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Theme: "THE ROLE OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF READING TEXT IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM"

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THEME: THE ROLE OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF READING TEXT IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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INTRODUCTION

After getting the Independent the Republic of Uzbekistan has worked out an own model of development taking into account the specific social and political traditions in the country. One of the most important conditions for the development of any country is a well functioning education system. As the education system ensures the formation of a highly developed that must be able to live in a highly with social and personal activity ability to function, independently in the public and basis of the Motional Model of development there had been worked out the national program For Personnel Training which defined conceptional ways and concrete details, mechanisms for radical reforming the education system and personnel training.

The program is the normative scientific basis for reforms. Starting fro 1997 it is being put into practice stage by stage. The document paves the way for radical reforms in the structure and content of education system of the National Program we need to change some ways of teaching the English language under school conditions as the Old approaches and longer meet the requirements of the last year. The historic changes took place in Uzbekistan, since there have been obtained Independence and sovereignty after September 1991, in Independent Uzbekistan many political, economical, cultural and social factors have changed. Therefore, the very time of gifting Independence the head of the republic Educational System and the attempts reflected on changing the Educational System in 1997, the Educational System and personnel Training so high developed before Independence no longer meets market changes occurred in the Republic today.

It should be noted that the National Program of Personnel training had some unique features. The refams are carried out on a extensive scale and are supported scientifically.

As the President I.A.Karimov: emphasized in his book "Uzbekistan along the road of Independence, and progress"-[1]. There are four path of reform and development is based:

1) adherence to universal human values.
2) Consolidations and development of the nations spiritual heritage.
3) Freedom for the individuals realization.
4) Patriotism.

The highest objective of reformation in Uzbekistan is to revive those traditions, fill them with new content and set up all necessary conditions achieving place and democracy, prosperity, cultural advancement freedom of conscience and intellectual maturity for every person on earth. According to the requirement oh the Motional Program of Personnel training and reforming of highest education in the republic of Uzbekistan it is important to make effective changes in the System of Higher Education[2].

As I.A.Karimov highlighted "Our young generation must be quick – cutter, wiser, healthier and of course, must be happier than us"[3].

In order to achieve Harmoniously developed generation Educators should use all the suitable aids.

Four Important Factors in Reading

Objectives, stance, texts, and tactics: these are the factors involved when people read in their native language. If we are to have a realistic approach to teaching people, to read efficiently in a foreign language, then we have to take these same factors into account. Although in recent years applied linguists and teachers have given some attention to one or another of them, it is rare to find in teaching and practice materials any evidence of them being considered all together. The consequence is that the remedies that are proposed for learner-readers' difficulties are at best only partial, and at worst not remedies at all.

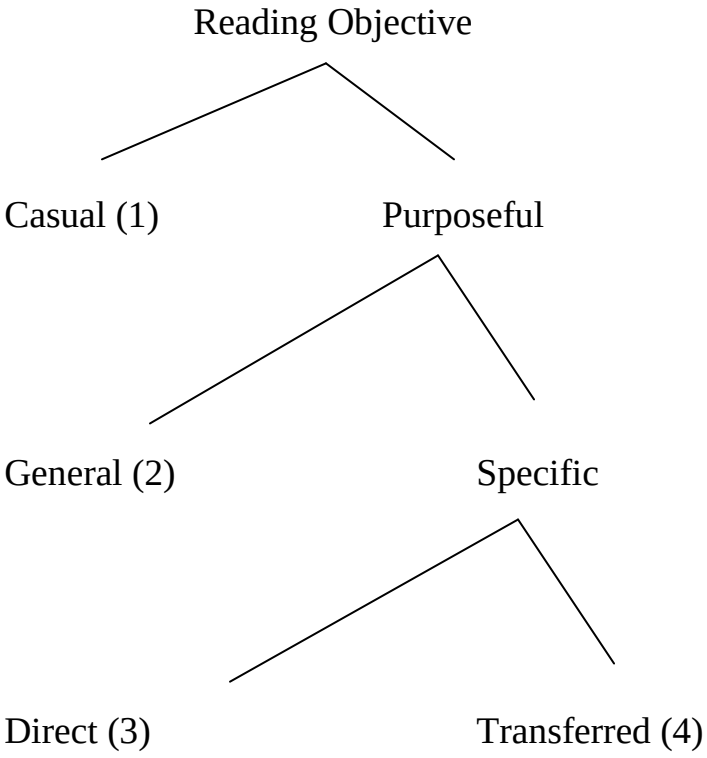
[1] I.A.Karimov. "Uzbekistan along the road of Independence and progress". Tashkent 1993, p 67.
[2] I.A.Karimov. "There is no future without history". Tashkent 1997, p 47.
[3] I.A.Karimov. "Harmoniously developed generation is a basis of progress of Uzbekistan". Tashkent. 1998, p 63.

To illustrate what I mean by this criticism, let us look at a traditional reading exercise. Usually we find the text presented at the beginning of the exercise, headed by the instruction "Read this passage and answer the questions below"; and these questions may be open-ended, yes/no, or multiple-choice questions. In the last decade or so, materials writers and teachers have realised that it is unrealistic to expect someone to read a text with no objective other than to comply with the instruction to do so, so they offer a "warm-up" question with the aim of getting the learner-readers interested in the content of the text before they start reading it. It has also been realised that readers use different tactics in reading, so skimming and scanning questions, and questions requiring the transfer of information from the text to tables and; diagrams have been introduced[4].

Unfortunately, warm-up questions usually establish only a vague objective for general reading on a topic,; whereas in real life we frequently have a precise objective for reading a certain text. And often the tactics implied by the exercises are inappropriate to the text. To cite an extreme example: Does one normally skim or scan a poem or a| short story? I don't think so, yet I have seen in a textbook: "Scan this poem to find out what it is about." In other words, materials writers and teachers often do not recognise that there are different types of reading objectives, and that for practising certain reading tactics only certain types of texts are suitable.

[4] Alderson J. and A.Urquhart, eds. 1984. Reading in a foreign language. London: Longman

Figure1: Reading Objectives



Examples:

1. time to fill, a need to be amused or distracted, idle curiosity, a general interest in a subject or topic;
2. burning curiosity, or an academic, professional, or specialist interest in a subject or topic;
3. (the objective and choice of text are one's own) a definite need for some particular information as a means to some consequent activity, a need to confirm one's suppositions, suspicions, or beliefs or to check one's knowledge or understanding of the facts;
4. (the primary objective and perhaps also the choice of text are somebody else's) the task of finding information for somebody else, of reporting on, reviewing, translating, or summarising a particular text, or the command of a teacher to read a particular text.

The purpose of this article is to relate the four factors—*objectives, stance, texts*, and *tactics*—so that a comprehensive approach can be made to the

preparation of reading exercises and the teaching of reading in a foreign language. First, we should look more closely at each of the four factors.

Reading objectives

There are two basic types of reading objectives, the *initial objective* and the *immediate objective.* The initial objective is the objective we have when we decide to look for and choose a text, and the immediate objective is the one we have when we are about to start to read the text we have chosen. These objectives may often be the same, or they may change—intensify or shift focus—as we look for and choose a text. Figure 1 shows the variety of reading objectives.

Obviously, reading objectives will differ in intensity from one potential reader to another, and often a potential redder will have a combination of objectives. For these reasons the scheme shown in Figure 1 is only an attempt to show how complex the question of reading objectives is.

Reader's stance

The initial reading objective influences the potential reader's way of looking for and choosing a text; it also influences his stance. This has been described by Widdowson, but the term *stance* is mine. It means the reader's attitude towards the text that s/he is about to read. The two opposite extremes of stance are the *submissive stance* and the *assertive stance.* Widdowson (1984:213-30)[5] describes them like this:

If the actual reader is prepared to play the role that the writer has cast him in, reading will be an act of submission. The reader, recognising the authority of the writer,… will… allow himself to be directed by the writer and be content to keep the course that has been plotted for him.

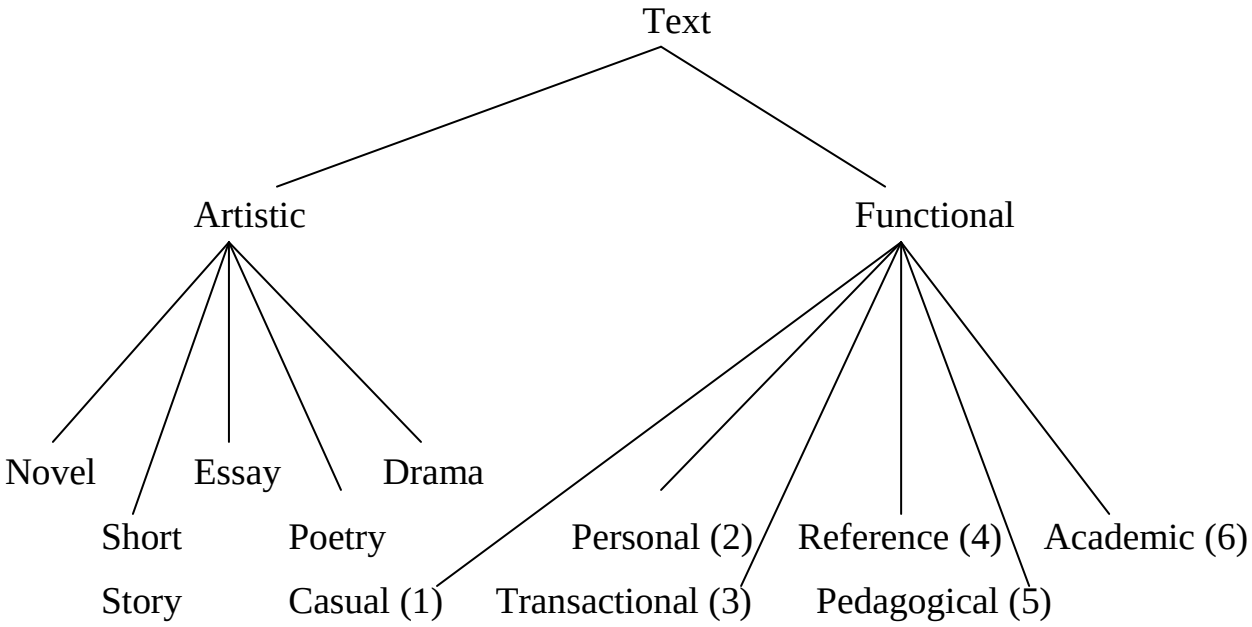
[5] Widdowson H.G. 1984. Reading and Communication. In Reading in a foreign language. See Alderson and Urquhart 1984.

And: But the reader may not wish to submit to writer control in this way;. . . The text is there before him,.. . and so he can use it in whichever way best suits his purposes,... In this case reading is an act not of submission but of assertion.

In other words, the reader may accept the writer's framework and follow the way the writer has arranged the content of the text; this is being submissive. Or the reader may disregard the writer's framework, and simply take what s/lie needs from the text; this is being assertive.

The reader's stance is influenced not only by the reading objective, but also by the type of text. Certain types of texts demand a submissive stance, whereas other types allow, or even invite, the reader to be assertive.

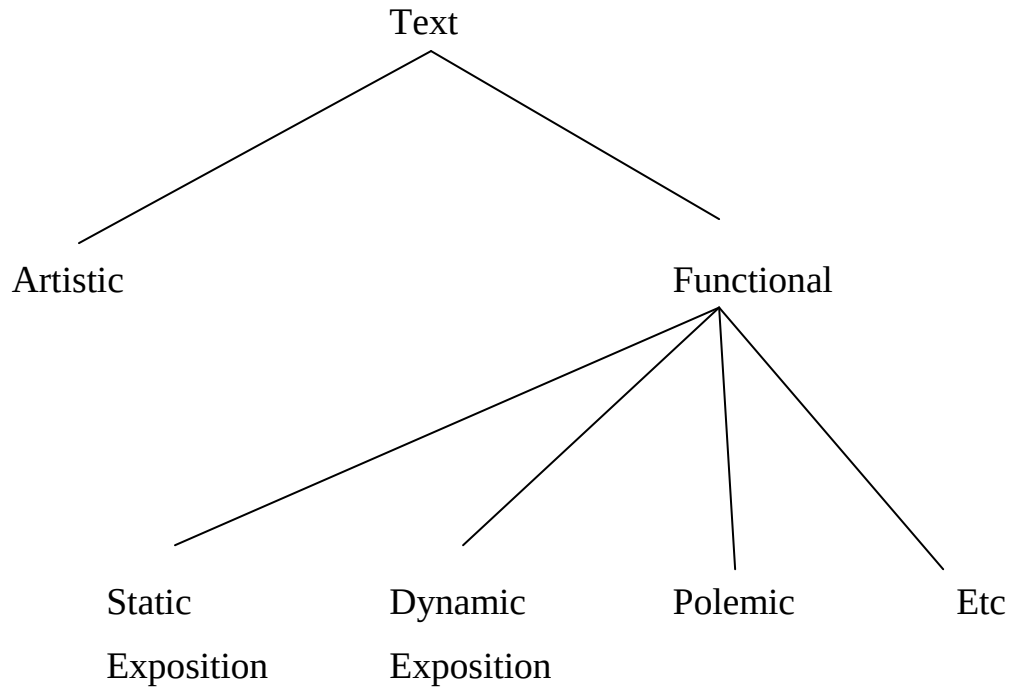
Figure 2: Mediums of Text



Examples:

1. newspapers, magazines, non-fiction books for the layman
2. letters, diaries
3. business letters, memoranda, legal documents, reports, instructions
4. dictionaries, catalogues, directories, inventories
5. textbooks, encyclopaedias
6. research papers, theses, specialist books and journals

Figure 3: Texts according to writer's Purpose



Reading tactics

Reading tactics, in the sense used here, refers to the ways of actually reading the chosen text. I shall mention four tactics: *skimming, scanning, sequential reading,* and *focussed reading. Skimming,* the tactic of running the eye over the text for a general impression of its character and content, and *scanning*, running the eye through the text in order to find parts of it that one wants or needs to read, are superficially similar, but they come from different objectives and different stances. Skimming follows from any kind of objective and a fairly submissive stance, whereas scanning follows from a specific objective and a decidedly assertive stance.

Sequential reading, which is a consequence of a submissive stance, is a linear processing of the text—starting at the beginning and going on to, or towards, the end. And *focussed reading,* which is associated with an assertive stance, is the intensive reading of the parts of the text of special interest which have been found by means of scanning[6].

[6] Lucas, Michael A. 1988. Reading factics for non-fiction texts. Tokyo: Kaibunsha

There seem to be four ways, or modes, of reading in which these tactics are normally used. These are shown in Figure 4, where they are graded according to stance, Mode 1 being the most submissive and Mode 4 the most assertive.

Figure 4: The Order of Tactics in Reading Modes

Mode 1	Mode 2	Mode 3	Mode 4
Sequential reading	Skimming	Skimming	Scanning
	Sequential reading	Scanning	Focused reading
		Focused reading	(Sequential reading)
		(Sequential reading)	

Notes: These modes are graded according to stance: Mode 1 is the most submissive, and mode 4 is the most assertive. In modes 3 and 4, there may be final sequential reading with the purpose of seeing things in the writer's perspective.

The interaction of the factors

Normally, readers start with an initial objective, and on the basis of this they look for and/or choose a text. While they are doing this, their reading objective may change, so that they may actually start reading with an immediate objective that is different from their initial objective. The chosen text influences the readers' stance (unless they have already fixed their stance according to their initial objective) and their choice of reading tactics: they will tend to approach an artistic text with a submissive stance, accepting the writer's framework because it is an essential element of such a text, contributing to its artistic effect; on the other hand, many types of functional texts may be read either submissively or assertively, depending on the readers' initial objective. The readers' stance determines their reading tactics: If they are submissive, they will skim or read sequential[1] by, perhaps focussing where they come to a point of difficulty or special interest; but if

they are assertive, they will scan and focus. These interactions are shown in Figure 5.

The teaching of reading in a foreign language

In the rest of this article, I shall concentrate on the teaching of reading functional texts. The teaching of reading artistic texts requires separate treatment, and warrants a separate article.

So far, we have been looking at the factors involved when people read texts efficiently in their own language, and now we have an idea of how complex the reading operation is. The basic questions for us now are: (1) Why can't people who are efficient readers in their own language read efficiently in a foreign language? and (2) How do we teach people to perform the complex operation of reading on texts in a foreign language?

A simple answer to the first of these two questions is that people who need to read texts in a foreign language do not know that language well enough to be able to read them efficiently. This may be true of beginners and elementary foreign-language learners, and true of intermediate learners, too, when they are faced with certain types of texts. But very often, with intermediate and even advanced learners the true answer is that they *think* they do not know the foreign language well enough to read efficiently in it. They start reading a text with the fear that they are going to have problems with vocabulary and unfamiliar structures, and so they read slowly and carefully, weighing and measuring every word, with a dictionary at their elbow as a life-support system. In other words, they lack confidence and retreat into a submissive stance, even though they quite capable of being assertive or even aggressive towards texts in their native language.

For students in tertiary education, or academics, and for professionals, reading is like eating: they do not think about what they do when they read, any more than they think about how they handle, say, a knife and fork, or chopsticks, when they are having a meal. And this brings us to the answer to the second

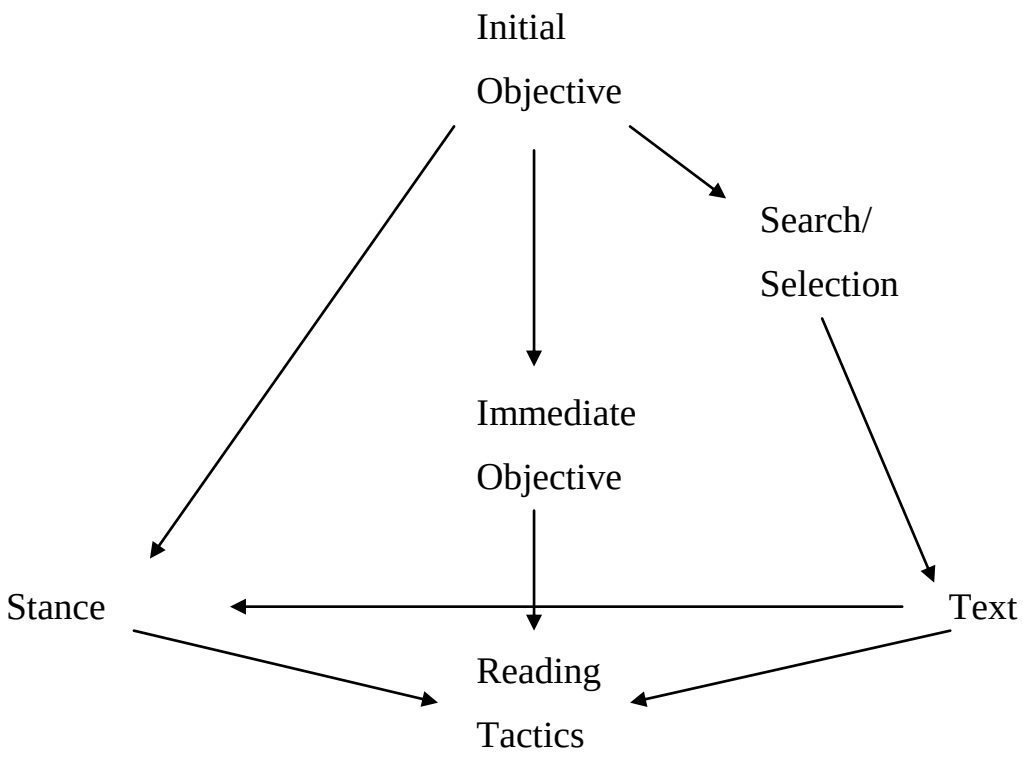
question. The first step in reaching people to read in a foreign language is to make them aware of what they do when they read efficient-their own language. We can do is by starting a reading course with texts in the native language. Of course, I everybody is an efficient reader in the native language, and with such people this technique will not just make them aware about reading, but will actually teach them to read more efficiently. The second step is to give them guidance and practice in transferring the reading procedures to reading in the foreign language - how to recognise and respond appropriately to the type of text in front of them by adopting a suitable stance and suitable tactics.

Even in these early stages of a reading course, we have to remember that reading should be based, on objectives. Unless the learner-readers already have an initial objective, the teacher should try to establish one by means of a warm-up question to stimulate discussion on a topic considered in the text.

Having now an initial objective, the learner-readers should be guided into adopting an appropriate stance towards the text. It is easy for them to slip into a submissive stance, so it is important for the teacher to show them the alternative, an assertive stance. The traditional reading exercise, with the text followed by the questions, encourages a submissive stance, so to encourage an assertive stance the teacher should present the questions first, and should give the learner-readers the opportunity to read them before they see the text. The obvious types of questions to precede the text are the skimming and scanning questions—how can one realistically skim or scan a text if one has already read it just a few minutes ago? But shouldn't all types of questions precede the text? Frank Smith (1985:105, 124)[7] describes reading as basically the process of finding answers to questions: "To read we must ask questions, *implicit* questions," and "There are many different kinds of text and many different purposes for reading. The one aspect of reading all have in common is that questions are asked of the text.

[7] Smith, Franck. 1985. Reading. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Figure 5: Interaction of the Factors



Comprehension occurs when answers to these questions are found."

If we place all questions before the text, we go some way towards breaking our learner-readers' habit of seeing the text as a thousand trees with a dangerous beast lurking behind every one, instead of seeing it as a wood with paths running through it, and we may choose the path according to where we want to go.

Another mistake of the traditional reading exercise—and one that we often find in contemporary materials—is over-questioning. That is, too many questions, and too many different kinds of questions, are asked about a text. It is as if the materials writer is determined to make the learner-readers squeeze the last drop of meaning out of the text. And what are the results of this? The learner-readers are demotivated by seeing a lot of questions, confused by their variety, and bored with the text by the time they are halfway through the exercise. The answer is for the teacher or materials writer to decide, on the basis of the reading modes shown in Figure 4, which tactics are to be exercised on a particular text, and set a question or two for each tactic. This will mean that the teacher has to find more texts for the reading course and will have to prepare more exercises; but, on the other hand, the

learner-readers will read more texts and the exercises that the teacher has to prepare will be shorter**.**

How do we decide what types of texts to use on the reading course? Regarding field, we should find out the interests of our learner-readers at the beginning of the course, but our choice of texts should not necessarily be restricted to those interests, because we can arouse interest in topics in other fields through visual aids, discussion, and warm-up questions. More important, I think, is the classification of texts according to medium.

Casual texts from newspapers and magazines are particularly useful with classes in general English. The problem with these texts is that they usually contain journalese, with colloquial expressions and cultural references that may puzzle even fairly advanced language learners. Generally speaking, though, such passages of journalese alternate with passages of straightforward description or narration, and the assertive reader can pass over them. Thus, these texts provide good practice for scanning and focussed reading.

Sample Exercise

A. Elementary/Lower Intermediate Level:

Skimming: Here are three other possible titles. Which tells you most about the article?

a. The Mystery of Petrie's Head

b. The Life of an Archeologist *c.* Miss Allen's Problem

Scanning: On which lines of the article can you find the following?

a. Jerusalem *b.* The Royal College of Surgeons

c. The date of Sir Flinders Petrie's death

d. University College, London *e.* Pyramids

Focussed Reading:

1.Where and when did Sir Flinders Petrie die?

2.What is the main difference between the head in the preserving jar and Petrie as he appeared in photographs?

B. Intermediate:

Skimming: Which of these possible titles gives the best idea of the content of the article?

a. Heads You Lose *b.* The Mystery of Petrie's Head *c.* The Remains of Sir Flinders Petrie *d. A* Head in a Jar

Scanning: Which lines of the article are about

a. the location of Petrie's body? *b.* the location of Petrie's head?

c. the people who knew Petrie personally?

Focussed Reading:

Why is it difficult for Miss Allen to solve the mystery of Sir Flinders Petrie's head?

HEADS YOU LOSE *By Andrew Moncur*

SIR Flinders Petrie's highly personal legacy to the academic world, the last token of a lifetime's devotion to scholarship, is now causing a particular sort of ache.

The great archaeologist and Egyptologist, explorer of pyramids and graves, might now be turning in his own. Grave, that is.

His mortal remains, with one important exception, lie in Jerusalem, where he died in 1942 at the age of 89. By his own wish. Sir Flinders' head is elsewhere—detached and returned to England for the purposes of scientific research.

The problem which confronts the beneficiaries of this generous if unusual bequest is what, exactly, has become of it. Is it the head which has been sitting for

years in a preserving jar in a cupboard at the London headquarters of the Royal College of Surgeons? And, if not, then whose head have they got?

Doubt has arisen since Miss Elizabeth Allen, curator of the college's collection, set out to confirm the identity of the anonymous object-assumed to be Petrie's head-which she found in her care.

She called on her opposite number at University College, London, where Sir Flinders occupied the chair of Egyptology for just over 40 years. An uncomfortable feeling started to creep in.

The head looks curiously youthful for a man who lived to his 90th year. And another question mark hangs over the colour of the whiskers.

"The photographs we have before he died show him with white hair. The hair in the bottle is dark," Miss Allen said.

"I know you can get rather odd changes when you preserve biological material, but hair does not darken. There is obviously some considerable doubt about whether it is the head."

The problem will be hard to solve. "People who were in the college at the time have now. sadly, passed away," said Miss Allen. "The people I would like to talk to aren't available any more. So far 1 have come up with absolutely nothing. How a switch has been made, if a switch has been made, I just don't know."

The head, meanwhile, will continue to be treated with all respect.

And it is not alone. The collection contains a "fine" selection of brains-including some of the greatest of their day and some of the most frankly idiotic.

An example

To finish with, I provide an example. I have chosen a text and have written two exercises for it, one for learners of an elementary to lower-intermediate level, and the other for rather more advanced learners.

The text is a short newspaper article, and is therefore a casual text, containing colloquialisms and other linguistic features of journalese, such as a heavy use of apposition. I chose this text because it is short, and because, de-

scribing a mystery, it is likely to be interesting to almost anyone.

But even a text like this one should not be simply pushed under the noses of the learner-readers. I would start the class in which I use this text with a discussion on the use of human organs for scientific and medical research. With learners at an elementary level who all speak the same native language, this discussion could be conducted in the native language.

II. THE TEACHING OF READING FUNCTIONAL TEXTS

§ 2.1. Casual texts from newspapers and magazines

Magazines and newspapers

Brief description

The Economist is an English-language weekly news and international affairs magazine aimed at educated readers. It covers international news, economics, politics, business, finance, science, technology, and the arts.

Every two weeks, *The Economist* publishes special reports on a given topic – the five main categories being Countries and Regions, Business, Finance and Economics, Science and Technology. The reports consist of a series of articles in the form of summaries and analysis.

BBC Focus is a British monthly magazine about science and technology published in UK. It covers all aspects of science and technology and is written for general readers as well as people with knowledge of science.

Its main features include *Agenda*, *Eye Opener* (interesting or amazing photos on a common theme), Q&A (a section welcoming science queries from readers and answers from an expert panel), mathematical puzzles, a factual multiple choice quiz and a crossword and Last Word (discussion of problems in science).

Here are some ways in which newspaper articles can be employed in English-language proficiency activities[8]:

1.Have individual students read the newspaper article out loud to the whole class and in small groups to improve their pronunciation Select individual students to read a paragraph out loud to the class. Correct their pronunciation and encourage peer correction. Then have them read aloud individually one or more paragraphs in small groups. Continue to use the same steps in correcting their pronunciation. You can do a follow-up activity for serious mistakes in pronunciation by having the class engage in a pronunciation exercise such as a repetition drill or a minimal-pair

[8] Patterson G.B. 1991. Using newspaper articles to teach English language skills. English Teaching Forum.

drill. After class you can explain students' errors in pronunciation privately to them.

2. Ask comprehension questions about the newspaper article. Ask what/when/ where/why/how questions for each paragraph, in the whole class and in small groups. You can employ the same steps in asking for the main idea and supporting examples of each paragraph. Follow up this activity by asking specific *wh*- and yes/no questions about the whole article.

3**.** Have the students underline any vocabulary that they do not understand.

4. Have the students ask each other the meanings of the new words, in pairs or in small groups. Then ask them individually the meanings of the new words. Write the definitions of the words on the blackboard. You can suggest that the students write these definitions in their notebooks. Follow this up by asking them individually to produce sentences orally using the new vocabulary.

5. Ask the students communicative questions about the article. For example, ask them to describe a situation in their country that is similar to the one in the newspaper article with respect to persons, places, events, etc.

6. Have the students ask each other communicative questions about the article in pairs or m small groups.

7. Ask the students for the main idea of the article and supporting details. They can also do this with each other in small groups or in pairs.

8. Ask the students what they liked about the article.

9. Have the students discuss the article in pairs or in small groups. You can go to certain pairs or small groups and facilitate their discussions by participating in them. You can also ask them questions about the issues that are brought up in the discussions. Then call on some groups or pairs to give oral summaries of their discussions.

10. Have five to ten students write a summary of the newspaper article in paragraph form on the blackboard. Each student that you call on goes to the blackboard and writes only one sentence. Then call on different students to correct the summary (orally). After that, have them write the corrections on the

blackboard. You can also have them identify the topic sentence, and the supporting examples in the paragraph.

11. Have the students write summaries of the articles in class. Then have them read their summaries to the class. You can also have them write summaries of different newspaper articles for homework, and have them summarize these newspaper articles orally.

12. Assign group or individual topics, and let the students look for an article that corresponds to the topic. They can obtain their article from local newspapers such as the *Korean Herald* and the *Korean Times,* which may be found on street corners, in major hotels, bookstores, etc., and from international newspapers such as the *International Herald Tribune* and the *Asian Wall Street journal,* which may also be found in bookstores and major hotels and which are sometimes found in university libraries.

13. Have the students subsequently engage in debates on the topics in the articles. Organize the debate by selecting two groups, with four or five people in each group. One group will defend the position or positions regarding the topics that are mentioned in the article; the other group will oppose them by trying to refute these positions. The teacher should act as moderator, making sure there is fair and equal participation by both groups. Then, ask the audience listening-comprehension questions. After that, you can let the audience ask questions of the debaters.

14. As a follow-up activity, have the students give speeches about the topics of the articles you have used. Then ask the audience listening-comprehension questions.

15. Give a dictation consisting of a paragraph from one of the articles.

Multi-skill improvement

1 believe that these activities will bring about improvement in several language skills.

The students improve their reading skills through extensive practice with comprehension questions about the main idea and supporting details of the article

as a whole and of each paragraph of the article, as well as by follow-up comprehension questions. This helps them learn to read for the gist of the article and for meaningful content.

Their speaking skills improve through talking about issues that are relevant, concrete, and meaningful to them, and through using the language creatively and meaningfully in debates, small-group discussions, oral summaries of their small-group discussions, and speeches. Furthermore, being asked communicative questions gives them the opportunity to speak the language in a meaningful context about things that are relevant and interesting to them.

The debates and speeches also help them improve their listening skills through intensive practice with the listening-comprehension questions that follow these activities. The dictation also improves their listening skills by helping them learn to discriminate sounds.

The students' pronunciation improves through the correction of errors by the teacher and their peers, as well as through the pronunciation drills and the teacher's after-class explanations. The newspaper activities also help to reinforce and enlarge the students' English vocabulary, both because of the meaningful context of the words and the intensive systematic practice, both in the whole class and in small groups and pairs.

These activities can be very useful in improving the students' writing skills, through summary writing and the development and organization of paragraphs on the basis of a main idea or topic sentence, supporting examples, and a concluding statement. The paragraph is an essential building block of the written language of English.

A handy tool

In conclusion, newspaper articles are not only a practical tool for improving students' English-language skills; they are also cheap and readily available. They can serve as the basis for many useful classroom activities.

A well-known source of useful material is all the pictorial advertisements you can find in any popular magazine. Teachers already knew how to use them to

illustrate structures, inspire discussions and dialogues, or for straightforward description. Another versatile source of printed material is to be found in newspaper headlines or publicity slogans. Combining these two types of material can produce a further creative activity for classroom exploitation[9].

Preparation

First, collect as many different advertisements as possible from all kinds of popular magazines. They do not necessarily have to be from English or American magazines, so the teacher can make use of what is available locally, without going to any great expense. The usual products found advertised include drinks (alcoholic and soft), perfumes/ after-shave/cologne, vehicles, televisions/ video/hi-fi equipment, cameras, domestic appliances, cosmetics, men's and women's fashions, cigarettes, furniture, jewelry, watches, leather goods, cold remedies/pain-relief products, etc. Carefully cut off or obliterate any slogan already appearing in the advertisement, but leave the product itself visible.

Next, make a list of possible advertising slogans. This requires some thought on the part of the teacher, but he does not have to be an advertising specialist to come up with some simple sentences – the shorter the better and the more ambiguous the better. If we think about it, the most effective advertising is that which uses the fewest possible words to suggest an idea, combined with a suitably striking photo. A slogan catches our attention very often because of its apparent simplicity, unusual turn of phrase, t or use of double meaning, together with some humorous implication.

The following are some examples of invented slogans. They will probably never sell the product in question, but they do serve a linguistic purpose. If you have managed to find advertisements in English, you can use the slogans you have removed, or at least base your own slogans on them.

1. The sound of quality.

2. Show her how much you love her.

[9] Smith E.W. 1989. A drevtisments and the creative use of Language. English Teaching Forum.

3. The happiest day in their life.

4. Sparkling gold.

5. Comfortable, roomy and fast.

6. A dream come true.

7. Just one drop is all it takes . . .

8. His shirts will notice the difference.

9. The real thing.

10. For the man in your life.

As part of the class preparation stick the magazine advertisements onto stiff cardboard or place them in plastic envelopes to make them more durable. Photocopy your list of slogans.

Exploitation

Step One. Give out the photocopied slogan sheets to the students. Give them a few minutes to look through them.

Step Two. Go through the slogans one by one, asking students to tell you what they think they could be used to advertise. Do not ask for a translation, though the odd word may need clarifying. Ask for all the possible interpretations of ambiguous words or phrases.

In the case of the 10 slogans given above, students might think that number one could refer to a TV, radio, cassette, hi-fi equipment, or the like. Number two could suggest some kind of present a man would give to his wife/girlfriend, something expensive or ostentatious;! number three might not suggest anything in particular other than a special occasion of some sort, involving more than one person. Students may take number four as referring to real gold, in the form of jewelry, though it could refer to something only golden in color such as a soft drink or table wine, hence "sparkling." In number five the key word is undoubtedly "fast," which will suggest some type of vehicle, not a motorbike ("roomy"?). Number six is probably a mystery to students; they may suggest something pleasant that

is not an everyday occurrence. Number nine must represent something that cannot be successfully imitated; number seven must refer to a liquid ("drop"), but what kind? Perfume? A drink? A cleaning product? Is a detergent in fact referred to in number eight? Perhaps his shirts will be whiter, or better ironed. Number ten surely advertises a masculine product such as after-shave lotion, a briefcase, or even a drink with masculine connotations such as brandy or whisky.

The thing to stress at this stage is that there is no "right" or "wrong" answer. It all depends on what students see and guess from the language in front of them. The kind of structure generated by this speculation is the hypothetical type: if *might be . . ., it could be . . ., perhaps it's . . ., I wonder if it's . . ., it makes me think of . . ., it brings to mind . . .*, etc.

Step Three. Give out the magazine advertisements to the students. Let them pass them around and look at as many as they can. Tell them to take note in pairs or groups of any slogans they would like to match with any particular picture. It doesn't matter much at this stage if they use L, for their discussion.

Cosmopolitan is an entertainment magazine for women, sometimes referred to as *"Cosmo"*. It mainly focuses on educating women in areas other than sexuality and providing coverage of the latest news in fashion and beauty. Sections such as "Health Check" help women recognize possible health problems. Less serious regular features include celebrity gossip and a wide variety of fun facts and advice.

Total Film is the UK's second best-selling film magazine. It offers film and DVD news and reviews. Each month, *TF* provides a range of features, from full-length interviews, with established and up-and-coming actors and directors, to major film previews, from Top 100 lists to retrospective pieces. All issues contain The *Total Film* Interview - an in-depth chat with a celebrated actor or director, along with a critique of their body of work and a rating of each major film to date.

BBC Wildlife is a British glossy monthly magazine about wildlife, which you might find informative and interesting at the same time.

New Scientist is a weekly international science magazine covering recent developments in science and technology for a general English-speaking audience.

The Guardian is a British national daily newspaper printed in full colour, which covers the topics ranging from the UK and world news to education, society, sports and science.

The Guardian Weekly, which circulates worldwide, provides a compact digest of four newspapers. It contains articles from *The Guardian* and its Sunday sister paper *The Observer,* as well as reports, features and book reviews from *The Washington Post* and articles translated from France's *Le Monde.*

The *Financial Times (FT)* is a British international business broadsheet newspaper. Will be especially interesting and useful to IELTS candidates because it discusses topical issues like Globalization, Climate change and so on. The website offers short videos and podcasts which will be of interest and use to learners who wish to develop listening skills in English at an advanced level.

The Times is a daily national newspaper published in the United Kingdom. It covers local and international news for general English- speaking audience.

The Sunday Times is a UK Sunday broadsheet newspaper, which covers local and international news for general English-speaking audience.

The English Language Gazette is a monthly newspaper for English Language Teaching professionals: trainee teachers, teacher trainers, experienced teachers, academic managers and academics. Each edition is packed with news, features, classroom resources, teaching materials and teaching tips.

English Language Professional (ETP) is a wonderful resource for teachers of English because articles are written by English Language professionals for fellow teachers and provide lots of useful insights as well as practical classroom ideas.

Also, see *MyETP*- ***a*** new sister website www.mvetp.com has been launched to provide a community website for teachers around the world -join up, it's free! You can create groups, networks of friends and swap ideas, tips and advice.

Modern English Teacher (MET) is a useful resource for teachers of English which mainly consists of 4 sections: Teaching Theory, Language Development. Classroom Ideas and Reviews.

§ 2.2. Personal texts: letters, diaries.

Did you ever keep a diary in order to write down your deepest secrets when there was nobody to talk to or to confide in? Was it a place to express your regrets, feelings or thoughts about various events and record everything of interest that happened to you during the day? Who would have thought that keeping a diary could also be a great way to practise English? Even in the age of amail, blogs and online chats. We still encourage students not only to keep diaries but also to write traditional letters[10].

Diaries

I have a very good relationship with my students', girls often complain about boys, and vice versa; they share their worries and fears, anticipating receiving some advice. Realising that they trust me and seeing '.heir need to talk to somebody. I have suggested my students keep diaries for me to read. I make it clear that they can write about whatever they want, serious or trivial.

What surprises me in my students" diaries is that a lot of private matters Are discussed with great sincerity. Students experience ups and downs with schoohvork: sometimes they fall in love with a classmate or are themselves the object of another student's attentions. It seems that, in general, they hardly have anybody to talk to: their parents are often too busy to spare the time.

Everything is written down in these diaries and I spend some of my free time reading them and making an effort to give helpful and reasonable advice.

The students really take pride in their diaries. The girls often decorate them with colourful pictures and stickers. The diaries are not only beautiful, but it is clear that the students have put their hearts into their writing.

---

[10] Walczak J. Dear diary

I started using diaries with my 12-year-old students, but when some of the younger students (about ten years old) saw these nicely decorated notebooks, they were intrigued by them and keen to try them themselves.

The style and the form of the writing is up to the students. Children's imaginations are incredibly fertile and some write in the form of fantasy stories. Others write as if they were a fain', a friendly ghost or a sister or brother. This may be because the students are shy and have a preference for writing as if they were somebody else, something I respect and understand.

Once a week they bring me the diaries (they are asked to describe at least two or three days per week) and t read them. I correct any mistakes in pencil as I think that what attracts our attention while reading a diary shouldn't be a lot of red pen. Later I discuss the mistakes individually with each student.

Letters

At the very beginning of the winter holidays some students told me they would miss me and the feedback on their diaries. I then came up with the idea that they could write letters to me which I would answer.

In the first letter, they introduce themselves and describe their family. I write back, posing a question such as *Have you got a pet? Write to we about it* or *What's your favourite season of the year/singer (etc) and why'.'* Students reply in their letters and ask their own questions. I read each letter and attempt to respond to their queries as promptly as possible.

I must admit that the older students' questions, in particular, can sometimes be very complicated. They describe various situations and express doubts as to decisions they have made. I can't leave these unanswered as the students are waiting avidly for my opinion and, indeed, some guidance. Very often they ask *What do you think?* or *What would you do?*

The frequency of the letter exchange is about one letter per week. Sometimes students write more often, especially when something interesting happens.

Every so often. I am really touched when students put colourful cards or rose petals into the envelopes.

Writing diaries and letters has had a very positive influence on the bond between me and my students. Both forms of writing are invaluable sources of knowledge about the students, their backgrounds and their environment. Using diaries and letters has enabled me to reflect on every student as an individual and to look at them all from a different perspective. This leads to a deeper understanding of their behaviour, especially when occasionally they act improperly or do something out of the ordinary.

Reading diaries and letters and replying to them is certainly very time-consuming. Not a single letter can be left unanswered, and every page of a diary must be read so that you don't miss anything in the course of events. Yet it is undeniably worth the effort as, believe me, nothing can compare to the students' trust and reliance on you, as a result of the enhanced communication it makes possible.

My learning diary

Date:

…….

What have I done today/this week?

…….

…….

…….

Did I like what I did?

…….

…….

…….

…….

What have I learnt from this activity?

…….

…….

…….

What will I do next?

…….

…….

…….

…….

Worksheet 3 My Learning diary (SAMPLE)

What have I done today/this week? *Make brief notes of what you did during the day or a week. Here you can record the skills you have practised, tests you have done, any events you have attended (e.g. Conversation Club} etc* Today I spent half of the day in the Learning *Centre.* I did the following:

- activities from Unit 8 from Inside Out, mainly on reading and listening
- then for about 30 minutes I talked with Umid in English about the football match
- I watched BBC World for 15 minutes
- I participated in the Conversation Club.

Did I like what I did? *Write about what you felt about the things you did. It will help you to decide which activities you prefer and which you don't.*

Most of all I liked when I chatted in English with Umid from the Centre. I felt confident and relaxed. If I did not understand anything I could ask him to repeat it.. I was so interested as we were mainly talking about football. However, in the Conversation Club I felt a bit uncomfortable because it was mainly about shopping. I am not that interested in it, so I did not know what to say.

What have I learnt? *Make notes of what you think you have learnt. It will help you to make your learning conscious.*

I learned that it is easier for me to speak to one person rather than in front of the whole group. I can speak English better when I am talking on the topic I am interested in. I also learnt several words and expressions from watching TV, doing exercises in the book and participating in the Conversation Club. I noted these words down in my Vocabulary notebook.

What will I do next? *Note down what you think you will do next.*

Now I think I will read more magazines and watch more TV to get ideas on different topics. Umid and I decided to meet three times a week and chat in English.

Many learners of English, as well as their teachers, realize that professional and private contacts require the skill of writing letters in English. I will present three procedures that may be followed in teaching this useful skill[11].

After the presentation and discussion of examples, the teacher asks the students to write letters of their own. Writing letters to another person in the classroom increases both motivation and creativity. Being personally involved, the students not only enjoy writing letters but are interested in reading the answers as well.

Pair writing

The simplest procedure is to ask the students to write letters to each other in pairs. For instance, Student A "sends" an invitation to Student B, who, in turn, writes an answer. Next they change their roles, and Student B writes an invitation that Student A answers. This procedure may help the students to practise writing business letters as well. It should be remembered that the students are not allowed to see the letters written by their partners until they are delivered to them. A student may not ask his or her partner questions about vocabulary, grammar, or the message to be conveyed in the letter. When in doubt, the student should be encouraged to consult the teacher.

[11] Stanulewics D. Letter: Guess who has written to you. October 1992. English Teaching Forum

Unsigned letters

A more complicated procedure involves writing the students' names on separate slips of paper. This may be done by either the teacher or the students themselves. The teacher holds the slips face down so that nobody can see the names, and each student draws one slip containing another student's name, which he or she keeps secret. If a student happens to draw a slip with his or her own name, the student returns it and tries again. Then the students are asked to write letters to the person whose name they have drawn. As in the previous procedure, the teacher tells the students what kind of letter to write or what message should be conveyed. The only difference is that the senders are unknown-the students "forget" to sign their letters. However, they are asked to include some information that can help the addressee to identify them.

After all the letters are written, the teacher collects them and acts as a mail carrier, delivering them to the addressees. While reading the letters, each student is to guess who has written to him or her. Then everybody is asked to write **an** answer to the person he or she thinks is the author of the letter. A sender may happen not to be identified; another person may get two or more answers. After reading the answers, the students write letters again. If somebody has not received an answer, he or she writes to the same person once more, asking whether that person has received the previous letter. This time more information about the sender should be included so as to make identification much easier. A person who has been wrongly identified is obliged to explain that. A student who has received an answer from the person he or she previously wrote to may either confirm receipt of the answer, which completes the exchange of letters, or include new information, e.g., about a change in the plans, which encourages further correspondence. The other students continue writing short letters until all the senders are identified.

To give an example: The teacher asks the students to write short letters with invitations. Student A, Anne, draws a slip with the name of Student B, Bill. She writes to him.

Dear Bill,

Don't forget to come to my birthday party on Saturday" Of course, I will be happy to see your girlfriend, too.

Yuors.

Having sent the letter to Bill, Anne receives an invitation from another student.

Dear Anne,

I am sure that you will be glad to see my cousin Barbara, whom you met last year. She is coming to se me tomorrow. Would you like to come and have lunch with us the day after tomorrow?

Love,

Anne thinks that Student C, Catherine, may have written the letter because she met her cousin last year. In fact, Anne does not remember the cousin's name. To be on the safe side, she does not mention it in her letter to Catherine.

Catherine,

Thank you very much for your invitation. I will be so happy to see your cousin!

Anne

Then Anne receives an answer from Bill, who has easily identified her—he and his girlfriend had already been invited to the party.

Dear Anne,

How could you suspect me of forgetting about your birthday? Of course I will come.

Bill

This time Anne signs her letter:

Dear Bill,

Don't forget to bring Susan to the party?

Anne

Catherine is surprised to get Anne's letter. She addressed her first letter to Student D, Derek, who has identified her and written an answer. Catherine must write two letters now.

Derek,

I am very happy to hear that you have accepted my invitation. See you tomorrow then.

Catherine

Dear Anne,

It was nice to hear from you. Who has told you that my cousin is coming? As far as I know, she is not *planning to visit me. But I will be very happy to see you anyway!*

Lots of love. Catherine

In the meantime, Student E, Emma, who wrote to Anne, receives no answer, and writes to Anne again.

Dear Anne,
Have you received my letter? I am writing to you again to invite you to a party. Can you come on Sunday at 7 p.m.? I think that you will be interested in seeing my new postage stamps.
Yours.

Anne now identifies Emma as the sender of the unsigned letters she has received. She remembers seeing Emma's collection of stamps. She replies:

Emma,
Thank you so much for your letters. I am sorry for not having written to you at once, but I was very busy helping my father paint our kitchen. Thanks for the invitation. It will be great to see you and your cousin.
Love, Anne

Dear Anne,
Thank you for your letter. See you on Sunday.
Take care, Emma

In the example presented above, it is possible to distinguish the following stages. (The names of the authors of unsigned letters are in brackets.)

Stage 1. Anne, Bill, Catherine, Derek, Emma, Frank, and Grace write their names on slips of paper, and hand them to the teacher. Then each of them draws one slip.

Stage 2. (Anne] writes to Bill.

[Bill) writes to Frank.

[Catherine] writes to Derek.

[Derek] writes to Grace.

[Emma] writes to Anne.

[Frank] writes to Emma.

[Grace! writes to Catherine.

Stage 3. Anne reads [Emma's] letter, but writes to Catherine.

Bill reads [Anne's) letter and writes to her.

Catherine reads [Grace's] letter and writes to her.

Derek reads [Catherine's] letter and writes to her.

Emma reads [Frank's] letter and writes to him.

Frank reads [Bill's] letter and writes to him.

Grace reads [Derek's) letter and writes to him.

Stage 4. Anne reads Bill's letter and writes an answer. Bill reads Frank's letter and writes an answer. Catherine reads Anne's and Derek's letters and writes answers.

Derek reads Grace's letter and writes an answer. Emma does not receive any letter, so she writes to Anne once more.

Frank reads Emma's letter and writes an answer. Grace reads Catherine's letter and writes an answer.

Stage 5. Anne reads Catherine's and

[Emma's) letters, and writes to Emma.

Bill reads Anne's letter (exchange completed).

Catherine reads Grace's letter (exchange completed). Derek reads Catherine's letter (exchange completed). Emma reads Frank's letter (exchange

completed). Frank reads Bill's letter (exchange completed). Grace reads Derek's letter (exchange completed).

Stage 6. Emma reads Anne's letter and writes an answer.

Stage 7. Anne reads Emma's letter (exchange completed).

For clarity, the group in the example consists of only seven students, and only one of them, Anne, fails to identify the author of the first letter she receives. Not all of the letters have been presented, but mainly the ones written and received by Anne. Also, the letters are simple and short. The purpose of giving this example is to show how the procedure may work in a group of students.

Some teachers may not like this procedure, saying that it is easy for students to recognize their friends' handwriting. I find such an objection rather unjustified. Nevertheless, I will present another procedure, which enables the teacher to exclude the possibility of identifying the authors of letters by their handwriting.

Unaddressed letters

The beginning is identical with Stage 1 of the previous procedure. Again, the students write letters to the persons whose names they have drawn. This time they remember to sign their letters but "forget" to write the addressees' names. They are, however, asked to give some hints that may help the addressees identify themselves. The teacher collects the letters and affixes l hem to the walls with tape. Then the students walk about the classroom and read the letters, and each of them tries to find the one addressed to him or her. Having found it, he or she sits down to write an answer, which is delivered by the teacher. If the guess is correct, the sender of the first letter confirms that. If a student fails to guess correctly, the addressee of the answer writes a short letter explaining he or she has not sent a letter to the student. In such a case, the student has to read the letters on the walls once more and try to make another guess. As in the previous procedure, the

exchange of letters continues until all the students manage to find the letters addressed to them.

A communicative factor

The procedures presented above do not allow the teacher to neglect communication, which is one of the most important aspects of correspondence. Besides, the guessing involved provides additional motivation for writing and reading letters in the classroom.

§ 2.3. References: Dictionaries

Dictionaries

Perhaps the most useful piece of 'equipment' a student can ever own or use is a good dictionary. Modern dictionaries are clearly designed, have a wealth of information, and help students to understand what words mean, how they are used, how common they are, and what phrases they occur in.

Bilingual dictionaries

Most students start, quite rightly, by using a bilingual dictionary, such as the example here from a Polish-English dictionary. It is important that students choose a dictionary that gives good information, including accurate translations, examples and collocational information.

choice[1] /tjbis/ *n* 1 [C,U] wybor: *If you had a choice, where would you waul to lire? | The prizewinner was given a choice between* (=zwyciezcy dano do wyboru) *J10.000 and a cruise. | It was a difficult choice* (=wybor by} trudny). *but ice finally decided Hannah was the. best.* 1 + of *The supermarket offers a choice of different foods.* **I have no choice** *He had no choice but (*=nie mial innego wyjscia niz) *to move back into his parents' house.* **I have a choice of sth** *You will have a choice of* (-bedzierie mogli wybierac sposrod) *five questions in the test.* **I a wide choice** (-duzy wybor) *There is a wide choice of hotels.* **| make a choice**

(=dokonac wyboru**)** *I hope I've made the right choice. 2* **by choice** z wyboru: *Do you really believe that people are homeless by choice?*

choice[2] *adj* wyborowy: *choice plums*

Monolingual learners' dictionaries (MLDs)

Good MLDs are now designed better than ever before. The data is clearly presented, with information about frequency (how common a word is in speaking and writing), appropriate definitions, authentic examples, and most importantly, information about how the word operates and what other words it collocates with. The example here shows how, for the second meaning of 'heavy', the phrases the word occurs in are highlighted immediately. This is extremely useful information since it is usually in these phrases that the word - with this particular meaning - is found.

heav-y[1] |'hevi| *adj. comparative* **heavier.** *superlative* **heaviest**

1 WEIGHT weighing a lot: **light:** *The. wardrobe was coo heavy for me to more on my own. a heavy suitcase The males are seven times heavier titan the females. How heavy is the parcel* (=how much does it weigh'.')?

2 AMOUNT/DEGREE/SEVERITY great in amount, degree, or severity

heavy traffic

heavy rain/snow

heavy fighting

heavy drinking **also**

heavy drinker

heavy smoking **also**

heavy smoker

heavy burden/demands/pressure

heavy fine

heavy casualties (=a lot of deaths or injuries)

heavy losses heavy defeat heavy cold heavy use of sth
The traffic *going into London was very* ***heavy. Heavy rain*** *has roused flooding in many areas.* ***Heavy fighting*** *was reported near the harder.* ***Heavy drinking*** *during pregnancy can damage your baby. I used to be a* ***heavy smoker,*** *dw* ***heavy burden*** *of taxation If found guilty, they lace* ***heavy fines*** *of even prison. There were* ***heavy casualties*** *on both suits. England's* ***heavy defeat*** *in yesterday's match She's in bed with a* ***heavy cold,*** *the film's* ***heavy use*** *of special effects*
NEEDING PHYSICAL EFFORT needing a lot of physical strength and effort: *My son does most of the* ***heavy*** *outdoor* ***work.*** *She has a bad back and can't do any* ***heavy lifting.*** **4 NEEDING MENTAL EFFORT** nor easy or entertaining and needing a hit of mental effort: / w*ant something to read on holiday - nothing too heavy.*

Dictionaries and technology

Non-book/paper dictionaries come in three forms: on the Internet, on CD-ROMs, or as separate pocket *electronic dictionaries.* The great advantage of all three is that users no longer have to worry about alphabetical order. They can find what they want just by typing in a word or phrase. Especially on CD-ROM-based dictionaries, users can go from words to phrases and associated language at the click of a mouse rather than having to turn pages backwards and forwards. Modern portable electronic dictionaries are now much more impressive than the originals since they have bigger windows, better navigation systems, and often two or more dictionaries bundled into the same device.

§ 2.4. Pedagogical texts: textbooks/coursebooks, encyclopaedies.

It is very useful to have a collection of reference books, extra textbooks and teachers' handbooks easily available to the teaching staff; and regular reading of a professional journal can inject new ideas and update teachers on current thinking.

Imagine the following: your car has broken down and in your car, you have got a toolbox. You probably don't get just any tool to fix your car. First, you need to identify what part of it needs mending and then decide which tool you can choose to fix it with.

The same situation could be applied to learning English. There are several types of materials, which can help you to become a more effective learner of English if you know how to use them to the full.

COURSE BOOKS

Course books help you to work on all 4 language skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking) and grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation at the same time.

A course book usually consists of at least 3 books: the Student's book, the Workbook and the Teacher's book. Let's take a look at a course book called *Natural English.*

Student's book

Natural English

New grammar points and necessary vocabulary are introduced and followed by exercises/tasks to practise them.

Please note that you can check answers to the exercises in the Teacher's book. The Student's book is usually accompanied by audio CD and supplementary books.

Workbook

Natural English

Consists of practice tasks and activities, no new grammar points are introduced there. It is used for practice only. There is usually an Answer key section to check answers to exercises, so it is ideal for learning autonomously.

Teacher's book

Natural English

It's a book for a teacher who will facilitate the learning of students. However, you can use the book to check answers to the exercises in the Student's book or find explanations when necessary. In addition, it contains the tests, which you will have to take to check your progress.

It's important that your course book is at the level that you are at now and that you want to improve, otherwise if it is too difficult, you might be struggling with it or if it's too easy you might find it boring.

SUPPLEMENTARY MA TERIALS

2a. Grammar reference books

Ideally, grammar reference books supplement your course. For example, if you are working on the Present Perfect in your course book, you might want to have a look at what your grammar reference book provides and do some exercises to increase the impact.

If you choose to use this book as a course book, please remember that grammar reference books focus on grammar only, and there will be no practice for listening, reading or writing, so it is a one-sided approach and you should not be relying too much on your grammar book to improve your English as a whole.

Remember that grammar reference books are supplementary to course books. They only focus on grammar and do not provide practice in listening, reading or writing. So don't rely too much on your grammar books to improve your English as a whole.

2 b. Vocabulary development materials

You can see a lot of vocabulary development books, which you might want to use independently to build your vocabulary. Alternatively, you might want to consider working on vocabulary in parallel with your course book to supplement it and increase the impact. For example, if you are studying the topic *Travelling* in your course book, find the same topic in your Vocabulary practice book and work on it.

The English Vocabulary in Use series is accompanied by *Test Your English Vocabulary in Use* at every level. So you can do, for example Unit 1 in *English Vocabulary in Use* and test how well you understood it by doing Test 1 in *Test Your Vocabulary in Use* and so on.

Language skills

If you would like to work specifically on developing your listening, reading, writing or speaking skills, you might want to work with the materials which serve this purpose. For example,

Also, please have a look at the language skills grids in the Learning Skills Guide which will refer you to the right resources at your level.

There is a wide range of preparation materials for a number of exams.

Audio books

Audio books are books read by actors, TV presenters or authors of the books and they are excellent for developing listening skills. You can listen to them in your car or while walking along the street or riding on the metro or bus with your walkman or CD player on.

Video

There is an excellent video collection ranging from comedies, drama and detective films to cartoons and documentaries. You can enjoy the films and improve your English at the same time because they are a wonderful source of

authentic English, which can help you learn more about the culture of English-speaking countries and experience various accents of English.

Most of the films include subtitles in English.

All About Encyclopaedias

Write the headings above the encyclopaedia entries

1 _____

The word encyclopaedia comes from an ancient Greek phrase pronounced "enkyklios paideia", which, depending on where you look for your information, means "whole circle of knowledge" (www.britannica.com), "well-rounded education" or "a general knowledge" (www.wikipedia.org), or "in a circle of instruction" (Encarta95). The term was first used to describe an encyclopaedia in the 16th century, but the Greek phrase was incorrectly written as one word.

2 _____

The idea of collecting together all exisitng knowledge about the world in one work is thousands of years old. The Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BC) wrote about many areas of human knowledge, and is sometimes called "the father of encyclopaedias". It is thought that the first encyclopaedia was compiled* in Greece in the 4th century* BC, but if that's true, no copy of the work now exists. An encyclopaedia called *Disciplinar (the Disciplines)* was produced in Rome in 30 BC, but no copy of that work exists either. The oldest surviving encyclopaedia was compiled in Rome by Pliny in about 79 AD. It's called *Historia Naturalis (Natural History),* consisted of 37 books, and was popular for almost 1,500 years.

3 _____

Today, most encyclopaedias contain general information about all subjects, and entries* are written by a group of experts in different fields. They are reference works written for the general public - you simply look up information when you need it. Early encyclopaedias were very different in concept. They were written by

one person, and their aim* was to collect together all that was known at the time about one subject or about a number of different subjects. They were not reference books, but were used for study, in the same way that we use textbooks today.

Activity Notes

Introduction

Ten years ago encyclopaedias were our main source of general information. Today many encyclopaedias can be found on the Internet, and people around the world are providing the content.

What to do

1.Answer the true/false questions on page 8.

2.Read about encyclopaedias on page 9. Write the headings above the texts.

3.Correct the sentences on page 10.

4.Read about the Encyclopaedia of Life on page 11 and write your own encyclopaedia entry.

Online

► http://wikipedia.org

► http://info.britannica.co.uk

► www.encyclopedia.com

Glossary

All the words and phrases below appear in the magazine feature. These words are marked with an asterisk (*).

carnivorous (adj) that eats other animals; site (n) a website (=page or group of pages on the Internet); update (v) add new information and correct old information; available (adj) ready to use; source (n) the place where something comes from; compile (v) make, put together; century (n) a period of 100 years; entry (n) a text on one subject; aim (n) objective, intention; revolutionise (v) change radically or completely; facility (n) something designed to do a particular task or serve a particular purpose; access (v) make contact with, see; key (adj) important; online (adj) on the Internet; multiple (adj) two or more; edit (v) change,

modify; reliability (n) the quality of being dependable or reliable; accurate (adj) correct, without errors

4 _____

Until very recently, the traditional printed encyclopaedia was an essential part of any home library. This type of encyclopaedia is normally organised alphabetically and has relatively short entries. This way of organising information is based on the dictionary, and was first used in the 18th century. Before that, encyclopaedias were generally organised by subject. *The Disciplines,* for example, had nine volumes that dealt with nine different subjects - grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astrology, music, medicine and architecture.

5 _____

The CD-ROM revolutionised* encyclopaedias. Automated search facilities* and hyperlinks allowed encyclopaedias to organise information thematically, but access* information in a variety of ways - by subject, alphabetically, by searching for key* words, and by clicking on links in the information itself. Audio and video materials could be added to entries, too. And all this multimedia information was available on something you could carry around in your pocket. In 1985, the *Academic American Encyclopaedia* became the first to publish a multimedia version on CD-ROM.

6 _____

Surprisingly, the first encyclopaedia went online* *before* the first multimedia encyclopaedia was available on CD-ROM. In 1980, the full text of the *Academic American Encyclopaedia* was made available online to 200 homes in Colombus, Ohio, in the United States, but online encyclopaedias have only recently made discs seem like history. After almost 2,000 years of books, it's clear that the Internet, and not the disc, is the encyclopaedia's new home. The Internet

allows for constant updating and links not only to other parts of the encyclopaedia, but to an almost infinite selection of other sites.

7 _____

The spectacular growth of the Internet encyclopaedia Wikipedia has revealed another advantage of storing information online. The word *Wikipedia* is a combination of *wild* and *encyclopaedia.* (A *wiki* is a piece of software that allows multiple* writers to edit* a Web page.) Since its launch in 2001 Wikipedia has become, in its own words, "the largest, most extensive and fastest-growing encyclopaedia ever compiled". All articles are written by anonymous volunteers, and most can be edited by anyone with an Internet connection. The fact that anyone can contibute to Wikipedia has raised questions about its reliability*, and students on some university courses are, prohibited from using Wikipedia as a source for their information. According to Wikipedia, independent studies show that incorrect information is generally corrected quickly – by users, and that it is just as accurate* as encyclopaedias written excusively by experts.

After 2000 years of books, it's clear that the Internet, and not the 6k *is the encyclopaedia's new home.*

Check you understand

Correct these sentences.

1. The English word *encyclopaedia* comes from a Greek word.
2. Aristotle wrote the first encyclopaedia.
3. The oldest encyclopaedia that still exists was written in Greece.
4. The first encyclopaedias were reference books for students.
5. Most printed encyclopaedias are organised by subject.
6. The first encyclopaedia on CD-ROM only contained text.
7. The DVD-ROM represents the future of the encyclopaedia.
8. Studies show that the information on Wikipedia is unreliable

Encyclopaedia

Are the following sentences true or false?

1. Mount Everest is 8,848 metres tall.
2. The Tyrannosaurus rex is the biggest known carnivorous* dinosaur.
3. Harare is the capital city of Rhodesia.
4. There are nine planets. Pluto is the smallest.
5. The population of Spain is 33,000,000.
6. The pope's real name is Giovanni Battista Enrico Antonio Maria Montini.

HOW SURE ARE YOU of your answers above? What' would you do if you needed to check them? Most people would probably search for the relevant information on the Internet. If you look on the Net for the facts above, you'll find that the sentences are in fact all false. Some sites* will tell you that numbers 1 and ? are true, but that just shows how fast information changes, and how slow some sites are to update* their facts. Can you correct the six sentences?

To find the facts in the sentences above we consulted Purnell's New English Encyclopaedia. It was published in 1965, and its 18 volumes occupy a whole bookshelf. These days, there much information available* on the Net that it's to forget that even 10 years ago encyclopaedias were our main source* of general information. Only a minority of schools and homes had Internet connections, and there was very little organised information of this kind on the Web.

When choosing textbooks that best suit our teaching situations, we find that the array offered by the different publishing houses proves limited. Choosing enriching materials or non-textbook materials can be time-consuming because almost everything in English—from novels to computer games—can be adapted for use in the classroom. We will discuss how The New Guinness Book of Records can offer classroom teachers of English as a foreign language a unique source of pedagogic possibilities.

The inclusion of authentic materials in the classroom is one ol the most important tenets in the teaching of EFL. Nevertheless, most teachers

are overwhelmed by the difficulty of using materials that are not intended for the classroom. Materials may have complex lexical items or grammatical constructions, and the length of the passages may be excessive and time-consuming. Also, students may not be acquainted with the topics.

The New Guinness Book of Records[12] (Matthews 1994) is a feasible alternative. As a publication written primarily in English and for English-speaking readers, its value as authentic material is beyond question. In addition, the book consists of very short passages in which the difficulty of lexical items and grammatical construction is minimal, thereby reducing the amount of time teachers need for preparation and use. *The New Guinness Book of Records* is well known by our students, and its popularity is continuously enhanced by references from the mass media.

The special nature of this book accounts for its highly motivational value in the classroom. Students usually associate this type of material with entertainment and do not necessarily think of it as a didactic tool. The book also has an attractive layout with eye-appealing pages the show pictures accompanied by explanations. Since most of the pictures are not self-explanatory, students must refer to the text. Furthermore, students are curious about the book and even the most reluctant students—as we have experienced—are eager to browse through it to discover the most fascinating records. Because of its bizarre and unique contents, a large number of students want to take the book home for a day if the teacher allows it to be borrowed. Regardless of the degree of difficulty, students experience the feeling of accomplishment when they can read and understand the information from a genuine and authentic book in English.

Learning new information and having contact with the English language should not end with English lessons. A wide range of follow-up activities can be designed by using *The New Guinness Book of Records.* It is an excellent source of general knowledge that can easily be linked with most

[12] Mathews P. 1994. The New Guiness Book of Records. Middlesex: Guiness Publishing Ltd.

cross-currieular areas. Certainly, the most important curricula!' areas are represented, and this undoubtedly favours the global education of students, which is the spirit of the Spanish Reform at the secondary education level in Spain.

The New Guinness Book of Records and the ELT curriculum

Countless new proposals concerning the didactic excellence of particular songs, films, magazines, books, and so forth, are publicized every year. However, for a given tool to be useful, it is essential that teachers familiarize themselves with its true potential as well as the difficulties inherent in using it. The purpose of this article is to discuss the use of the book to promote language skills, taking into consideration some of the teaching possibilities as well as the drawbacks of *The New Guinness Book of Records.*

Although most teachers would initially associate the concept of records with the teaching of such grammatical structures as comparatives and superlatives, that view may be restrictive. Indeed, the very nature of the book favours its exploitation from a wider perspective. Although the activities focus on teaching vocabulary, this does not exclude such topics as grammar, integration of skills, and culture.

Teaching vocabulary

Criteria for selection

Vocabulary is an essential element in learning a foreign or second language, but vocabulary cannot be taught or learnt in complete isolation from the rest of the linguistic components, namely grammar, phonetics and phonology, and notions and functions. Authors have proposed diverse criteria to help textbook writers and teachers make valid decisions on the right vocabulary items to teach at every educational level.

Gairns and Redman (1986:57-63)[13] have proposed the following criteria:

Frequency: The most frequently used words should be taught first. McCarthy[14] (1990:69-70) adds a further factor clearly related to frequency range. He suggests that useful frequently-used words should appear in a wide variety of texts.

Students' needs and levels: The vocabulary should be appropriate to the students' levels and respond to the students' needs, for example, priority vocabulary for English as a subject in the curriculum might be different from that for English for specific purposes.

Cultural factors: The learners' background is to be considered, since people from different countries may need different words to express their everyday life in the second language. For example, the word *bullfighting* may be relevant to a Spaniard, but not to a Chinese student.

Expediency: The classroom is a world by itself and requires specific types of vocabulary such as grammatical terminology and activity instructions.

Harmer (1991:154-156)[15] adds to the discussion by pointing out the following criteria:

(Concretion vs. abstraction: Concrete words should be taught at lower levels, whereas abstract terms should be taught at higher levels. This criterion is clearly linked to the cognitive development of each student and reflects the process of learning words in the mother tongue.

Coverage: General words should be taught before more specific terms.

Rapport: Either for reasons of spelling and pronunciation or cognates in the native language, some words are easier to teach and learn than others. The student's personal involvement with the word is another aid in learning. This involvement is called rapport and is a major motivator for vocabulary

[13] Gairns R. and S.Redman. 1986. Working with words. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[14] McCarthy M. 1990. Vocabulary. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[15] Harmer J. 1991. The practice of English language teaching. Essex: Longman.

learning. The more related a word is to the student, the sooner it should be taught. However, it is extremely difficult to predict which words will "touch" our students because every learner has different personal experiences.

Using The New Guinness Book of Records for content

Thanks to the work of applied linguists and text developers, the application of the criteria previously considered in foreign language teaching has resulted in the establishment of relatively fixed content designed to be taught at different levels of instruction. Indeed, the vocabulary items included in almost every textbook at the secondary education level in Spain arc centered around such common topics as people, clothes, food, housing, travel, animals, places, learning, mass media, the environment, leisure, geography, occupations, transportation, work, money, education, technology, and sports.

As we can see in the following charts, there is a close relationship between textbooks and *The New Guinness Book of Records*, as both the vocabulary items and topics are similar. In fact, *The New Guinness Book of Records* surpasses the possibilities of textbooks and becomes a perfect complement because it discusses topics similar to those of many textbooks and has the undeniable advantage of being authentic material. This chart shows that regardless of the subject, there is almost always a parallel category in *The New Guinness Book of Records.*

Techniques in presenting vocabulary

Using a wide range of techniques brings variety to the classroom and helps the students remain alert. Used correctly, the following techniques favour the long-term retention of newly-learned vocabulary. Following Gairns and Redman's (1986:73-76) classification, presentation techniques are divided into two groups: visual and verbal.

Visual techniques

Realia: Using a variety of real objects is one of the most efficient ways ol teaching and learning vocabulary.

Pictures: The main advantage of pictures is that they are able to illustrate very large objects which are not easily brought into the classroom.

Mime and gesture: This is an extremely effective way of introducing a new word since it resembles the Total Physical Response, which clearly promotes the understanding and meaningful retention of new vocabulary items.

Verbal Techniques

Definitions and illustrative sentences:

The introduction of a word in English through the use of other words in the same language offers the advantage of con-textualization. In addition, sample sentences complement the definition because thev show how the new word is used.

Synonyms and antonyms: Synonyms and antonyms are especially important in building new vocabulary because learners are able to use known vocabulary.

Scales: This technique is the presentation of related words in scales that I include the combination of both verbal and visual techniques; for example, in the term 32° Celsius, the degree sign is the visual.

Explanations: This technique explains the meaning and the use of a given foreign word in the foreign language itself.

Translations: Although many linguists state that translation is not a good presentation technique, it is only considered dangerous for students if it becomes the only presentation technique. However, the major drawback may be when L2 words are introduced in lists.

Sample activities

The New Guinness Book of Records favours presenting vocabulary through the use of pictures, charts, graphs, maps, diagrams, and so forth. The book has an excellent selection of shocking and highly appealing photographs that can be used by themselves or with the written text that accompanies them, thus facilitating the combination of both visual and verbal techniques.

It is worth emphasizing that the book mainly presents records and their explanations. Thus, teachers can easily provide students with real instances of definition and sample sentences or explanations taken from an authentic book. Let us consider the following example taken from page 21 in *The* .New *Guinness Book of Records.*

III. TEACHING OF READING ARTISTIC TEXTS.

§ 3.1. Practice advice on using drama in the classroom

Choose the tight activity

When planning drama activities, teachers should take into account.

1) The learner' interests

2) The learner's needs

3) The learners' ages

4) And even time of the day.

If an activity doesn't correspond to student's interests, if the learners are tired because they had a physical training lesson or a test right before the activity, it could be waste of time. Drama activities should not emphasize accuracy and fluency; instead, focus on practicing language. Listen and do the activities are the solution[16].

Start small

Not all children are good at acting, especially if drama is not part of their first language curriculum, but most children like drama activities. Introduce drama into your classroom in small steps. Start with easy, guided activities (miming), and move on to less controlled activities(plays) as the children gain confidence.

Total physical response (TPR) activities are an excellent way to introduce dramatization: have children respond to language with their bodies, a first step to miming and acting.

Help children realize that they can say things in different ways: loudly, quietly, sadly, angrily, (It's a good way to explore the power of their voices).Choose one word and say in different ways (the children need to see that you are enthusiastic about dramatizing). Next

[16] Holden S. 1981. Drama in Language teaching. London: Longman.

have the children choose the words and practice saying them in many different ways. This could be done as. A kind of competition, children enjoy this activity

Give feedback

Drama is an enjoyable way for young English language learners to practice using English. Give feedback on what the children have done, not only the end product and language but also, the process they went through, the way they cooperated with each other and how they came to decisions. Always find something positive to comment on.

For participation in a drama activity, and especially in a performance, you can give colorful, specially designed certificates to the young actors: "This certificate is awarded to ----- for the way he/she acted presented/danced/..."

Classroom Drama Activities

Listen and do activities can be part of almost any lesson. Such activities help children:

- to acquire English by listening instructions;
- to be active and enjoy doing thins in English;
- to use non-verbal clues(e. g gestures)to interpret meanings;
- to get used to understanding general meaning;
- to prepare for spoken interaction;
- to absorb good pronunciation and intonation patterns

Some other drama activities that students enjoy are outlined below.

Miming Practice

Students learn gestures to go with words that are repeated in a story. Then as the teacher reads the story aloud, the children do the actions when they hear the key words.

1. Select a story with repeated words such as the story of the big cat in the big house.

The Big Cat in the Big House

Once upon a time there lived a big cat in a big house.

The big cat had long black hair and a very long, long tail.

The cat was very happy that it was very big.

Next door to the b[g cat? There lived a small mouse in a small house. The mouse was very small and so was its house.

The small mouse was very sad that it was very, very small.

2. Select gestures to go with repeated words.

Big

Starting above your head, trace a big circle with your hands.

Cat

Show gestures like cats washing themselves, licking a paw.

House

Draw a house in the air

Long

Stretch both arms out straight to make a long "like"

Tail

Wave an arm behind your back, like a cat's tail.

Happy

Mime that you are happy

Hair

Point to your hair or touch your hair.

Small

With your hands, trace a small circle above the floor.

Sad

Mime that you are sad.

3. Teach students gestures for the repeated words

4. Slowly read the story aloud, and have students do the appropriate gestures as they hear each repeated word.

Miming stories

Students will willingly compose their own story. They welcome the chance to show what they can do with the language.

1. Give students a list of words you want them to know or review. For example, heart, friend, apple, eat, tired.

2. Ask students to compose a story using the words.

3. When they have finished writing their story, have students take turns miming their stories while the rest of the class tries to guess the whole story.

Miming game

Children use actions or gestures to indicate a word and other students can guess the word. This game can be played in teams.(one team shows the actions and asks the other team to guess what the word might be) or as a big group (one student shows/mimes and the others guess).

1. Make a set of miming cards based on the context that students have been studying. For example, if 7-year olds have been studying the names of farm animals, you can prepare cards with the names or pictures of farm animals (goat, cow, hen, etc.) on each card.
2. Next have students select a card and pantomime the item on the card.

3. The other students guess what is being mimed.

Variation; Write down the names of different characters from stories the students have been reading. The name of one character should be written on each card. For example, Tom Sawyer in "Huckleberry Fin".

Each student selects a card, and then writes a few sentences from the point of view of the character. The rest of the class guesses who the character is.

Transform stories into mini plays

1. Choose a simple story that students have been studying, such as "Goldilocks an three bears"

2. Create a script for the story with as many parts as there are students in your class. Note that you can have several students playing the same part. For instance, you could have three different students" playing the role of Goldilocks.

3. Have students practice learning the different parts.

4. Have students prepare costumes and props.

5. Put on the play for other classes and/or parents

Students versions or dramatic productions

As watching videos are among the students' favorite activities, try to use videos often and exploit them as much as possible. There are many variations for the use of video. Here are a few;

1. Students watch a fragment, a video sequence with no sound, and guess what happens. Students then create a dramatic scene based on what they have watched. Students then watch the video sequence with sound and compare and contrast their version with the video.

2. Students don't watch, but only listen and try to guess what happens and where the events take place. Students then create a

dramatic sequence based on what they have heard. Students then watch the video the sequence and compare and contrast their version with the video.

3. Students watch only a very short fragment and then predict its continuation. Students then act out the continuation. Students then watch the continuation and compare their continuation with the video.

§ 3.2. Poetry in the English foreign language classroom

The poem related activities in the language classroom

Poetry is beginning to creep back into the language classroom as teachers realise that it can be used profitably for language learning and students become aware that it is not necessarily boring and abstruse and that, therefore, it can be *enjoyed.*

Poems can serve various purposes: learning vocabulary, becoming sensitive to rhyme and rhythm and thus helping comprehension, grammatical purposes even. Quite often poetry uses repetition and alliteration, making it easier for words and phrases to be remembered and memorized. Like singing - and even better because one does not have to sing in tune - when the initial shyness is overcome most people enjoy reading poems aloud, thereby making them come alive. They can be repeated over and over, for the enjoyment of it, for the rhythm and intonation - and, in the process, a lot of language is learned[17].

Here are a few ideas that can be used in class. We have chosen short - many of them very short - poems, as they are often humorous and less forbidding to tackle. Of course, these poems can (and should) be used with a more conventional approach about the form and meaning'.

[17] Decure M. 1991. Rediscovering poems. London: Longman.

Recipe

Mix a pancake,
Stir a pancake.
Pop it in the pan.
Fry the pancake
Toss the pancake,
Catch it if you can.

Christina Rossetti

Aim: vocabulary exercise Level: intermediate

1. Give the gapped poem. Students try to guess the words that fit the blanks. They can then compare their findings and try to agree on one version.

2. Give the list of jumbled verbs to put in their proper place.

Exercise

Poem	Jumbled Verb
a pancake	catch
a pancake	fry
it in the pancake	mix
the pancake	pop
the pancake	stir
it in the pan	toss

What My Lady Did

I asked my lady what she did
She gave me a silver flute and smiled.
A musician I guessed, yes that would explain
Her temperament so wild.
I asked my lady what she did

She gave me a comb inlaid with pearl.
A hairdresser 1 guessed, yes that would explain
Each soft and billowing curl.
I asked my lady what she did
She gave me a skein of wool and left.
A weaver I guessed, yes that would - explain
Her fingers long and deft.
1 asked my lady what she did
She gave me a slipper trimmed with lace…
A dancer I guessed, yes that would explain
Her suppleness and grace.
I asked my lady what she did
She gave me a picture not yet dry.
A painter I guessed, yes that would explain
The steadiness of her eye.
I asked my lady what she did
She gave me a fountain pen of gold.
A poet I guessed, yes that would explain
The strange stories that she told.
I asked my lady what she did
She told me—and oh, the grief!
I should have guessed, she's under arrest
My lady was a thief!
Roger McGough

Aim: use of tenses and modals
Level: intermediate to advanced

This poem is rich in all sorts of tenses and modals. Students should put the verbs in their proper form and find the modal where *(m)* is indicated. Two blanks indicate a compound tense or a modal + verb.

Note: the form *a-been* will be explained at the end, when the exercise is corrected.

Exercise:

I ... *(go)* down to the river,

I ...(set) down on the bank

I .... *(try - think)* but ... (m-not)

So I... *(jump)* in and....(sink)

I ... *(come)* up once and ...(holler)!

I ... *(come)* up twice and ... (cry)

If that water ... not ... (be) so cold

I *(m - sink)* and ... (die).

But it was

Cold in that water!

It was cold!

I *(take)* the elevator

Sixteen floors above the ground

I *(think)* about my baby

And ..... *(think)* I *(in - jump)* down.

I ... (stand) there and I ...(holler)

I ... (stand) there and I .. .(cry)

If it (not - be) so high

I (m - *jump)* and ... *(die).*

But it was

High up there!

It was high!

So since I ... here .... (slid - live)

I ... (guess)J ...(live),on.

I (m-die)for love..

But for .. (live) I ... (be) born.

Though you..... *(in - hear)* me *(holler),*

And you *(m - see)* me ... *(cry)* ... .

§ 3.3. Pictures Books: Sort Stories/Urban Legends/Comic Strips

Classroom use of English songs and chants has become increasingly wide-spread because English-as-a-foreign-language teachers try to keep students interested in their classes. Similarly, when cultural artifacts are available, teachers have students work with restaurant menus, phone books, maps, travel brochures, and newspaper clippings. All of these materials help teachers motivate their students. These materials also provide students with helpful models of authentic use of the English language. However, ESL/EFL teachers seem to be overlooking! one useful resource: picture books. While almost all of these books were written and illustrated with children in mind, many picture books can be found that adults can also enjoy. In this article, I will discuss characteristics to look for when selecting such books; I will provide a descriptive list of effective books and will give examples of ways to use picture books for instruction.

Before discussing the practical use of picture books for TEFL, let us note that several researchers encourage teachers to give students books, in addition to textbooks, that they can read, understand, and enjoy. Elley and Mangubhai (1983) have demonstrated that children learning EFL in Fiji improved more in English skills when their instruction consisted of the reading of picture books than when their instruction consisted of an audiolingual curriculum. Two other researchers, Krashen and Terrell (1983), state that reading is an important source of exposure to English as long as it is not too easy or too hard. They also suggest that language learners can improve their English grammar, spelling, and writing if they read regularly. Furthermore, Smith[18] (1978) suggests that students will become better readers by reading and that their vocabulary will improve because of their reading.

[18] Smith L. 1983. Reading in English. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Goodman (1986) and Mathews (1987) urge teachers to read aloud to students. Goodman also encourages teachers to give students un-simplified whole books to read rather than just textbook passages followed by a lot of questions. All of these researchers suggest that exposure to books that students understand and that interest them is an effective way to speed up their acquisition of English.

Since beginning- and intermediate-level students have a hard time comprehending books that don't contain a lot of illustrations, picture books are good tools to keep these students understanding written English.

Characteristics of effective picture books

Many teachers have not used picture books when teaching adults because they assume that most picture books are only full of cute animal characters that act like people, and that the language used is more like baby talk than adult language. Some picture books do have these characteristics, so teacherr. need to examine each book's story, illustrations, vocabulary, and sentence structure carefully.

The effectiveness of the story is very important. The story should consist of an imaginative sequence of events that adults can relate to. For example, in *The Stonecutter* a manual laborer wants to become a more powerful being. In *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* the reader traces the development of a butterfly through the following stages: egg, caterpillar, cocoon, and adult butterfly. In *Happy Birthday Sam* the reader sees how a little boy is frustrated by his short stature,! but he learns to compensate for it and, consequently, gains new independence. Clearly, some storybooks deal with universal themes about everyday life.

Another important characteristic is the kinds of illustrations that accompany the text. The pictures should have enough cues so that students can figure out the meaning of new words and sentence structure. For example, in *The Wind Blew* the text reads: "It [the wind] took the umbrella from Mr. White and quickly turned it inside out. In the accompanying picture we see a man who has just lost an umbrella to the wind and the umbrella is pictured inside out.

Third, most of the vocabulary used in these books should consist of everyday words. However, occasional use of clearly illustrated specialized terms should not result in an otherwise good book being rejected.

A fourth characteristic is the sentence structure and style of writing. The story shouldn't be limited to simple sentences, since even beginners need exposure to a variety of sentence structures. Beginners can infer the meaning of well-illustrated complex sentences. If the story given to beginners has long sentences, it should include repetition of clauses, along with different illustrations. Thus, students will acquire knowledge about English grammar without explicit instruction. The following sentence groups, taken from two picture books, are examples of how repetition is used in some books.

It [the wind] took the umbrella from Mr. White and quickiy turned it inside out.

I! snatched the balloon from little Priscilla and 'swept it up to join the umbrella.

from

The Wind Blew, pp. 4-6

On Monday, he [the caterpillar] ate through one apple. But he was still hungry.

On Tuesday, he ate through two pears, but he was still hungry.

On Wednesday, he ate through three plums, but he was still hungry.

from

The Very Hungry Caterpillar, pp. 6-8

The use of varied sentence structure and repetition of words and clauses often results in well-written stories that unpracticed readers can comprehend.

Fifteen recommended picture books

While readers may already know of some picture books that fit the four characteristics, my list of favorites consists of the following:

Mysteries

■ Alexander, L. G., *K's First Case,* Longman, 1982.

In this murder mystery, Detective Kathy Kirby is called to find out who murdered Mr. Gray. She also needs to determine how Mr. Gray died. Because this book was written specifically for English learners, it begins with short sentences and includes a limited vocabulary. It is a wonderful book for low-intermediate students.

■ Musman, R., *The House by the Ocean,* Longman, 1984.

Mr. and Mrs. Turner, who live by the ocean, try to rescue a man. The man turns out to be ungrateful for their help and tries to steal their car so that he can get away. Written specifically for English learners, the book has three illustrations on each page. Advanced beginners who like action-packed stories enjoy this book.

Everyday Life

■ Carle, E., *The Secret Birthday Message,* Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1972.

For Tim's birthday, he received a note that gave him directions for finding his birthday present. He had to look below and behind things; he had to climb up and through things. This book is a good way to teach prepositions, especially if the teacher who is reading the book out loud uses total-physical-response hand movements to help students understand the prepositions. Advanced beginners can benefit from this book.

- Hutchins, P., *Titch*, Macmillan, 1971.

Titch is disturbed because she is the youngest and shortest child in the family. Therefore, all of her playthings are also the smallest until she plants a seed that becomes a very big plant. This story, made up oft 19 sentences, uses very basic vocabulary and a variety of sentence structures in a meaningful context. The story exposes readers to the simple past tense and to relative clauses. It is a very good choice as a first book for beginners.

- Hutchins, P., *The Wind Blew*, Macmillan, 1974.

On a very windy day, Mr. White, Priscilla, a judge, and others lose items that they are carrying to a gust of wind. This story "contains only 11 mostly lengthy sentences. Because of repetition of concepts and grammar and because of detailed illustrations, advanced beginners can understand it.

- Hutchins, P., *Happy Birthday Sam*, Greenwillow Books, 1978.

Sam starts his birthday feeling short and inadequate, but after he receives a chair as a present, he finds that he has gained a lot of independence. This book has a series of "if" and "but" sentences and uses some direct speech in a meaningful and clearly illustrated context. Your advanced beginners will be able to read it with understanding.

- Lloyd, D., *The Sneeze*, Lippincott, 1986.

A man is in a park reading a newspaper. Suddenly he sneezes and takes out a tablecloth-size handkerchief from his suitcase. On the first page of the book we are given a picture dictionary of seven items. Interspersed between the description of who else was in the park and what they were doing are questions that the teacher can ask her students. This humorous story encourages beginners to interact with the text.

Folklore

- McDermott, G., *Anansi the Spider,* Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972.

Anansi had six sons all of whom had different qualities. When Anansi got into trouble, he called on all of them to rescue him. Advanced beginners enjoy this award-winning book about the importance of cooperation.

- McDermott, G., *The Stonecutter,* The Viking Press, 1972.

Tasuku, a stonecutter, kept on wanting to be a more powerful being until he became a mountain and another stonecutter was chipping away on him. Advanced intermediate students enjoy this story, which is told with a sophisticated vocabulary and varied sentence structures.

- McDermott, G., *The Magic Tree,* Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973.

A mother loved one son but not Mavungu, so he left home. At a river's edge he found a magical area where trees became people. The last tree became a princess, whom he married. She made him rich. However, the princess warned Mavungu never to tell anyone about how he became wealthy. Unfortunately, Mavungu forgot the warning. This story is told in simple enough language for advanced beginners to be able to understand it.

- McDermott, G., *Arrow to the Sun,* The Viking Press, 1974.

A boy whose father was the Sun God went searching for his father. An arrow-maker made the boy into an arrow which the arrow-maker shot to the sun. The Sun God tested his son's courage; after the son passed the tests, the Sun God sent him back to earth to spread word about the Sun God. Because many of the concepts are abstract in this story, intermediate students will enjoy it most.

Nature

- Carle, E., *The Very Hungry Caterpillar,* Philomel Books, 1969.

A caterpillar hatches from an egg, eats for seven days, changes into a cocoon, and then becomes a butterfly. This story uses a lot of repetition of a sentence pattern to describe what the caterpillar ate from Monday to Sunday. It incorporates the days of the week and common American food terms in a story suitable for beginners.

■ Carle, E., *The Tiny Seed*, Picture Book Studio, 60 N. Main Street, Natick, Massachusetts 01760, 1987.

A tiny seed escapes many perils, including being eaten by birds. After it has become a plant, it escapes being weeded out and stepped on. This imaginative book captures the interest of advanced beginners.

■ Coats, L. J., *The Oak Tree*, Macmillan, 1987.

An oak tree offers shelter to birds and other creatures who live in it and also shelters children who play under it. The story tells us who is enjoying the tree at every hour of the day. Beginning readers can review telling time in English while enjoying a simple story.

Fantasy/Science Fiction

■ Dr. Seuss, *You're Only Old Once: A Book for Obsolete Children*, Random House, 1986.

An old man wishes he lived in a place where people stayed healthy when they became old. However, he has to go to a clinic where various specialists check all his functions from hearing to smelling. A fish in the waiting room puts up withf the old man's complaints. As always, Dr. Seuss uses a few nonsense words to entertain his readers. Since the vocabulary and sentence structure are sophisticated, advanced readers enjoy it the most.

Using picture books for instruction

Since students and teachers like having a regular textbook, picture books are most effective when they are used to supplement the main textbook. Depending on the number of picture books available, they can be used daily, biweekly, weekly, bimonthly, or monthly. However, because they offer language in an interesting and meaningful context, frequent use of picture books is best. While some teachers may want to reserve picture books primarily for sustained silent reading, I recommend several uses. While these uses incorporate some teacher-centered instruction, many of them incorporate pair and group work, the advantages of which have been described by Long and Porter (1985).

First, the teacher can read the book aloud using total-physical-response-type cues to help students comprehend the story. For example, when reading ***The Secret Birthday Message,*** the teacher can demonstrate looking below a star and finding a rock. Using hand signals along with the pictures in the book, she can demonstrate ***go in, walk through, go downstairs,*** and ***open the door.*** Besides using hand signals, teachers reading books aloud can also use facial expressions to help students understand concepts. For example, a teacher's facial expression could help students understand the sentence "Mavungu was astonished" in ***The Magic Tree.***

Second, especially when reading mysteries or folktales aloud, teachers can stop reading before the story has ended and ask students to work with a partner and make up good endings for the story. Each group then tells the class in English how they thought the story could end. Finally, the teacher reads the story's ending.

Third, when multiple copies of books are available, the class can be divided into pairs with each pair reading a different one. Students read their books and then try to tell their partners what the story was about in English. The second speaker should add to the retelling of the story and should say how he or she liked the story. While the students are reading and discussing their books, the teacher circulates to help, encourage, and listen to students' reports.

The first three techniques have two good features. No handouts or exercises need to be prepared. Also, students practice several English subskills at once, such

as listening comprehension, vocabulary and grammar development, reading comprehension, and speaking. The next technique also encourages students to apply different skills; however, handouts need to be prepared in advance.

The double-cloze technique has been used with songs (Averill 1987), but it is just as effective when used with stories. Following this technique, students listen to the teacher read a story. The teacher shows students the pictures so that they can comprehend it. Next, the teacher divides the class into pairs.

Let's say that each pair consists of student A and student B. All student A's get one cloze exercise while student B's get a different cloze exercise based on the same story. Two sample handouts for the book *Anansi the Spider* are reproduced below. Notice that in each of these cloze passages different words are left out and that the first and last sentences are left intact.

Student A's Handout

1) Anansi had six sons. (2) The first son was called See_____. (3) He had the gift of seeing trouble a _____ way off. (4) The second _____ was Road Builder. (5) The _____ son as River Drinker. (6) The _____ one was Game Skinner. (7) Another son was _____ Thrower. (8). And the last of his sons, who was very soft, was Cushion. (9) All _____ good sons. (10) One time Anansi went a long way from . (11) Far from home, he got lost. . . .

Student B's Handout

(1) Anansi had six sons. (2) The first _____ was called See Trouble. (3) He had the gift _____ seeing trouble a long way off. (4) The son was Road _____. (5) The thirsty son was River Drinker. (6) The next one _____ Game Skinner. (7) Another son was Stone Thrower. (8) And the last of _____ sons, who was very, was Cushion. (9) All were _____ sons. (10) One time Anansi went a long way from home. (11) Far from home, he got lost…

Before the students begin this problem-solving activity, the teacher should model different ways to guess missing words and different ways to ask for them in English. Next, students should be asked to work with their partners, but not to look at their partners' cloze exercise. Instead, they should ask their partners questions in English about the words that they need. For example, student A might ask student B, "What was the first son's name?" Student B might ask his partner if his guess is right, as in "Is the third word in sentence two 'son'?" The object of the activity is to have students fill in all their blanks, using their knowledge of the story, their knowledge of the English language, and the help that they get in English from their partners.

The fifth technique helps students review vocabulary that was used in the story. A teacher can develop different post-reading vocabulary exercises. One kind of exercise that I particularly like involves searching a book for synonyms (antonyms also work well) and writing an exercise like the following on the board.

Using comic strips in language classes

Scholars and teachers agree that motivation is crucial in language teaching. One well-known way to arouse students' interest can be achieved by bringing something extraordinary and new into the language class. Especially among teenagers and young adults, comic Strips can be used efficiently for this purpose. Comics are usually funny; therefore, applying them to methodological purposes will have the same effect as using games in teaching English—it brings a cheerful atmosphere into the class. Comic strips not only amuse and interest L2 students; there are plenty of other reasons to use them in education.

Oller's episode hypothesis

According to John Oiler and his episode hypothesis, "texts (oral or written forms of discourse) which are more episodically organized can be stored and recalled more easily than less episodically organized material" (Oiler 1983, 44). In other words, it is easier for students to learn a language if they are given connected

sentences that have a logical structure and a story line, instead of disconnected, randomly organized phrases. Of course it has been stated many times before that vocabulary and, language can be learnt in context; however, Oiler goes one step further and states that context in itself is not sufficient (i.e. a simple dialogue). What' is essential is that the dialogue or text should have a logical structure and a logical conclusion (Oiler 1983). This way the students can follow the story line step by step and can recall its structure more easily because logic helps them, and they do not have to rely only on memory.

Oller's theory can be applied in the case of comic strips used in language classes. Comics have a storyline; therefore, they have a conclusion or at times a punch line. This way the reader, in this case the student, is "motivated to continue reading and to become more involved in the content than in the language" (Brown 1994, 227). Consequently, the student will be eager to know what will happen, what will be the end of the story (as his/her curiosity has been aroused), and will remember the words, expressions, and grammatical forms more easily.

Comics also can be used to facilitate vocabulary teaching. As Brown points out, "the best internalization of vocabulary comes from encounters (comprehension and production) with words within the context of surrounding discourse" (Brown 1994, 365). This way students will associate the words with a certain context, and they can recall and apply it better than just learning a single word with a corresponding meaning. Besides vocabulary, grammatical competence can be improved as well. With the help of comic strips, new grammatical points can be introduced and practiced, and since these grammar points are embedded in a story with a logical structure, students will be able to better recall them later.

The visual nature of comic strips

Oiler's episode hypothesis is further supported by the very nature of comic strips, namely that they are drawn, and therefore visual. This characteristic of comic strips also helps to increase motivation (especially

when the comics are coloured ones); and more importantly, if a word, expression, or concept is accompanied by a picture (a visual image in one's mind), then the learner will memorize and recall it more easily.

The fact that comic strips are visual also contributes to improving communicative competence. In a comic strip, life-like situations and expressions are used in spoken, colloquial language: for instance, idioms, reduced forms, slang, and expressions that require shared cultural knowledge. Consequently, comic strips help students to deal with spoken and even informal language, preventing them from sounding "bookish," as students might when they are only exposed to written, formal language. Another advantage of the visual nature of comic strips is that they show the gestures and the body language of the characters. This contributes to the development of communicative competence, which includes nonverbal communication.

The importance of using authentic materials

Comic strips are authentic, and using authentic material is very important in language teaching and learning. It has several advantages, among which is the fact that if students comprehend a genuine text successfully, that can motivate them and build their confidence. However, it should be noted that the difficulty of the language presented to the class should be matched with the level of the students; otherwise the use of authentic materials will only frustrate them. Furthermore, by reading comics in class, "learners are asked to generate personal responses to something in the text, responses which necessitate the production of original discourse" (Hirvela 1996, 128). Consequently, comic strips can be used not only for reading exercises but also for improving the other three skills. Apart from reading, there are various types of exercises that can be used successfully in EFL classes.

Sample exercises

First of all, it is important not to throw away the comic sections of newspapers (especially for coloured comics) so that one will have an abundance of comic strips to use in class for a variety of activities, such as those described below.

Activity 1

The teacher curs apart the individual panels of a comic strip and puts them in an envelope. The students (either individually or in groups) then are asked to arrange the pieces into the proper sequence to tell the story, either in written form or as a speaking exercise.

For more advanced learners, the task can be made more difficult by giving a different panel to each student in a group and asking students to describe to the rest of the group what is on their panels. The students should not show their pictures to each other until they have figured out the correct order for the panels.

Activity 2

In a variation of the first exercise, the teacher removes the speech or thought bubbles of the comic strips, hands out copies of both the comic strip and the text of the bubbles to the students. The students' task is to figure out the proper order of the speech or thoughts.

Activity 3

The teacher hands out a comic strip from which the last panel is cut out. Students are asked to continue the story and come up with an ending. Similar to the first activity, this can be a writing or speaking exercise and can be organized as either an individual or a group activity, depending on the needs of the students.

(Naturally, the first exercise could be continued with this exercise as well; however, this way is more challenging than having to continue a story that already has a conclusion).

A follow-up for this exercise could be that the students act out their stories in class. After acting out a story, they could continue it as a role-play activity.

Role-plays are useful for providing the teacher with feedback on how well the students learnt the new language (grammar, vocabulary, etc.). Besides, this activity reduces Teacher Talking Time and facilitates the speech of the students. It is generally true that people are less inhibited to talk when they have a personality "to hide behind," so when they play a role, they tend to forget about the surrounding circumstances (i.e., the classroom or the presence of the teacher).

Activity 4

Another interesting (and slightly more complex) exercise is to organise students into groups and give them a written story with missing information. First the groups should discuss what might be missing from the text. Then the teacher gives them a comic strip version of the text. They must fill in the blanks in the written story by describing what they see in the pictures. After that, they are asked to think of speech and/or thought bubbles for the comic strip. Naturally, as a follow-up activity, they can act it out and continue the story as a role-play.

The variations of these kinds of activities are almost endless. They can be combined with other activities, or used as supplementary material.

Conclusion

Comic strips are not only for fun in a language class, but there are also methodological reasons for teachers to use them. According to Oiler's episode hypothesis, a text that has a story line and a logical structure is easier to remember and to recall. Comics strips provide the structure and stimulus to which students respond, and, as Brown points out, since stories are universal, students from different cultures can understand their structure and can identify with the

characters (Brown 1994), which helps them to acquire vocabulary, grammatical and communicative competence, and provides them with special cultural knowledge as well.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the range of activities discussed and exemplified provides an opportunity for any teacher, who may feel discouraged at the thought of devoting more time to reading texts, to deal effectively with extended reading. Being able to use techniques other than “question and answer” allows teachers to make reading a more point being that reading as a means of vocabulary enrichment is almost limitless in its opens up in dealing with choice, meaning and use.

Reading materials based on text types. May be divided by type of publication (newspapers, news magazines, journals and books) with a further breakdown by expository type (essays, research reports, theoretical articles, etc).

Dividing reading materials by text type provides a coherent structural bases for teaching both advanced EFL and ESP courses.

The underlying rationale for using a genre – based approach is two fold. First, specific skills, such as identifying the main idea of a paragraph or scanning, will vary with different text types.

Second, identifying and focusing on the difficulties inherent in particular types of texts will help students improve their reading comprehension.

In my English classes I used reading the following text activities: Jigsaw reading: students read a short text which sets up a problem and then, in three groups, they read three different texts, all of which are about the same thing (different aspects of behaviour such as anger, or different reports on a problem, or different *parts* of a story or strange event). When they have read their texts, they come together in groups where each student has read a different text, and they try-to work out the whole story, or describe the whole situation. JoAnn Miller's UFO webquest employs jigsaw reading on a large scale, but it is still a highly motivating technique, despite - or perhaps because of - the time it takes. Above all, this kind of jigsaw technique gives students a reason for reading - and then sharing what they have found out.

Reading puzzles: apart from jigsaw reading, there are many other kinds of puzzle which involve students in motivating reading tasks. For example, we can give them texts which have been chopped up so that each paragraph is on a *different piece of* paper. Students have to reassemble the text.

We can give students a series of emails between two people which are out of sequence. The students have to work out the order of the emails. We can mix up two stories and students have to prise them apart.

Using newspapers: there is almost no limit to the kinds of activity which can be done with newspapers (or their online equivalents). We can do all kinds of matching exercises, such as ones where students have to match articles with their headlines or with relevant pictures. At higher levels, we can have students read three accounts of the same incident and ask them to find the differences between them. We can use newspaper articles as a stimulus for speaking or writing (students can write letters in reply to what they read).

We can ask students to read small ads (advertisements) for holidays, partners, things for sale, etc, in order to make a choice about which holiday, person or thing they would choose. Later, they can use their choices to role-play descriptions, contact the service providers or say what happened when they made their choice.

We can get students to read the letters page from a newspaper and try to imagine what the writers look like, and what kinds of lives they have. They can reply to the letters.

Following instructions: students read instructions for a simple operation (using a public phonebox, etc) and have to put the instructions in the correct order. They might also match instructions about, for example, unpacking a printer or inserting a new ink cartridge with the little pictures that normally accompany such instructions in manuals. We can also get students to read instructions in order to follow them.

Recipes are a particular kind of instruction genre, but can be used in much the same way as the examples above - e.g. students read a recipe and match the instructions with pictures. We can then get them to cook the food!

Poetry: in groups, students are each given a line from a poem. They can't show the • line to the other members of the group, though they can read it out loud. They have to reassemble the poem by putting the lines in order. A poem I have used like this with some success - at upper-intermediate levels - is 'Fire and Ice' by Robert Frost:

Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favour fire.
But if it had to perish twice
I think I know enough of hate
To know that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.

We can get students to read different poems and then, without actually showing their poem to anyone else, they have to go round the class finding similarities and differences between their poem and other people's.

Another way of using poems with the whole class is to show the students a poem line by line (on an overhead projector or a computer screen) with words blanked out. The first time they see these blanks, they have to make a wild guess at what the words could be. When they see the lines for the second time, the first letter is included. When they see the poem for the third time, the first two letters are included, and so on. This is a great activity for getting students to really search in their minds for contextualised lexis.

Predicting from words and pictures: students are given a number of words from a text. Working in groups, they have to predict what kind of a text they are going to read - or what story the text tells. They then read the-text to see if their

original predictions were correct. We don't have to give them individual words, of course. We can give them whole phrases and get them to try to make a story using them. For example, the phrases 'knock on the door', 'Go away!', 'They find a man the next morning', 'He is dead', 'James is in the lighthouse' will help students to predict (perhaps wrongly, of course!) some kind of story about a lighthouse keeper, some sort of threat and a dead person. (They then read a ghost story with these phrases in it.)

We can also give students pictures to predict from, or slightly bigger fragments from the text.

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