

# TESL

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## TWO CAUSES FOR MISAPPLICATION OF LANGUAGE RULES

By David C. Butler

Incorrect application of rules in a foreign language may stem from at least two basic causes: (1) failure to master the operational or transformational component of a rule, and (2) failure to learn a rule's true domain of applicability (see Landa, 1974).

An example of the first problem is a student of English as a second language who

does not know how to form the present perfect tense or how to nominatize and embed one sentence in another. The second problem is illustrated by a student who does not know in what semantic contexts—what communication situations—present perfect tense is required or who can not identify the features of sentences which make application of a given sentence—combining rule either appropriate or inappropriate. This second problem is the more perplexing one for the student.

A math example may help illustrate the importance of coming to grips with teaching a rule's true domain of applicability (see Scandura, 1973, p. 173). Suppose I give a student a neat rule for summing a long arithmetic number series such as  $4+7+10+13+\dots+n$  or  $1+6+11+16+\dots+n$ . The rule is add the

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first term in the series to the last term, divide by 2, and multiply the result by the number of terms in the series:  $([(F+L) / 2]N)$ . We might assume the student has mastered all he needs to know when he has demonstrated

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# REFLECTIONS OF A LANGUAGE LEARNER

by Beverly McLeod

The department of English as a Second Language of the University of Hawaii requires its students in the Masters program to enroll in a foreign language course in order to appreciate the experience of the language learner.

During the past two years, I have taken both Japanese and Thai courses at the University of Hawaii, and I am currently involved in a tutoring situation on a one-to-one basis in which I am learning French. In addition, in past years I have studied Latin, French, Spanish, German, Japanese, and Thai for varying lengths of time and by various methods. The following are some of my reflections on my experiences as a language student.

First of all, I would like to offer my reactions to my own language learning experiences in general. My experiences have been generally pleasant. I have never had the feeling of being forced to take a language, and I have never taken language courses just to satisfy a requirement. Thus, I have always felt that I was taking the language course out of my own free choice, which I am sure had a positive effect on my motivation. Probably as a consequence, I have always enjoyed studying languages, and I have always done well, at least as far as success is measured by tests of classroom performance. Thus I was not consciously aware of the many problems which students are said to face in language classes, the anxiety, the feeling of frustration and failure. I, myself, had these kinds of feelings when I attempted to use the language outside the classroom, but in the classroom situation, while I felt nervous some of the time, I didn't see it as a big problem. Perhaps I have been lucky also in that I have had for the most part "good" teachers. None has been authoritarian, rigid, unsympathetic. Some have been excellent. From this background, I would like to say more specifically what I have learned from the experience of being a student which will help me to be a better teacher.

First of all, having been a student has

given me an appreciation of the students' position and feelings. From having observed my fellow students, I know that some of them were considerably more frightened and bewildered than I, and of course I have experienced the same reactions in other classes. Some of the students were also bored much of the time, and I have also been bored in language classes, especially when repetitive drills dragged on and on. I have realized that what is interesting to the teacher may be boring to the student, and there is a need to vary the activities often to keep all of the students interested, not just those whose motivation will carry them through anything. I have become more sensitive to the kinds of techniques and settings which are interesting, and less tolerant of those which are inherently boring. Also, I can judge more accurately the length of time necessary to learn different aspects of the language, and the relative difficulty of various items.

I have learned several things that I will try to avoid in my classroom. For example, I, as a student, find it very difficult to read a passage aloud for the first time and then to translate it. I cannot concentrate on pronunciation and meaning at the same time. I think that many teachers do not realize how difficult this task is, because it is relatively easy to read a short, simple passage in one's own language, and be able to comprehend it simultaneously. But it is quite another matter when you try to do it in a foreign language. Also, I will be wary of manipulation drills which produce unreal sentences. For example, a sentence may be perfectly acceptable in the declarative, but when the drill calls for making as many questions as possible from that sentence, some of the questions, although grammatically correct, are unnatural and would never be said by native speakers. Such drills are not only useless, but also possibly confusing.

Another thing which I have come to realize is that some exercises, while purporting to test the students' comprehension, progress, or ability, are really only testing the students'

facility at manipulating forms. The students I taught in Thailand were amazingly skillful at any kind of drill which was presented to them, but they would invariably miss an item from the same drill if it were in isolation on a test. I have also experienced as a student the kind of mental acrobatics which many drills require, and am able to do what is asked without any comprehension of what I'm saying. This seems to be especially true under the conditions which are typical of such drills, in which the teacher forces the students to do them as rapidly as possible. Perhaps if the pace were slowed a little, the students would have a chance to think about what they were saying.

I would like to describe more specifically some of the good techniques which I've observed in the various classes I've taken. First of all, out of all the teachers I've had, those I remember most fondly are also those from whom I learned the most. I have had three teachers who were middle-aged women, and who presented sort of a mother-image to me. They were warm, encouraging, non-threatening, and personally interested in the students. They were also willing to reveal themselves as real persons, not just as teachers, by telling anecdotes from their own or their family's experiences, or telling of their own foibles and amusing mistakes in learning English. I find that I learned best from such "motherly" types, and when my own motivation lagged, I kept working so as not to disappoint "mother's" hopes and expectations for me. Regardless of whether or not second language learning is like native language learning, surely there is some psychological connection between the two for the learner, and recreating the emotional, if not the cognitive or environmental conditions of first language learning, may facilitate learning of a second language.

One of the good techniques, or rather talents, used by one of my teachers was her ability to draw out the students' knowledge in directed informal conversation. She talked very little, supplying only the minimal help necessary, but somehow the conversation flowed on and on, and students said things which they hadn't believed they were capable of saying. One often sees such a talent in good discussion leaders; they are able to control the discussion with a light touch, an appropriate word here and there, while letting the participants do all the talking. Too often

in language classes, the free conversation time ends up being a monologue by the teacher, and the students don't get sufficient time to practice. I was very impressed by this particular teacher's technique; it was almost as if she "tricked" the students into revealing their knowledge and ability, and they would often be surprised at how much they were able to say. This technique seemed to work much more effectively than that of confronting the students directly, putting them on the spot and demanding that they perform correctly.

Another thing which contributed to the relaxed atmosphere in this teacher's class was her encouragement of the students to work cooperatively and help each other when help was needed, rather than competing against each other. She tried to arrange the seating so that a slow learner would be seated next to one who tended to catch on quickly, and during the lulls in the class, the better student could assist the slower one.

I am the type of learner who tries to connect a new item to something which I have learned before, and I am always inventing relationships, correct or not, between items. I often feel like asking the teacher for confirmation, for example, whether this new vocabulary item is a synonym of the one we learned two weeks ago, and if not, how they differ in meaning. This particular teacher was always very tolerant of my questioning, and quite willing to explain relationships. She also did this on her own, making an effort to connect new material with that learned previously. It was not a matter of a five-minute review of yesterday's lesson at the beginning of class, but while she was introducing a new item, she pointed out its relation to something which we had already covered. I found this very effective, and it gave me a better feel for what I was learning as an integrated system. I have found that my short term memory is much better than my long term one, and thus I tend to forget easily what was covered a few weeks back. This teacher's method of reviewing old material in the new context helped to keep it fresh in my mind.

The teacher also used this technique in correcting student mistakes. If the student made a mistake, she corrected it, had him repeat the correct form, and then went on to another student. But later in the period, or even the next day or the next week, she would ask the same student a question of the

same type, in order to review for him the correct form of the item which he had missed. She was able to remember each student's weak points over a long period of time, so that she didn't waste time asking students questions which were too easy for them, but judged precisely what level of difficulty or what area would be appropriate for each student. A course in memory training would certainly be useful for language teachers!

In any activity, the teacher encouraged the students to stretch their usage of the language to the limits of their knowledge, for example, by encouraging them to paraphrase if they had forgotten a word or pattern. I learned

from this teacher that it is just as important for a teacher to know the right questions to ask to elicit the maximum response as it is to know the right answers.

It is a valuable experience to be able to look at one's profession "from the other end" and I have certainly learned a great deal about teaching from being a student. Perhaps the most important thing is to be able to keep that awareness in mind of how it is to be a student, to be able to put oneself in the student's position when trying out new techniques, to be able to answer the question, "How would I like it?"

## Missapplication of Language Rules

(continued from page 1)

the ability to sum any arithmetic number series we give him. But notice the artificial nature of this task. In the real world, no one is going to be around to tell our student which number series are arithmetic, and which are not. The rule given above will not work at all for series like the following:  $2+4+8+16+32+\dots+n$  or  $3+7+15+31+\dots+n$ . It is obvious that the student must learn some kind of procedure for identifying the indicative features of situations where the rule given above is appropriate. If those features are not present, then he must search for some other summing rule. In the case of the rule given above, the indicative feature is whether or not there is a constant numerical difference between terms in the series.

In an actual lesson for teaching present perfect tense to intermediate students of English as a second language, the teacher might begin by pointing out the need for instruction.

Teacher:

In this lesson, you're going to solve the following kind of communication problem. This is the situation. You go to a club meeting and meet one of the members. Is it appropriate to ask him the following question: "How long have you been a member of the club?"

Student:

It's appropriate.

Teacher:

You're right. Listen to another example.

You are talking to the president of a large company and he tells you that he used to be the janitor. Is the following question appropriate: "How long have you been janitor?"

Student:

I'm not sure.

Teacher:

This question is *not* appropriate. You are telling the company president that you think he is still the janitor.

At this point, the teacher might want to review or introduce the operational component of the rule.

Teacher:

In this lesson, you're going to learn about forms such as *have been*, *have worked*, *has studied*, and so forth. Then you will learn when to use these forms. Notice the chart on the board labeled *Present Perfect*. When we ask, "How long have you been a member of the club?" or say, "She has studied piano for five years." we are using present perfect. Notice that we use *has* with subjects like *he*, *she*, *it*, *Mr. Davis*, *the student*. But with subjects like *I*, *you*, *they*, *we*, *Mr. and Mrs. Davis*, *the students* we use *have*.

Now you should be ready to teach the decision-making capability (Scandura, 1973, p.173) which is necessary for correct use of the present perfect. You need to teach the two indicative features for this rule—Previous Action AND Current Relevance.

Teacher:

When do we use the present perfect?

We use it when a previous action (point to time line chart on the board) is directly related to the present. Notice there are two necessary things: Previous Action AND Related to the Present.

Listen to this situation. John began playing ping pong three years ago. He is still an active player. Listen to John: "I've played ping pong for about three years." Is his statement appropriate?

Student:

Yes.

Teacher:

That's right. It's a previous action and it's also related to the present. Listen to another situation. Mark was a member of the Blue Key club for one year. He didn't like the club so he joined the Red Key club about six years ago. Listen to Mark: "I was a Blue Key for just one year, then I have joined the Red Key club." Is Mark's last statement all right?

Student:

It sounds funny.

Teacher:

Which of these is missing? (Points to the indicative features: Previous Action AND Related to the Present)

Student:

It's a previous action but it's not related to the present.

Teacher:

Very good.

After students have demonstrated listening mastery for present perfect, the teacher may then proceed to design speaking activities where the communication setting makes it either appropriate or inappropriate to use the present perfect forms.

Instead of teaching the present perfect, suppose you want to teach students how to add more information to their sentences through nominalization and embedding. Again it seems important to teach not only the structural manipulation and word order changes but also an explicit procedure for determining the set of situations to which the sentence-combining rules may be applied.

In an exercise in Crymes, James, Smith, and Taylor (1974, p. 89), one finds the following sentence pair to be combined using *that* or *to*:

He supposed SOMETHING. The similarity between proverbs is significant. (He supposed that the similarity between proverbs is significant) OR (He supposed the similarity between proverbs to be significant).

Then on page 100, one finds the following sentence pair to be combined using an *ing* nominalization:

Some folk remedies may keep you from SOMETHING. You would get sick. (Some folk remedies may keep you from getting sick).

Suppose the student is in a situation where the appropriate rule to be used is not indicated by the instructions for the exercise. Unless we teach the student to identify the features of sentences which make application of a given rule either appropriate or inappropriate, there is nothing to prevent him from generating the following ungrammatical sentences:

\*He supposed the similarity between proverbs being significant.

\*Some folk remedies may keep you from that you would get sick.

While it is probably easier to teach the operational component of language rules, the more challenging task of teaching a rule's true domain of applicability must not be slighted.

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# SOME GAMES FOR TEACHING BEGINNING TESL

by Judy E. Winn-Bell Olsen

## PROBLEM:

What to do with a class labeled "ESL 1" that has *all* the following types of students:

those who are, at best, semi-literate;

those who have just gotten off the plane and don't know a word of English;

those who have been here for years and can communicate reasonably effectively in broken English;

those who really know a lot more than they'll admit, but don't want to be pushed very far very fast;

those who are highly motivated to learn as much as they can as fast as they can;

those who are in class mainly because it's a more enjoyable way to live out the rest of their years than sitting at home looking at four walls;

those who are there on time every, every day so they won't miss a single word you say;

those who straggle in during the first half hour of class and often leave 10 or 15 minutes early;

all of whom speak the same language, so they don't need English to communicate with each other.

How best to meet the needs of all of these types of students while maintaining general class interest and some semblance of unity?

What has worked best for me so far this semester has been 20-40 minutes daily of *bingo games* of three types:

- 1) Number Bingo
- 2) Spelling Bingo ("Quizmo")
- 3) Vocabulary Bingo

The important thing here, of course, is not the game itself as much as the communication activities that go on before, during and after the game. More about that later. First, an explanation of the games and how to use them.

1) NUMBER BINGO--can be bought almost any place games are sold--Usually

marketed as "Bingo."

We sometimes forget that *really* knowing the numbers past 10, when we hear them out of sequence, is a somewhat difficult task. Just try it on yourself in a foreign language you've studied. So this activity is more than just "funzies" for the beginning--and some not-so-beginning--students.

a) Have the students repeat the numbers after you, for pronunciation practice. You can take a few minutes out here and there for quick pronunciation drills on problems such as the "f/th" sounds for Chinese students, with numbers like "53" and "35" when they come up. After all, the game is really a means to an end.

b) Be sure to keep track of the numbers you've called. If some of the class members are having trouble recognizing the numbers on the cards, you might write the numbers on the board for a game or two. When someone says he has bingo, have him read off the numbers to be really sure he's got it (and for further pronunciation practice).

c) The next round, have the winner become the number-caller, if you think he's ready for it. More opportunity for directed pronunciation practice--you're right there to help the student if he stumbles and to repeat and clarify any numbers that the others can't understand.

d) When the class really gets going, you can also have the number-callers give out prizes while you talk about what they're doing. "Who is he giving the prize to?" "Should she give the prize to . . . .?" "Why?" "Class, tell him/her to . . . ." "(Name of number-caller), ask the class about what you're doing," etc.

2) SPELLING BINGO or LETTER BINGO (marketed as "Quizmo" by Milton Bradley Company.)

This one is more easily directed by the teacher than by students, but there are many ways

to handle it.

a) Name the letters. For a very beginning literacy class, have the alphabet on the wall or blackboard and ask the students to point out the letters in the alphabet before finding them on their cards. This helps the slower students without making them self-conscious. This is great for contrasting letters that beginning students confuse easily, like b/v, i/e, v/w, p/q, b/d, g/j. But after a few rounds of this, it gets pretty old.

b) Ask "What letter makes the sound /b/? The sound /p/?" "What letter can make all these sounds—/o/, /ɔ/, /ə/, /v/, and /ɛ/?" (answer: the letter o, as in home, dog, come, woman, and women.) "What letters together make the sound /tʃ/? (c,h) "What different letters can sound like /dʒ/?" (j,g) etc.

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Good for reinforcing the idea that most letters in English stand for more than one sound, and that the same sound can sometimes be represented by different letters.

c) Prompt the class with such questions as "What's the first letter in bus? The second letter? The third letter?"

Good for spelling and review. Hold up a picture: "What's this? What's the first letter in its name?" etc. Also good for teaching "first, second, third, last" etc. in text.

We've used this last game at the Alemany student Christmas parties the past couple of years, with great success. We get one of the advanced classes to make sets of "call-cards" so that we can just run through and call them out without thinking on that rather hectic day.

To have a class help you make the "call-cards": Give each student 26 slips of paper and an envelope. Then ask them to write any word with *a* in it on one slip, underline the *a*

and put it in the envelope. Then write any word with *b* on it on another slip, underline the *b*, put it in the envelope, and so on. Then during the bingo game, you've got x number of sets of call-cards that you can just read off: "the second letter in man" "the first letter in beautiful" . . . whatever is on the slips of paper. You can use a different set for each game. On the harder words, the more advanced students playing can help the beginners.

For bingo prizes at the Christmas party, we got donations from the teachers of all their old white elephants, which were wrapped by loving, and frantic hands in the office and put in a large grab bag. Watching the winner of each game choose his prize and unwrap it is part of the whole production.

3) VOCABULARY BINGO: This requires more preparation on the teacher's part, but I think it's well worth it.

a) First, make up a large bingo-grid (25 squares) on a ditto master. (No words, just the squares.) Run off as many copies as you can.

b) Take 25-40 vocabulary items already learned in class that you want the students to review. (I also use high-frequency short phrases, such as "to us", "yes, he does" "no, I'm not", "her book", etc.) Write each word on a separate slip of paper and put it in an envelope—you will choose the slips at random when you "call" the game.

c) Here's the tedious part: Write these words in random order on the grids. (I'd suggest making ten-fifteen more copies than you have students on an average day.) You can do it fastest and most neatly if you type the words as you draw slips from the envelope, occasionally re-shuffling the slips.

d) When calling the words, you can vary the procedure by showing a picture of the object instead of naming it or asking such questions as "Are we playing bingo?" "Does he have a bingo card?" Where the answers ("Yes, we are" "Yes, he does") are the phrase-items they must look for.

If you do this for every new unit or chapter you cover, pretty soon you'll have a

nice bunch of bingo-sets for vocabulary review and for the next time you teach the class. You can make sets to cover special groups of words, like parts of the body, kinds of food, different forms of a verb in a particular tense and the appropriate time-words. . . whatever is important to you.

This last game is also good for more advanced classes, where you can give students an empty grid, dictate the words, which they must write on the grids, in random order, and then begin the actual game.

**CAUTION:** For any semi-literate students in your class, this last bingo game is much harder than the number-game or spelling-game. *Do* circulate among the students as you call the words, and determine who is having trouble. Show them the slip of paper you have just read and let them compare it with what's on their paper. Talk about what's happening—they'll be talking to each other in their own

language(s). Gently guide them into English. ("Do you have it? Let's see. . . No, you don't have it." or "Yes, you do. You have it. I can see it. Keep looking. . . Do you see it now? That's it. Please read it to me. Good!")

I've really been excited to see how this has sparked some of my older non-readers. They're really trying now, and doing better all the time. They are so proud of themselves when they find a word without help from me or other students.

But, as mentioned earlier, the important part is not the game itself (except maybe in this last case) but the communication that can go on before, during, and after the game. There are lots of "situational reinforcement" possibilities, as well as opportunities for contextualized pronunciation practice. (Prime example: correcting the Cantonese speaker's "fank you" to "thank you" when he is given a

*(continued on page 18)*

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## BOOK REVIEW

**Ronald Mackin.** *A Short Course in Spoken English.*  
Oxford University Press and Language Services 1975.

Price: \$3.50

This text, intended for students who have studied English but have not achieved mastery of the spoken form, offers a fresh approach to teaching English conversation.

Ten units, each containing "Texts," drills, and written exercises, based on the main difficulties of the English verb, are graded grammatically (some other grammatical points are also included).

The "Texts" are always presented in two ways: groups of single utterances and dialogues. Both are supplemented with pictures. Tapes present the dialogues three times, giving the student an opportunity to listen, repeat, and then take the part of one of the speakers.

Drills are used to focus on the grammatical structure(s) presented in the dialogues.

Writing exercises, based on the "Texts" and drills are various types: transformational, fill in the blank, multiple choice, etc.

This text with its tapes could be a welcome change for students and teachers where a language lab is available, but it would be a challenge to use if there are no tape facilities.

**Kenyon Moss**

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# BOOK REVIEW

## *Developing Fluency in English*

Price: \$4.95 Paperback

by Ruth Crymes, Gary James, Larry Smith and Harvey Taylor  
Prentice-Hall, 1974

This book is appropriately advertized as being designed for high-intermediate to advanced students of English as a second language as the average readability level of the nine reading texts in the book is twelfth grade. (This is the grade level required for *complete* comprehension according to the G. H. McLaughlin readability formula. The corresponding Dale-Chall level would be about tenth grade since Dale-Chall uses a less severe criterion: "The grade at which a book or article can be read with understanding.")

There are several features that should make this a useful text for the more advanced student. The book is divided into two basic parts: *Performing in English* and *Developing Competence in English*. In the first part, communication activities for reading, listening, and speaking are emphasized without explicit attention to rules or structural models. The authors focus on what is said rather than on how it is said. Each of the nine lessons is centered around a single topic such as proverbs, nonverbal communication, propaganda, etc. The topics are well suited for stimulating discussion across cultures among college age students.

An innovative feature of this part of the book is the Discussion Text. In each lesson the topic is presented in a brief summary, then amplified in the reading text, and finally paraphrased in a listening text. The latter uses the spoken forms of the language in the mode of a somewhat informal lecture. In contrast, the Discussion Text presents an unrehearsed, unedited discussion of the lesson topic including the false starts and pause words that are typical in natural conversation.

This seems to provide a useful kind of listening practice that is usually ignored in ESL texts. Each lesson also includes a list of five or six speaking activities for the class and a vocabulary study section.

The second part of the book is primarily concerned with helping students become proficient in combining sentences through nominalization and embedding. This latter part of the book is made up of nine sentence study sections corresponding to the nine lessons in part one. The sentence combining practice is intended to help students add more information to their sentences through productive use of the full resources of the language. Students learn to turn sentences into subjects, objects, complements, and passives in various ways. Along with the sentence-combining exercises, each of the study sections has an excellent exercise called *What About Meaning?* Completion of this exercise requires the student to carefully consider the precise meanings communicated by the embedded sentences.

The second part of the book would be improved by providing students with an explicit procedure for identifying the characteristics of sentences which make it appropriate or inappropriate to apply one of the sentence-combining rules introduced by the authors. Without such a procedure, students may attempt to nominalize and embed sentences for which a given rule was never intended. (See the article in this issue of the *TESL Reporter* "Two Causes for Misapplication of Language Rules.")

David C. Butler

# DISTINGUISHING TWO TYPES OF SENTENCES BY RE

by Yao Shen

This short article demonstrates four grammatical features in a simple predicate in English. Two of them are obligatory; the other two are not. All four features are illustrated with examples in a statement.

The two obligatory features in the predicate of an English statement are 1. tense (present or past and NO other, because English has no other tense), and 2. the verb (usually a word with a lexical meaning). In a simple predicate, tense occurs only once, and the verb also occurs only once.

When there is only one word in the predicate, both tense and verb occur in the same word.

Peter studie-s. (Present tense of verb *study*)  
Kathy write-s. (Present tense of verb *write*)

Peter studie-d. (Past tense of verb *study*)  
Kathy wrote. (Past tense of verb *write*)

A modal or an auxiliary or both (modal and/or auxiliary) may precede the verb, in which case, a verb string is formed. A verb string consists of a specifically related string of words (modal and/or auxiliary + verb) in which the modal or the auxiliary carrying tense begins the string, and the verb ends (terminates) it.

	Present		Verb
Peter	will		study.
Peter	had		studied.
Peter	is		studying.
Peter	does		study.
Peter	will	be	studying.
Peter	has	been	studying.
Peter	will	have	been
	Past		Verb
Kathy	would		write.
Kathy	has		written.
Kathy	was		writing.
Kathy	did		write.
Kathy	would	have	written.
Kathy	would	be	writing.
Kathy	had	been	writing.
Kathy	would	have	been

While the verb and the verb string are always co-terminous, the verb and the predicate are not. When the verb is followed by a complement, the complement and the predicate are co-terminous.

	Verb	Complement
Peter	studies	English.
Peter	studies	in class.
Peter	studies	everyday.
Peter	studies	carefully.
Peter	studies	because of interest.
Peter	studies	English in class everyday carefully because of interest.

	Verb	Complement
Kathy	wrote	letters.
Kathy	wrote	at home.
Kathy	wrote	on Sunday.
Kathy	wrote	regularly.
Kathy	wrote	for the family.
Kathy	wrote	letters at home on Sunday regularly for the family.

Let us now examine the four grammatical features in a simple predicate: tense, the verb, modal and/or auxiliary, and the complement in each of the following four different kinds of examples.

1. Predicate = tense + verb:  
Peter studies.  
Kathy wrote.
2. Predicate = tense + modal and/or auxiliary + verb:  
Peter will have been studying.  
Kathy would have been writing.
3. Predicate = tense + verb + complement:  
Peter studies English in class everyday carefully because of interest.  
Kathy wrote letters at home on Sunday regularly for the family.
4. Predicate = tense + modal and/or auxiliary + verb + complement:  
Peter will have been studying English in class everyday carefully because of interest.  
Kathy would have been writing letters at home on Sunday regularly for the family.

When the verb is not followed by a complement, the verb and the predicate are co-terminous.

	Verb
Peter	studies.
Peter	will have been studying.
	Verb
Kathy	wrote.
Kathy	would have been writing.

# RETRIEVAL

In each of the four kinds of predicates, tense and the verb both occur (1, 2, 3, 4); they are obligatory features. The occurrence of modal and/or auxiliary nevertheless, is optional. If modal and/or auxiliary are added (+ modal and/or auxiliary) preceding the verb, a verb string is formed with tense carried by the modal or the auxiliary (2, 4). If none ( $\emptyset$ ) is added (+  $\emptyset$ ), there is no verb string; tense is carried by the verb (1,3). The occurrence of a complement

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is also optional. If a complement is added (+ complement) following the verb, the complement and the predicate are co-terminous (3, 4). If no complement ( $\emptyset$ ) is added (+  $\emptyset$ ), the verb and the predicate are co-terminous (1,2).

The predicate of an English statement begins with tense (1, 2, 3, 4), and in the predicate there is a verb (1, 2, 3, 4). In a simple predicate, tense occurs only once (1, 2, 3, 4), and the verb also occurs only once (1, 2, 3, 4).

In conclusion, then, the following formula should be clear.

A simple predicate in English=

$$\text{tense } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} + \text{ modal and/or auxiliary} \\ + \emptyset \end{array} \right\} + \text{ verb } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} + \text{ complement} \\ + \emptyset \end{array} \right\}$$

The syntactic arrangement of the two obligatory features and the two optional features in a simple predicate in English is represented with the obligatory features given outside the braces and the optional ones inside the braces.

Note: This is the first of a series of three articles.

**1976 CONVENTION  
MARCH 2-7**

**TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS  
OF OTHER LANGUAGES  
(T E S O L)**

**The American of New York, New York City, N.Y.**

# GENERATING LANGUAGE THROUGH MEDIA

## AUDIO-VISUAL PRODUCTION BY THE ESL STUDENT

By Linda New Levine

*This is the second of a two-part article. The beginning installment of "Generating Language Through Media" appeared in the Fall 1975 issue of The TESL Reporter.*

Another exciting student production technique is the filmstrip. Filmstrip production is one area where we can utilize the artistic talents of our students. In producing a filmstrip, the special materials needed are minimal. Each filmstrip requires one or two feet of U Film, a commercially produced product with a dull finish on which students may draw or print using a pencil, pen, felt tip marker, or typewriter. Planning sheets come with the U Film so that students may preplan their filmstrip accurately before they begin drawing on the actual film.

Filmstrips may be prepared on a wide variety of topics. They may be informative or done in cartoon style as a form of entertainment. As in the case of slide shows, filmstrips may illustrate a grammatical point or be in the form of a picture show. However, the show is limited or enhanced by the quality and creativity of the student drawings. Filmstrips can be most effective when done as a visual dialog in cartoon style. If your students are studying ways of buying things in the store, suggest that students prepare a dialog based on a store situation and produce a cartoon filmstrip to illustrate it. Any dialog used in a classroom situation can usually be illustrated through means of a student prepared filmstrip. Once again, the goal of filmstrip production should be presentation to the class with a filmstrip projector onto a movie screen.

Students working on filmstrip production must prepare their filmstrip together, aid each other in the production techniques, and cooperate on writing a script which they can

tape as an audio accompaniment to the filmstrip. If students have had adequate classroom practice in the target structures and vocabulary, the verbal interaction that occurs as part of the student work sessions will provide valuable experience in using the new language as a skill to complete tasks. Work sessions of this type also encourage the high density of interpersonal communication needed in language learning.

Filmstrips that are produced without an audio soundtrack may use a musical background, or they may be completely silent and rely on the printed message on the filmstrip itself. Filmstrips of this type may be used to generate discussion in the class as students question each other on what they have seen and discuss the topic more thoroughly. Teachers may find that some students react well to classroom conversations of this type, participating quite freely. Others do not, however, and may feel better about speaking before a class when their speech comes from a tape recorder as an accompaniment to a slide or filmstrip presentation.

A fourth technique for student involvement in media for the purpose of increasing conversational competence is the student production of movies. For this project, the students will need a Super 8 movie camera, preferably one that is light in weight and fairly simple to use, and a roll of Super 8 movie film. If the topic of the film will accommodate shooting the movie outside, then special lights and special film are not necessary. However, student films may be

produced indoors without special lighting equipment by using a high speed film. It is advisable, however, to use a tripod which will eliminate the jerky motions common to most amateur movies.

Movies are especially appropriate to topics involving motion, for example, sports events or a movie on My Typical Day which would illustrate particular verb tenses such as the simple present, or the simple past.

Movies are also a good means of illustrating a student prepared classroom dialog. Props can be used to designate the various characters such as an apron for the store clerk, and a coat, hat, and shopping bag for the customer. Elaborate background scenery is not necessary but a setting may be indicated by the use of a sign such as "Quiet—Hospital Zone" or "Mario's Fruit Market." When creating a movie dialog or a role-play situation, the student actors must act out the dialog twice, first as it is being filmed, and second, as it is recorded onto a tape recorder in order to provide an audio accompaniment to their movie. In this way, target structures receive extensive practice as the actors must know their lines fairly well before they go in front of the camera.

Movie production requires accurate planning. Students must decide what scenes they will shoot and for how long, keeping in mind that one roll of film produces a three minute movie. The work and planning sessions required for a project of this type give students adequate experience in using the new language as a skill. Conversational competence develops as a result of verbal interaction that is planned and prepared for by the teacher in advance.

The tape recorder is a technique of student production which I have already discussed as an aid or an accompaniment to slide shows, filmstrips, and movies. Tape recorders may also be used to produce shows in their own right and without visual accompaniment. ESL classes studying the simple past tense might prepare a radio style news program in which they announce the news of the day. The news material may come from a newspaper or be manufactured by the students to create comical effects. Students studying vocabulary relating to weather may announce the day's weather and make their

predictions for the next day. The simple present tense may be practiced in a radio interview with a famous personality. In the interview, Mr. X may be asked questions about what he does in his occupation. The question pattern using do and does would also apply to the interview situation. The tape recording can be turned into a "Twenty Questions" type game if Mr. X remains unidentified and the rest of the class is asked to guess his name or his occupation. This kind of activity provides a good review of various questioning structures while providing the high density of verbal interaction required for developing conversational competence.

The student produced tapes can be catalogued in the classroom or school library for later retrieval. They can easily be listened to by individual students throughout the day if a small junction box and earphones are provided for individual listening.

The last area of student production which I will discuss is that of student-made overhead transparencies, color-lift transparencies, and dittos. An overhead transparency is a sheet of clear acetate which can be written or drawn on and then projected onto a screen through the use of an overhead projector. Overhead transparencies may be made by students to illustrate a talk they are giving to the class, for example, a student-made map of Italy for a student's discussion of his native country. These talks may be prepared by small groups of students in work sessions, thus providing for verbal interaction among the students involved. Student talks may also be delivered extemporaneously by individual students. In this situation, teacher guidance may be provided in one of two ways: prior to the delivery of the talk or during the talk itself in the form of informal questioning. Transparencies may also be used to facilitate practicing dialogs as when students produce a map of the streets and shopping areas in their town and ask directions of other students in the class.

Color-lift transparencies are also projected onto a screen with an overhead projector. With a color-lift transparency, however, students are able to lift the images and colors from magazine photographs onto a clear Contact sheet. The photographs used must have a clay base. If a chalky substance comes off when you rub the photograph with a wet finger then you know the photo has a

clay base. Examples of this kind of photograph are found in magazines such as *National Geographic*. After cutting out the photo, students cover it with a sheet of Contact and rub the print with steady pressure all over. The two ply sandwich is then soaked in warm water. The paper will peel away and the Contact sheet will contain the colored image. Wipe the sheet gently with water to remove the clay residue and dry. The result will be a duplicate of the magazine photo which can be projected onto a screen. Color-lift transparencies are useful when students wish to illustrate a subject too elaborate to be drawn. These transparencies may be used to illustrate a speech about a student's native country, or an elaborate picture may be used to initiate a class game such as "I See Something" or "Twenty Questions." Dittos are commonly used in schools by teachers but they can also be used to advantage by students. If your students are interested in popular music, you may suggest that they share the songs they enjoy by writing the lyrics onto a ditto which can be duplicated for the entire class. Student compositions can also be written onto dittos, duplicated, and distributed to the class as part of a book which will be added to with each new composition. I have found students check their writing more carefully when they know it will be read by their peers. Creative teachers will find many more ways to expand these suggestions in their own classrooms.

I would offer a word of caution at this point. The projects which have been suggested presuppose that before new skills are used in media production there has been a comprehensive presentation of the new material in the classroom and a period of controlled practice of the new structure. Teachers cannot ask students to use skills and structures that they have not previously taught.

Many teachers in the past have been reluctant to use audio-visual devices because they are unfamiliar with their use. The rewards which accrue from using these materials, however, should encourage more and more teachers to explore their use. Most teachers will necessarily be limited by the equipment they find available to them in their schools. However, all schools contain some of the materials discussed here and more of the new schools being built include budget

allocations for cameras of various types for their media centers. The purchasing of expendable equipment such as film may not be a problem for some school systems. In those schools which do not provide funds for this material, however, students may volunteer to purchase their own. A roll of Polaroid film, purchased jointly by a team of three students, doesn't make a big dent in their budgets, but it does require them to plan more carefully so that none of the film is wasted.

Language teaching becomes subordinate to language learning when teachers recognize student differences, and allow for self-directed learning in a social context through the means of student media productions.

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## TESL REPORTER

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# INSTANT INVOLVEMENT- THOSE VALUABLE FIRST MINUTES IN THE ESL CLASSROOM

by Alice C. Pack

Frequently instructors have problems during the first five minutes in the ESL Classroom, particularly in large classes. Time is often wasted calling the roll, late students straggle in, friends sometimes exchange greetings (often in their native tongues), and, in general, student-teacher rapport develops slowly.

These problems can be almost completely eliminated by utilizing several methods of 'instant involvement.' Various materials, requiring simple preparation, which are described and illustrated in this article, are prepared in advance and distributed immediately when the class is supposed to start. If the material involves student listening, the teacher begins to read immediately; if the materials involve reading or writing, student materials are distributed immediately. Regardless of the number of students present and/or the disorder of the students in the classroom, begin immediately! The teacher should not repeat anything, either materials or instructions, and all student materials are distributed immediately and responses collected promptly at the end of the involvement exercise (usually two or three minutes after the class has started). After the responses are collected, another two or three minutes may be used for giving the answers and/or answering student questions about the selections.

As a student always puts his name at the top of all papers, the roll for the day is taken without using precious classroom minutes. Latecomers hand in a blank sheet of paper with just the student name on top, so teachers also have a record of late attendance. (I have found that there are no latecomers and very few absentees after a few days of using 'instant involvement' exercises in my classes.)

Specific materials used in class should depend on current classroom learning goals.

If the class is primarily aural recognition or oral production, listening exercises are used; if it is primarily a reading class, reading exercises are used; if it is primarily a writing class, writing exercises are used.

An added advantage to that of keeping track of attendance and immediate involvement in an ESL class is the knowledge a teacher can accumulate on the listening, reading, or writing ability of a particular student on a day-to-day basis. If rolls are marked with a correct score over the number of answers (4/9, 7/10, 8/9, etc.) daily improvement can be noted for each student. Then, if teacher-student consultations are held, the teacher can show the progress or non-progress of a student in a particular area and give individual help, out-of-class assignments, or assign students to other classes.

The ten to twenty minutes necessary to prepare these exercises is a small price to pay for the increased classroom help of instant attention and increased activity they provide.

## LISTENING EXERCISES

Aural recognition or listening materials may be prepared by selecting short articles from news journals or the daily newspaper. (Students are particularly interested in items about their native countries.)

Make up several true-false or multiple choice questions about the material, using synonyms and/or rephrasing content material. Avoid direct quotes and statistical figures.

At the start of the class small slips of paper with numbers and choice indications (one is reproduced below) are distributed and the teacher begins to read the article. As soon as the article is completed, the questions are read (again without any

repetition). Students mark their papers during this reading. The papers are collected immediately and the teacher reads the correct answers for student information. Students may also ask for word definitions or clarification of some part of the article at this time.

Articles should be read at normal speed--pauses between phrases and clauses may be necessary for beginning classes--but remember there are no repeats, either for the article or the questions.

Some newspaper or journal articles may be used only once as the news becomes 'stale,' but some are of general information and can be used for a year or two.

If the class has a very low level of English comprehension, or if the teacher is too busy to prepare materials, the short one-page 'rate-builder' materials in SRA kits may be used. These are available on levels from grade one through grade eight, and would be suitable for students in beginning and intermediate to advanced classes. (Often listening comprehension is much lower than reading comprehension of the material, as content cannot be reviewed.)

### Student Answer Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

- |    |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | a | b | c | d | e |
| 2. | a | b | c | d | e |
| 3. | a | b | c | d | e |
| 4. | a | b | c | d | e |
| 5. | a | b | c | d | e |
| 6. | a | b | c | d | e |

Following is an article that is still interesting to students although it is nearly five years old.

(It has been used for several classes.)

Reprinted by permission from TIME, The Weekly Newsmagazine; Copyright Time, Inc., 1971.

The director of the Detroit zoo hired four new security guards last week, not to contain the wildness within the cages, but to protect the animals from the inhumanity of man. In the past two years, the zoo population has been victimized by deliberate acts of brutality. A baby Australian wallaby left the protection of its mother's pouch and was stoned to death; a duck died with a steel-tipped arrow in its breast. A pregnant reindeer miscarried after firecracker-hurling youths bombed the frantic animal into convulsions. Visitors have been observed dropping lighted cigar butts on the backs of alligators, watching the ashes burn through the reptiles' skin, then breaking into laughter when the alligators reacted to the severe burn. Finally, the zoo's male hippopotamus choked to death last week after someone responded to the hippo's openmouthed begging for peanuts by rolling a tennis ball down its throat. The zookeepers were left to wonder whether it was their charges or their visitors that really should be caged.

1. The director of the Detroit zoo hired
  - a) watchdogs.
  - b) zookeepers.
  - c) guards.
  - d) some animals.
2. The security guards were hired to
  - a) protect the animals from the visitors.
  - b) protect the visitors from the animals.
  - c) protect the baby animals.
  - d) guard against accidents.
3. The injury to the animals by human beings during the last two years has been
  - a) unforeseen.
  - b) accidental.
  - c) unknown.
  - d) deliberate.
4. The zoo mentioned was in
  - a) Chicago.
  - b) New York.
  - c) Detroit.
  - d) Los Angeles.
5. The hippopotamus died because



- a) it was shot by a steel-tipped arrow.
  - b) some youths threw firecrackers at it.
  - c) lighted cigar butts were dumped on its back.
  - d) a tennis ball was thrown down its throat.
6. That people should probably be caged was suggested by
- a) the animals.
  - b) the zoo keepers.
  - c) the visitors.
  - d) the newsmen.

A short listening exercise for a beginning class is for students to indicate whether words read by the teacher are the same or different. The words should be either minimal pairs or the same word.

Example:

lug	rug	D
pick	pick	S
pick	pig	D
sick	thick	D
thick	thick	S

Excellent examples of minimal pairs for all English speech sounds in initial, medial, and final position may be found in Gordon, *Speech Improvement* (Prentice-Hall, 1974), Nilsen and Nilsen, *Pronunciation Contrasts in English* (Simon and Schuster, 1971), and Plaister, *English Monosyllables* (East-West Center Press, Honolulu, 1965).

### READING

Cloze tests are easily constructed from short articles or news items. Simply delete every *n*th word from the body of the text and replace it with a blank, leaving both the first and the last sentences of the article intact. In the article below every 6th word was deleted.

(Remember that 50% exact word or 65% acceptable substitute is an excellent score for a Cloze test.)

The same paragraph used as a listening exercise is repeated here as a Cloze test.

The director of the Detroit zoo hired four new security guards last week, not to contain the wildness within the cages, but to protect the animals from the inhumanity of man. In the past two years — zoo population has been victimized — deliberate acts of brutality. A — Australian wallaby left the protection — its mother's pouch and was — to death; a duck died — a steel-tipped arrow in its —. A pregnant reindeer miscarried after — hurling youths bombed the frantic — into convulsions. Visitors have been — dropping lighted cigar butts on — backs of alligators, watching the — burn through the reptiles' skin, — breaking into laughter when the — reacted to the severe burn. —, the zoo's male hippopotamus choked — death last week after someone — to the hippo's open-mouthed begging — peanuts by rolling a tennis — down its throat. The zookeepers were left to wonder whether it was their charges or their visitors that really should be caged.

The multiple-choice or true-false questions with articles described in the listening section may also be used with the paragraph and the questions duplicated for reading.

### WRITING

A good involvement exercise for writing is the scrambled sentence. Students are given lists of words which they arrange into the proper English syntax.

Example:

1.	2.	3.
needs	comes	always
improve	class	to
his	she	they
he	everyday	try
to	English	English
English	to	use

1. He needs to improve his English.
2. She always comes to English class.
3. They always try to use English.

Dr. Pack will demonstrate these and other instant involvement exercises at the TESOL Convention in New York City, March 1976.

## SOME GAMES FOR TEACHING

*(continued from page 8)*

bingo prize.) Within a limited but meaningful context, the students can be constantly exposed to structures heard in every-day conversation, some of which they would not ordinarily learn in a class until much later.

It's important not to attempt too many new structures or much new vocabulary at once. One or two new "bits" a week, thoroughly practiced, is enough. It's a cumulative thing—you keep repeating old structures as you add new ones. What follows is a list of what we've done so far in my class at Cumberland this semester, roughly in the order we've attempted it:

TEACHER	STUDENTS
(After "Bingo" has been called) Who has Bingo?	(pointing) She does! (or: he does! I do! we do! they do!)
(Giving a small prize to the student—individually wrapped penny candy is good for this.)  What do we say to her? (him? them?)	  Congratulations! (this word in itself is worth a few minutes of drill)
Is this my prize? (his, her, your)	No, it isn't.
Is this his prize? (her, your)	Yes, it is.
Whose prize is this?	It's my prize. (his, her)
Are these my prizes?	No, they aren't.
Are these their prizes?	Yes, they are.
Whose prizes are these?	They're our prizes. (their)
Okay, tell me what to do.	Please give a prize to him. (me, her, them, us) or: Give him a prize.
Okay. (pointing to a different student, not the winner)	
Should I give a prize to him? (her, you, them)	No, you shouldn't.
Why not?	Because he doesn't have Bingo. (she, I they, we, don't)
(finally pointing to the winner or winners) Should I give the prize to her? (him, them, you)	Yes, you should.
Why?	Because she has Bingo. (he, we, I, they have)
(to winner) Would you like a prize?	Yes, I would.

TEACHER

STUDENTS

(giving prize to winner so that both teacher and winner have their hands on the prize)

What am I doing?

You're giving a prize to . . . . .

What did I do?

You gave a prize to . . . . .

Why did I do it?

Because . . . . . has Bingo.

Who gave the prize?

You did.

What did I give?

A prize.

Who did I give it to?

To . . . . .

Where did I give it?

Right here. (in the classroom, etc.)

When did I give it?

Just a minute ago.

(before giving prize)

What am I going to do?

You're going to give a prize to . . . . .

What is . . . . .going to do?

. . . . . going to get a prize from you.

What is . . . . .doing?

. . . . . getting a prize from you.

What did . . . . .do?

. . . . . got a prize from you.

What do you have there?

I have a card and some markers.

How many markers do you have? (they, we, he, she, I)

(the "ar" sound is a good one for practice)  
I have . . . . . markers. (You, We, She, He, They)

What's this? What are these?

This is a card and these are markers.

What's that? What are those?

That is a card and those are markers.

What kind of card?

A bingo card.

What kind of markers?

Bingo markers.

After the class acquires five or six structures, you probably won't want to use them all in every game as you add more. Just remember to practice them frequently. And as you get to know your students, you'll be able to direct the more challenging questions to the faster ones and easier questions to the slower ones.

Please don't expect a perfect chorus of answers, like a pattern drill. You're varying structures constantly (as we do in real conversation) and students won't always come back

with the grammatically correct reply the first time. Just keep fishing for it. Also, if your class is like mine, there may be a lot of other chatter going on at the same time. That doesn't mean that the students aren't learning. Many times they are checking with each other on the appropriate response or something else related to the game. Mild pandemonium reigns as students shout out answers, disagree with each other and get generally excited about the game. When that happens, it's fun. Enjoy!

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