	Be (p.p.)	Verb (—ing form)	
They	have	been	taking	a test for the past hour
He	has	been	reading	that book for a long time.
You	haven't	been	working	on your assignment.

3

3. The simple form of the auxiliary HAVE is used if a modal is used.

Subject	Modal	Auxiliary	Verb (p.p.)	
We	could	have	gone	to town with them.
You	should	have	done	your assignment.
I	may	have	forgotten	the address.

The third article of this series 'The Functions of Do and Can in English' will appear in the next issue.

TESL REPORTER

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Editor . . . . Alice C. Pack Articles relevant to teaching English as a second language in Hawaii, the South Pacific and Asia, may be submitted to the editor through Box 157, The Church College of Hawaii 96762. Manuscripts should be double-spaced and typed, not exceeding six pages.

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