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I. Introduction.

After getting the Independence 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 political life.

By 1997 on the basis of the National Model of development there had been worked out the national program for Personal Training which defined conceptional ways and concrete details, mechanisms for radical reforming the education system and personal training.

The program is the normative scientific basis for reforms. Starting from 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 no 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 getting Independence the head of the republic I.A.Karimov attended to change Educational System and the attempts reflected on changing in Educational System in 1997, the Educational System and personnel Training so high developed before Independence no longer meets requirements of democratic and market changes occurred in the Republic today.

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

As the President I.A.Karimov emphasized in his book “Uzbekistan along the road of Independence and progress”. There are four path of reform and development is based:

-adherence to universal human values

- consolidation and development of the nation's spiritual heritage
- freedom for the individual's realization
- patriotism[1]

The highest objective of reformation in Uzbekistan is to revive those traditions, fill them with new content and set up all necessary conditions achieving peace and democracy, prosperity, cultural advancement freedom of conscience and intellectual maturity for every person on Earth.[2]

According to the requirement on the National 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.

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

In order to achieve "Harmoniously developed generation".Educators should use all suitable aids.[3]

[1] I.A.Karimov 1993 Uzbekistan along the road of Independence and progress. Tashkent p.67.

[2] I.A.Karimov 1997 There is no future without history. Tashkent p 47.

[3] I.A.Karimov 1998 Harmoniously developed generation is a basis of progress of Uzbekistan. Tashkent

Language learning/ Language learner

The prevailing view of the language-learning process in 1962 was that learning was achieved through habit formation. The native language was seen to comprise habits that a second- language learner must overcome. As we saw in the language lesson we observed, this was to be accomplished by forging new habits through repetition, pattern drills, and accompanying positive reinforcement by the teacher. Errors were to be avoided if it all possible. A way to anticipate errors was to conduct a contrastive analysis, comparing and contrasting the students' native language with the target language. Through this means, potential trouble spots could be identified. If an error was commited, quick correction was desirable in order to prevent the establishment of bad habits. Overlearning leading to automaticity was the goal.

Challenging this characterization of the learning process was Noam Chomsky (1959).[4] Chomsky argued that language acquisition could not take place through habit formation because language was far too complicated to be learned in such a manner, especially given the brief time available. There must be, Chomsky reasoned, some innate capacity that humans possessed which predisposed them to look for basic patterns in language. Furthemore, people could create and comprehend novel utterances- utterances they could not possibly have encountered in the language that was spoken to them. This observation was supported by evidence from children learning English as a naive language. Overgeneralization errors such as *eated and *sleeped were common in children's speech. Such errors suggested that children were not repeating what was said to them, but rather were attempting to induce the rules for the past tense from the language to which they were exposed. Thus, through a process of detecting patterns in the input language, forming hypotheses based on these about how the language worked, testing these hypotheses and revising them in light of contradictory evidence, little by little the grammar of the native language would be acquired.

What is especially significant for us was that learners acquiring English as a second or foreign language were found to be committing the same sort of overgeneralization

[4] Chomsky N.1959 A review of "verbal behavior" by B.F.Skinner.Language journal, 35,1

errors as the children. Furthemore, the second- language learners did not commit the errors randomly but in a systematic way, indicating that they may have been following a more or less natural progression in their acquisition of English. Corder (1967)[5] even suggested that learners might naturally adhere to a learner-generated or "built-in" syllabus. The language the learners spoke was termed an interlanguage (Selinker 1972), since it was intermediate between the native language and target language. By the very term interlanguage we can see that it was considered to be a language in its own right, subject to the same constraints as any other natural language. Moreover, any point along the interlanguage continuum was held to be fully describable by grammatical rules.

One cannot fail to note that viewing language acquisition as a process of rule formation had tremendous implications for the role of the learners. Rather than being seen as passive imitators of carefully controlled language input, learners were seen to be active agents involved in a process of "creative construction". Errors were not something to be avoided, but rather were regarded as a welcome signs that learners were actively testing hypotheses. Rather than seeing the native language as a source of interference, the native language was a source of hypotheses about how the target language functioned. Thus, language learning was seen to be a natural, cognitive process with learners ultimately responsible for their own learning.

With this shift of focus to the active role of the learner, another serious question motivated much research: the differential success question. Why was it, second-language acquisition researchers asked, that while all children with normal faculties were able to achieve native-speaker status, rarely (if ever)were second-language learners able to attain the same level of achievement? During the years that followed,
many factors were hypothesized to enhance or inhibit the second-language acquisition capability of learners: social, motivational, biological, and cognitive (see, for example, Schuman 1978).It has also been suggested that successful language learners employ more effective learning strategies than less successful learners (Rubin 1975) and that more success in language learning might be achieved if teachers engaged in learner training as well as language training (Wenden 1985).

[5] Corder S.Pit 1967 The significance of learners' errors. IRAZ 5,4

From this recent suggestion, we see that in 1987 learners are still seen to be the bearers of responsibility for how much learning takes place. What has changed somewhat since Chomsky first proposed it, however, is the view that language learning is solely a process of rule formation. While still assigning to the learner an active role of sifting through incoming data and testing hypotheses which eventually lead to the restructuring of the learner's interlanguage, the view of what the learner tests hypotheses about has shifted somewhat. Working within the framework of Universal Grammar proposed by Chomsky's (1981) Government-Binding Theory, second-language researchers (e.g. White 1985) have been exploring the idea that grammar acquisition involves setting or fixing the parameters of principles of the Universal Grammar in a manner consistent with the data of a particular language.

Other second-language researchers such as Schmidt (1983) feel that the role of imitation has been seriously overlooked in recent years. While not denying that language acquisition takes place at least in part through rule formation, Schmidt also believes a great deal of acquisition of language is brought about by learners having memorized sentences and phrases (e.g., How are you? I beg your pardon. You know what I mean?). The successful employment of these memorized formulae contributes greatly to learner fluency, Schmidt feels.

Finally, researchers like Hatch (1983),[6] while again not denying that grammatical competence is achieved through linguistic hypothesis testing, nevertheless believe that nonlinguistic processes may be critical to the learner's success in this endeavor. Hatch specifically discusses the value of native-speaker/nonnative-speaker interaction in which the native speaker adjusts the level of speech to accommodate the nonnative speaker's comprehension. These foreigner-talk adjustments, Hatch believes, "help promote communication, help establish an affective bond and can serve as either an explicit or implicit teaching mode" (1983:183).

We will return to our consideration of learning and the learner when we discuss the impact of these views on language pedagogy. But before we do, let us turn to the second

[6] Hatch E. 1983 Psycholinguistics: A second language perspectives. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.

major angle of our triangle- that dealing with the nature of the language and culture we teach.

Language/Culture

Influenced by structural linguistics, in 1962 language was seen as consisting of hierarchically organized strata, each dealing with a different linguistic structure: phonemes, morphemes, and syntactic patterns. It was these aspects of language, of course, that were drilled in the lesson we observed. Syllabi for a language course were organized around linguistic structures, carefully graded in a sequence from simple to complex. If one were studying in a beginning-level English course, therefore, one would likely work on sentence patterns with the BE verb early on (She is a teacher.), followed a few lessons later by yes-no questions (Is she a teacher?), followed by short answers (Yes, she is.), etc.

Despite the profound effect of the Chomskyan revolution in other areas, it did little to alter the way language was presented for pedagogical purposes. Like the structuralists before them, the transformational grammarians focused upon sentence-level syntax. It was thus not until the late 1960s that sociolinguist Hymes (1966)[7] introduced the distinction between linguistic competence and communicative competence. Whereas linguistic competence is understood as the unconscious knowledge of language structure of the ideal speaker-listener, communicative competence is the knowledge of how to use language appropriate to a given social situation. When the goal of language instruction shifted to developing students' communicative competence, teachers were asked not to focus on the grammatical rules of usage that enable speakers to compose correct sentences so much as on the use of language to accomplish some kind of communicative purpose (Widdowson 1978:3).

This new focus had important implications for syllabus design, and Wilkins' (1976) advocacy of an analytical notional-functional syllabus over a synthetic structural one was one manifestation of this shift in viewing language. Adopting a notional-

[7] Hymes D. 1966 On communicative competence. Baltimore: Penguin.

functional syllabus meant building a course around the uses or functions to which language is put. For example, one might work on requesting information in one lesson, apologizing in another, and expressing gratitude in a third Since it was not obviously the case that certain function would be simpler than others, grading according to function al complexity did not make sense. Wilkins proposed instead that the functions be recycled, that is, re-introduced several times. Earlier cycles might contain relatively unmarked forms of the functions expressed in linguistically simply ways. Successive cycles would introduce more linguistically complicated and more marked (e.g., very formal) forms Thus, the first time students were taught how to introduce one person to another, they might just learn to say "This is____ ." Sometime later, in a subsequent lesson, they might learn "I'd like you to meet____." In yet another, they would learn "Allow me to introduce you to____."

More recently, applied linguists Krashen and Terrell (1983) advised basing courses on topics (e.g., family, clothing, weather) and situations (e.g., a job interview, a visit to the doctor, a shopping trip). In presenting the language, structural and functional diversity would be perfectly acceptable; with importance given to the teacher's getting across a com prehensible message. Krashen and Terrell's focus was thu:. on the meaning or semantic dimension of language.

The structural, the notional-functional, and the semantic-based syllabi nicely illustrate the fact that language consists of three interacting dimensions: form, function, and meaning. Any course that takes having students achieve communicative competence as its goal must include all three (Larsen-Freeman and Celce-Murcia, in preparation). Thus, if a teacher were using a structural syllabus and the unit to be presented was on the passive voice, the teacher must teach not only how to form the passive, but also what it means (it has a "grammatical meaning" of putting the focus on the theme rather than on the agent) and what its function is, i.e., when it should be used (see Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Free man 1983). The same would be true if one were using a notional-functional syllabus. If a teacher were teaching the function of apologizing, for example, and wanted student to end up with more than some memorized formulae for apologizing, such as they might get from a phrase book, the

teacher would have to work with the students on the grammatical form and meaning of the apologies. Wilkins, of course, recognized this when he wrote:

"The grammar is the means through which linguistic creativity **is** ultimately achieved and an inadequate knowledge of the grammar would lead to a serious limitation on the capacity for communication. A notional syllabus, no less than a grammatical syllabus, must seek to ensure that the grammatical system is properly assimilated by the learners". (1976:66)

Unfortunately, in our enthusiasm to embrace the notion communicative competence, I fear we may have emphasized the functions too much over the forms and thus have sacrificed accuracy to fluency (Eskey 1983). Both, in my opinion are an integral part of communicative competence.

In addition to the three types already mentioned, many other syllabus types exist these days, of course. One particularly interesting approach is the procedural syllabus (Prabhu and Carrol 1980), which does not take language as its basis at all. Instead, students learn language through the performance of certain tasks and activities. Prabhu and Carrol's students have already studied English following a structural syllabus. Instructors using a procedural syllabus, therefore, are concerned with the activation of their students' already-learned grammar.

Another syllabus, one that has had impact on the teaching of ESL in the United States, is competency-based (Grognet and Crandall 1982).[8] This type of syllabus has been developed to teach survival skills to refugees who are newly arrived immigrants to the United States. The behavioral outcomes of competency-based instruction are specific survival skills: e.g., students will be able to identify food items, read food labels, make food purchases, and verify that they have received the correct change.

One final language-related development that we should not fail to mention is the expanded view of language to include discourse or the structure that exists beyond the sentence level. While acknowledging the importance of student mastery of sentence-level syntax, it is now commonly recognized, that explicit teaching will need to be

[8] Grognet A. and J. Crandall 1982. Compenency-based curricula in a duet ESL. ERIC/CZZ. New Bulletin, 6,1.

directed to the structure of language at the suprasentential or discourse level (Larsen-Freeman 1980).[9] Thus, students will have to learn to produce oral and written texts that are both coherent and cohesive.

English for special purposes.

So far we have discussed general communicative competence as being a desirable goal to strive for in a language course. Another major trend having to do with language during these past 25 years is the teaching of English for Special Purposes (ESP). Although all language use has a purpose, teachers of ESP teach only the English requisite for a particular purpose, be it an occupation (e.g., English for business or for airline pilots) or a domain (e.g., English for Science and Technology or English for Academic Purposes). Thus, curriculum designers of ESP courses conduct, rigorous needs analyses—analyzing the situation in which students will likely find themselves and carefully selecting the English necessary for students to meet the language demands of these restricted domains.

Content-based approaches.

Closely aligned to the ESP movement, at least in terms of their theoretical justification, are the content-based approaches (Mohan 1986) that are currently popular in Canada and the United States. Advocates of both ESP and content-based approaches see language as a means of achieving something else and not as an end in itself (Widdowson 1983:108-109). In content-based approaches, the learning of language is integrally linked with the learning of some other subject matter. The best-known example is that of bilingual education/immersion education, in which monolingual children at the elementary and secondary levels receive the majority of their instruction in

[9] Larsen-Freeman D. 1980. Discourse analysis in second language research. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.

the target language (Swain 1981). Although various models exist in this approach, some containing explicit instruction in the target language, the assumption is that both the subject matter and the language can be learned together when the students' focus is on acquiring subject-matter information.

Other models that share this assumption are those providing "sheltered English" and those that follow the adjunct model. Sheltered English classes are employed to teach English and subject content using specially modified curricula and materials (Curtain 1986). Students attend these only during a transitional period until they have acquired sufficient English to participate fully in regular courses. The adjunct model calls for ESL students to attend content courses that are linked with language courses through a coordinated syllabus (Snow and Brinton 1984). ESL teachers and students attend authentic lectures in an introductory psychology course, for instance, and later the teachers assist the students with comprehending the lecture and doing the homework assignments. Assignments made in the ESL components are based on the content course; in addition, the development of study skills is emphasized.

One final model should be mentioned in the discussion of content-based approaches to English-language acquisition. This is the "Writing across the Curriculum" approach developed in response to the 1975 Bullock Report's recommendation that there be a policy to teach language across the curriculum in British schools. By receiving writing assignments in each of their content-area subjects, students learn to write, in addition to learning the content.

Culture.

The second angle of our triangle embraces both language and culture. Many language teachers acknowledge the need to integrate the two; yet I think it is fair to say that there really is no well-articulated theory of culture that has informed our field during the last 25 years, and hence that the means of teaching culture to language students have not been well developed. It is true that many texts contain cultural information in the form of cultural capsules, i.e., short notes describing the differences

between the native and target cultures. But knowing a culture involves so much more than the transmission of information these cultural notes allow. Indeed, developing in one's students an understanding of the attitudes, values, beliefs—the "world view" (Fantini, personal communication)—of a particular target culture is at least as important as imparting factual knowledge such as what foods one can/cannot order in a restaurant, in which denominations the currency comes, etc. I do not mean to belittle the value of such cultural information, but all too often the other aspects of culture are ignored. They are sometimes addressed through studying the literature of the target culture. But, of course, this does not guarantee that students will arrive at a comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date understanding of the target culture.

Having just cited the need for a coherent theory of culture and an expanded repertoire of techniques for the teaching of culture, I would be remiss if I did not mention another language-related trend with methodological implications that takes quite an opposite view from this with regard to the teaching of culture. I am speaking, of course, of the English-as-an-international-language perspective (see, for example, Strevens 1978). Many applied linguists who hold this perspective value the pluralism that exists in the English-speaking world (Indian English, Singaporean English, Nigerian English, etc.) and feel that one can be bilingual without being bicultural, that one can and should learn English for utilitarian purposes without adopting the dominant target culture.

II. Approaches to Teaching and Learning.

§1 Traditional Methods and Approaches to teaching language.

The audio-lingual Method.

The audio-lingual Method surely is the case that in many classrooms in the world today, the ALM is still being practiced. However, it is also true that the ALM fell into disfavor in many circles in the 1960s. This was due in part to the refutation of the habit-formation theory of language acquisition and in part to the fact that both teachers and students often found the required repetition boring and unmotivating. Finally, there was the widespread observation that patterns mastered in the classroom were not always transferred outside when "real communication" was involved.

In the past 25 years, no single method of language teaching has assumed the dominance of the ALM, although we have witnessed the birth and maturing of at least five innovative methods during this period. It would be worth our while to consider each of these now, even though space will not permit us to do anything more than to introduce them.

Silent way.

The emphasis on human cognition inspired by the Chomskyan revolution led to a new general approach to language teaching termed cognitive code. As we saw earlier, rather than simply being responsive to stimuli in the environment, learners were seen to be much more actively involved in their own learning. Although Caleb Gattegno's Silent Way (1972)[10] did not evolve directly from the cognitive-code approach, its principles are consistent with it. For example, one of the basic tenets of the Silent Way is "the subordination of teaching to learning". This principle is in accord with the active role ascribed to the learner in the cognitive-code approach. Another shared principle is that errors are inevitable and are signs to the teacher that the learner is exploring new areas of the language. Learning is thus seen to be gradual, involving imperfect

[10] Gattegno C. 1972 Teaching foreign languages in schools: The silent way. 2nd ed. New York: Educational Solutions.

performance at the beginning. Another distinguishing feature of the Silent Way is that the teacher helps students to develop a way to learn on their own. By giving students only what they absolutely need, by assisting them to develop their own "inner criteria," and by remaining silent much of the time, the teacher tries to help students to become self-reliant and increasingly independent of the teacher.

Suggestopedia.

Georgi Lozanov, the originator of Suggestopedia, believes, as does Gattegno, that language learning can be made more efficient than what usually occurs. Lozanov (1978) feels that the inefficiency is due to the psychological barriers learners establish—their fear of failure is one of them. Teachers can help learners to surmount these barriers and to fully tap their mental powers, by desuggesting the learners' self-imposed limitations. This can be done through the teacher's direct and indirect positive suggestion in an environment that is relaxing and therefore conducive to learning. When learners trust in the authority of the teacher, Lozanov asserts, they will reach a state of infantilization—adopting a childlike role. If they feel secure, learners can be more spontaneous and less inhibited.

Counseling-learning/community language learning.

Another methodologist who advises that we should see learners as "whole persons," not just cognitive beings, is Charles Curran (1976). Through his research, Curran discovered that adult learners, in particular, are often threatened in learning situations. They feel threatened by the fact that learning requires them to change. In Curran's Counseling-Learning/Community Language Learning method, teachers understand and accept their students' fears and concerns. In addition, teachers try to provide a secure learning environment in which a sense of community is fostered. In such an atmosphere, students can be nondefensive and their positive energies can be channeled towards the language-learning task. Another essential element in learning, Curran believes, is for students to take some initiative for their own learning and to

make some investment in what they will learn. Therefore, in Community Language Learning students decide what it is they want to be able to say in the target language. Another way of putting this is to say the syllabus is learner-generated.

Comprehension approach.

Advocates of the Comprehension Approach (Winitz 1981) also acknowledge that learner insecurities have an adverse effect on language acquisition. As a consequence, practitioners of this approach do not put students on the spot by having them speak in the target language. Instead, students spend the hours at the beginning of instruction listening to the teacher speak the target language, much as children learn their native language by attending to the language spoken to them. The teacher insures that the language he or she uses is comprehensible to the students, just as parents modify the speech they use with their children. A child does not speak until ready to do so; so students choose when to begin to use the target language. Like a child, their initial speech exhibits much imperfection at first. Only later, when students are comfortable speaking the language, is their speech "fine-tuned." Two of the best-known methods associated with this approach are the Total Physical Response (Asher 1982)[11] and the Natural Approach (Krashen and Terrell 1983).

Communicative approach.

Adherents of the Communicative Approach (e.g., Johnson and Morrow 1981) assert that students' motivation will be enhanced if they feel that they are working on communicative skills, i.e., practicing some function within a social context, not just accumulating knowledge of vocabulary and sentence-level structures. By interacting with their teacher and fellow students, students receive practice in activating this knowledge in negotiating meaning. Class activities are often characterized by information gaps, i.e., the speaker knows something the listener doesn't. The speaker must choose the appropriate form through which to convey this information. The

[11] Asher, J.1982. Learning another language through actions: The complete teacher's guidebook. 2nd ed. Los Gatos, Calif.: Sky Oaks Productions.

speaker receives feedback from the listener on what the listener has understood. After considering this feedback, the speaker can revise the form of the message if such revision is necessary. In essence, then, students learn how to communicate by communicating.

We began our discussion by observing that there is more diversity in the language-teaching field today than there was 25 years ago. Nevertheless, the diversity that exists today should not be seen to be troubling. If having so many alternatives is confusing, it is also empowering—for while there is a certain security in knowing that one is teaching the one right way, there is also a stifling, imprisoning quality about it.

The science of language teaching has not reached the point of being able to consistently demonstrate the superiority of one methodology over another for all teachers and all students and all settings . . . and perhaps it never will. For teaching is a combination of science and art. Science helps us to be informed in contributing to our understanding of learning and of language, but it is the artistic aspect of teaching that requires us to uniquely interpret and apply the scientific information in making the choices for any given situation among the methodological options that exist (Brown 1980).[12] Thus, teaching is a matter of making informed choices (Stevick 1982; Larsen-Freeman 1983b).

Teachers' choices are like those of artists who have full palettes of paint from which they can choose a little of this color and some of another. Artists' choices are not random; they are driven by what artists are trying to achieve and they are assessed by the artists every step of the way to assure that the choices being made are congruent with their purpose. Art teachers can help art students become aware of the options they have by, for example, having them study art history to review the choices others have made. They can also help by working with their students to perfect their technique. But it is incumbent upon the artists themselves to create their unique blend that is their own special contribution to others.

And so it is with teaching. Only those who are intimately acquainted with the situation, with the students, and with themselves can make the choices they are

[12] Brown H.D.1980. Principles of language learning and teaching. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

uniquely suited to make. It is, after all, only the teachers who will be there to assess the outcome of the choices they make. It is only the teachers who are there to make sure that they know why they are doing what they are doing.

Whereas once teachers could be trained in the one way of language teaching, now they must be educated to choose among the options that exist (Larsen-Freeman 1983a). While having no one correct way to teach English may be confusing, even frustrating, it also allows teachers the freedom to be creative and to continue to grow and develop in their profession. As we grow, we do so with the motivation that we can increasingly make better choices, informed by our experience as well as by science. The choices we make become better where they provide our students with improved access to English and to aspects of themselves they would otherwise be denied.

§2. Modern vs. Traditional.

With the rapid development of EFL teaching in non-English-speaking countries, English teachers have become more aware that the exclusive use of either the communicative approach or grammar-translation method does not suit all English teaching situations. Teachers have also discovered that no single teaching method deals with everything that concerns the form, the use, and the content of the target language. The overall situation is probably still as Roberts (1982)[13] described: "The communicative approach, and we will now use the term to refer to the British tradition, is in many ways a commitment to eclecticism in practice and cannot be otherwise." Harvey (1985)[14] states: "What might be called traditional methods and skills are not necessarily unworkable alongside modern EFL teaching methods. The idea that the two are mutually exclusive is absurd."

What EFL teachers need to do now is to modernize, not Westernize, English teaching. They need to combine the new with the old so as to adapt the communicative approach to traditional teaching structures.

[13] Roberts, J.L. 1982. Recent developments in ELT. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[14] Harvey, P. 1985. A lesson to be learned. ELT Journal, 39,3.

Communicative approach vs. grammar-translation method.

Since teaching is deeply rooted in the local philosophy, culture, and basic concepts of education, the students' learning styles and habits in language acquisition must be considered. Although the grammar-translation method is out of favor, students accustomed to this method may still derive benefit from it. For example, students generally show great interest in language structures and linguistic details when they are learning a language. "We would like to know what happens, because if we understand the system, we can use English more effectively" (Harvey **1985).** Therefore, in teaching English to students, appropriate grammar analysis is essential, especially for beginners. Limited utilization of translation from or to the target language is an indispensable part of teaching. Vocabulary work and pattern drills are also ways of familiarizing the student with sentence structures. This information helps learners acquire linguistic competence.

But instead of teaching grammar traditionally and drilling grammar patterns, teachers need to relate teaching grammar and pattern drills to meaning and use. In other words, language structure practice should be used in contexts that involve some basic principles of appropriateness. This is the exact area that the traditional EFL teaching has long overlooked - teaching English for a communicative purpose. Thus, English teaching should be, partly communicatively oriented, so students can acquaint themselves with appropriate language usage.

In teaching grammar, it is important to make the language situations and language material as realistic as possible.

Immediately after supplying students with adequate explanations of grammar functions, the teacher can provide students with suitable situations that encourage students to ultimately use the rules in real-life communication. For instance, in teaching the modal auxiliaries can and may, what should be clear is that the two modals are not synonyms and that there are contexts in which only one of them is appropriate. Thus, these two sentences have slightly different meanings:

1.It can be very nice to have a picnic in winter.

2.It may be very nice to have a picnic in winter.

Accuracy vs. fluency.

There is no denying the fact that both accuracy and fluency are essential in language learning. However, in English teaching dominated by the grammar-translation method, accuracy is emphasized more than fluency. Students in such classrooms are extremely particular about linguistic details. They never feel satisfied with their language productions until the correct answers are provided. They are keenly interested in the exact words, have a low tolerance of ambiguity, and tend to focus on discrete grammar points and specific syntactic constructions (Barnhouse 1981)[15]. So the question arises as to the relationship between accuracy and fluency and which one should take precedence. These questions must be examined in relation to what is expected of the students when they graduate and what the teaching conditions are.

Modern society is in need of people who not only read English well, but also speak it fluently. As for beginners, they must have a solid foundation in English, which is primarily, though not solely, built on accuracy. It is believed that once bad language habits are formed, they are difficult to break. Moreover, for the students who are learning English in a non-English-speaking country, there is little chance for them to learn an acceptable form of English outside the classroom. So, in order to achieve accuracy, students need rigorous language training in their classes.

However, accuracy does not mean 100% error-free, an impossible achievement. But during the controlled and semicontrolled language practice periods for beginners, a high degree of accuracy should be required. Not only are the students encouraged to make as few errors as possible, but they are expected to manipulate the language system as spontaneously and flexibly as possible.

Of course, fluency in language learning goes far beyond that. Soon after the students have mastered the language forms, they ought to be given intensive fluency

[15] Burnhouse, K. 1981. Understanding and using learner strategies in teaching EFL. English Teaching Forum.

practice. Then, as control is withdrawn, students can use the language more freely. At this stage, errors should be tolerated, and the teacher should emphasize that error-making is not at all disgraceful but a natural and common practice. Teachers assess the students' performances at the end of each fluency practice so that the students are aware of their weaknesses and become more and more conscious of their errors. In this way, accuracy and fluency are practiced almost simultaneously. Accuracy and fluency are not mutually exclusive, but are interdependent.

Linguistic competence vs. communicative competence.

The relation between linguistic competence and communicative competence also is important. At the foundation stage, linguistic competence is the spontaneous, flexible, and correct manipulation of the language system. Communicative competence involves principles of appropriateness and a readiness on the part of the learner to use relevant strategies in coping with certain language situations. Linguistic competence, then, is the basis of communicative competence. Without linguistic competence, there is no communicative competence. But communicative competence does not automatically result from linguistic competence. Forms of classroom activities such as role playing, simulations, and real-life interactions should be used to provide as much practice as possible for students to develop communicative competence while practicing linguistic competence.

Student-centered orientation.

To facilitate language acquisition, students need much practice. So, teachers must ensure that classroom interactions are managed, not just by the teacher, but by all present. In order to avoid being the center of classroom interactions, teachers should arrange the desks in such a way that the students can look directly at one another. This helps create interactions among the students. The teacher does not act as leader of the class, but class leadership emerges from within the group.

Teacher's role.

Instead of being the dominating authority in the classroom, the teacher facilitates the communicative process among all the-learners and between the students and the various tasks, giving guidance and advice when necessary. Furthermore, teachers act as independent participants within the learning-teaching group. Any unnecessary intervention on the teacher's part may prevent learners from becoming genuinely involved in the activities and thus hinder the development of their communicative skills.

However, this does not mean that once a teaching activity is in progress, the teacher should become a passive observer. It is still the teacher's obligation to develop the students' potential through external direction. Although the teacher may be nondirective in general, it is still the teacher's responsibility to recognize the distinctive qualities in the students (Han 1979)[16] and to help them develop those qualities.

In contemporary English teaching, the teacher's function should become less dominant than before, but no less important. For example, his/her role as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group is closely related to the objective of his/her role as communicative activator. These roles include a set of secondary roles for the teacher: first, as an organizer of resources and as a resource; and second, as a guide and manager of activities. A third role for the teacher is that of researcher and learner, with much to contribute in .terms of appropriate knowledge, abilities, and actual and observed experience in the nature of learning (Breen and Candlin 1980).

One of the important components of communicative competence is the ability to select a linguistic form that is appropriate for a specific situation (Hymes 1981). Hendon (1980) argues that "today language has been redefined as an integral part of the culture with which it is connected". There is plenty of evidence that a good command of English grammar, vocabulary, and syntax does not necessarily add up to a good mastery of English. There is a set of social conventions governing language form and behavior within a communicative group.

[16] Han, Y. 1979. The thousand-li horse. In Chinese classical prose. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.

EFL teaching in many countries with its traditional setting, is markedly different from that in the United States and Great Britain in that it is conducted in different social and cultural contexts. Yet this does not mean that the communicative approach is not applicable in such a context. To make this approach work well, we must reconcile it with the traditional grammar-translation method that is still popularly used.

§3. A learner-centered approach to language teaching.

Work on learning strategies is part of a more general movement within educational theory and practice which takes a learner-centered view of pedagogy. A learner-centered approach is based on a belief that learners will bring to the learning situation different beliefs and attitudes about the nature of language and language learning and that these beliefs and attitudes need to be taken into consideration in the selection of content and learning experiences. (For a detailed analysis of the principles of a learner-centered approach to language teaching, see Nunan 1988b). The approach contrasts with the 'doctor-knows-best' approach which, while it might acknowledge that learners nave different preferences and beliefs, discounts these on the grounds mat the teacher is the expert and that the learners' views are irrelevant. However, if learners are to be in a position to make informed choices, they need to learn how to make such choices. Informed choice presupposes knowledge, arid knowledge presupposes instruction.

Learners, particularly those at more advanced proficiency levels, can be encouraged to reflect on their attitudes, beliefs and preferences by completing attitude surveys and inventories such as the following. The results of such surveys can be used as the basis for subsequent classroom discussions.

Indicate your attitude to the following statements by rating them from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree).

General. Disagree Agree

1. Learner behavior is not fixed, but changes in response to both internal and external pressures. People can and do learn throughout their entire lifetime. 1 2 3 4 5

2.Learners enter learning activities with an organized set of descriptions and feelings about themselves which influence their learning processes. 1 2 3 4 5

3. The past experience a learner brings to any learning activity is both a helpful resource for further learning and an unavoidable potential hinderance. 1 2 3 4 5

4. Part of the learner's past experience is organized and integrated into his self-concept and self-esteem. 1 2 3 4 5

5.When past experience can be applied directly to current experience, learning is facilitated. 1 2 3 4 5

6. Past experience becomes increasingly important as a person grows oldie. 1 2 3 4 5

7.Learners with a positive self-concept and high self-esteem are more responsive to learning and less threatened by learning environments and the process of change. 1 2 3 4 5

8.Adult learning tends to focus on the problems, concerns, tasks, and needs of the individual's current life situation. 1 2 3 4 5

9. Any group of learners will be heterogeneous in terms of learning and cognitive styles. 1 2 3 4 5

(Extracted from Brundage and MacKcracher 1980:97-116)[17]

Language learning.

1. Adults have a right to be involved in curriculum decision making, e.g.selecting content, selecting learning activities and tasks. 1 2 3 4 5

[17] Brundage, D.H. and Mackcracher. 1980. Adult learning. Principles and their Application to Program Peanning. Ontario, p 97-116.

2. Adults learn best if the content relates to their own experience and knowledge. 1 2 3 4 5

3. Adults have fixed ideas about language learning which need to be taken into account in developing language programs. 1 2 3 4 5

4. Adults who have developed skills in learning-how-to-learn are the most effective students. 1 2 3 4 5

5.Adults are less interested in learning for learning's sake than in learning in order to achieve immediate or not too far distant life goals. 1 2 3 4 5

6.Adults have different learning styles and strategies which need to be taken into consideration in developing learning programmes. 1 2 3 4 5

7. Adults who have developed skills in self-assessment and self-evaluation are the most effective learners. 1 2 3 4 5

In addition, all language classes, irrespective of their goals and the types of learner they are catering for, can incorporate elements of learner training. Some of the strategies and skills which can he encouraged arc set out in the following list.

Monitoring performance
Evaluating communication skills
Evaluating progress
Evaluating learning tasks
Evaluating content
Evaluating learner groupings
Keeping the conversation going
Techniques for memorizing
Identifying patterns in language
Applying skills in the real world
Making errors work
Using formalized routines
Using linguistic knowledge
Keeping an interaction going
Developing conversational techniques
Finding one's own best ways
Following instructions
Using an index
Using a learner's dictionary

The following sample exercises from Nunan and Lockwood (1989) illustrate some of the tasks and exercises which can be given to learners to develop the sorts of learning skills indicated in the above list. They have been designed for post-beginner learners, and show hat learner training need not (and indeed should not) be restricted to advanced learners.

1. How and where do you like learning? Number the following from 1 (best) to 7 (least).

Learning at home by yourself.

Learning at home with a friend.

In class, listening to the teacher.

In class, working in pairs.

In class, working in groups.

In class, working alone.

Working in the self-access centre.

Talk about you choices with your teacher and the other students.

2. What do you like/don't you like? Tick the box.

Activity	Like	Don´t like	Comments
Learning new words			
Learning grammar			
Listening to cassettes			
Speaking to other students Reading			
Writing			

Compare your answers with a friend. Talk about them with the teacher.

3. Work in small groups and make a list of all the ways we can use television and radio to help us learn. Compare your list with another group. Talk about your ideas with the teacher.

4. Which activities were easy, and which were hard? Which would you like more/less? Complete the grid by placing a tick in the relevant column.

Activity	Easy	Hard	More	Less
1. Tune in				
2. Listen				
3. Read, discuss and write				
4. Read and practice				
5. Language focus				
6. Pronunciation				
7. Role play				
8. Read, compare and write				
9. Out-of-class task				

Discuss your responses with the teacher and the other students.

5. Do these statements describe the way you learn? Circle the appropriate response.

1. It doesn't matter if I don't understand every word. Yes No

2. I try and use new words as soon as I have learnt them. Yes No

3. I plan what I am going to say before I speak. Yes No

4. If someone doesn't understand me, I try and say it another way. Yes No

5. My way of learning is different from the rest of the class. Yes No

6. I try to find out my own problems in learning English. Yes No

7. I always ask people to explain things I don't understand. Yes No

8. Out of class I always try and practice my English. Yes No

9. I try not to use my own language out of class. Yes No

10. It doesn't bother me if I make mistakes. Yes No

One of the advantages of systematically incorporating into one's teaching these learning-how-to learn tasks is that learners become aware not only of their' own preferred ways of learning, but also of the fact that there are choices, not only in what to learn but also in how to learn. They should encourage learners both to be more flexible in their approaches to learning, and to experiment with a range of learning experiences. I have found learners who are initially antipathetic to group work and other interactive tasks becoming both committed to, and enthusiastic about, such tasks as a result of experimentation and reflection.

III. Task-based Practical work.

§ 1. The place of tasks in the language classroom.

In this paragraph we shall consider the place of the task in the teaching-learning process. We shall first set the scene by providing a brief overview of the use of tasks in foreign language teaching. We shall then look at tasks from a cognitive viewpoint and consider the cognitive processes involved in carrying them out. Following this, we focus on the notion of purposefulness of learning activities. To illustrate this, we shall use Feuerstein's thinking skills programme known as 'Instrumental Enrichment' and present a selection of tasks that teach both language and thinking skills. Finally we consider tasks from an educational perspective, taking a constructivist approach. Our focus will be upon an educational rationale for the selection and presentation of tasks, upon the ways in which teachers exemplify their theories of learning by the kinds of tasks they present to their classes, and the sense that learners make of their learning experiences.

Tasks in foreign language teaching.

In this first section we shall explore briefly some issues involved in the use of tasks for language learning. This is well covered elsewhere in the literature, so we shall make brief mention only of aspects of tasks that relate to our subsequent discussion in this chapter of psychological and educational perspectives on learning tasks.

What is involved in a language learning task has been interpreted differently by language teachers as approaches to foreign language teaching have changed. In a grammar-translation approach, for example, a reasonable task might be to complete sentences with the correct form of the verbs supplied. In a topic-centred approach, an appropriate task might be to observe plants growing and describe the ways in which they change. Basically, a task is anything that learners are given to do (or choose to do) in the language classroom to further the process of language learning. The important point is that the specific interpretations taken will be determined by the different views that teachers have of the teaching-learning process, how they believe second language

acquisition is best facilitated, and the approach to language teaching that they subscribe to either implicitly or explicitly.

The language teaching literature provides a multiplicity of definitions and interpretations of the term 'task', which are well surveyed by Kumaravadivelu (1993:70-2)[18]. However, we shall take a broad definition, as explained above, that a task is any activity that learners engage in to further the process of learning a language.

In recent years, however, the term 'task' has taken on a particular meaning, as increasing attention has been focussed on what has become known as a '.task-based' approach to foreign and second language teaching. There is now a considerable volume of literature on this (Nunan 1989;[19] Candlin and Murphy 1987; Crookes and Gass 1993a; Legutke and Thomas 1991), as well as on task-based syllabi (Prabhu 1987; White 1988; Long and Crookes 1993; Nunan 1993). In addition, tasks have increasingly been used as units for research into second language acquisition (e.g. Crookes and Gass 1993b). Thus, the task has recently become a central pedagogical tool for the language teacher as well as a basic unit for language syllabus design and research.

One of the driving forces behind the current surge of interest in tasks within the foreign language classroom has been psycholinguistic. Studies of second language acquisition and theories about the way in which individuals acquire a foreign language suggest that a learner's language system develops through communicating meaningfully in, the target language. In other words, individuals acquire a foreign language through the process of interacting, negotiating and conveying meanings in the language in purposeful situations. Thus a task, in this sense, is seen as a forum within which such meaningful interaction between two or more participants can take place. It is through the ensuing exchange and negotiation of meanings that learners' knowledge of the language system develops.

Arising from the notion of task-based methodology is an approach to syllabus design which takes the task as its basic unit. A task-based syllabus is one that is based

[18] Kumaravadivelu, B. 1993. The name of the task and the task of naming: methodological Cleveland. UK: Multilingual matters.
[19] Nunan, D. 1989. Designing tasks for the communicative classroom. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

on the process of learning, that is, on how individuals learn a language rather than on a pre-selection of language items to be taught. This type of syllabus consists of a series of tasks, and it is in carrying out these tasks that learners are engaged in meaningful communication in the target language, thereby acquiring the language.

Different versions of a task-based syllabus have been proposed. One is the procedural syllabus which arose from the work of Prabhu and his co-workers in Bangalore, in India (Prabhu 1987). Prabhu's concept of task involved cognitive processes, and was defined as:

An activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process.

(1987:24)

A procedural syllabus consisted of a series of tasks that were intellectually challenging, and which the learners carried out in the target language, thereby focussing on meaning rather than form. The main difference between this and other task-based approaches lay not so much in the tasks themselves but in the absence of any focus on the formal properties of the language. Other approaches to task-based syllabus design generally include a conscious focus on the form of the language, while still conceiving of the task as a forum for meaningful interactions to take place.

Task components.

Many attempts have been made by those involved in language teaching to identify the elements that make up a task. One such analysis is that of Nunan (1989, 1993), who sees tasks as consisting of six elements. The first of these is the input data, which is the material that the learners work on, for example a newspaper article or a radio broadcast. Tasks also involve one or more activities or procedures, which is what the learners actually do with the input. In addition they include goals, roles of teachers, roles of learners and a setting.

In our discussion of tasks we shall mainly be concerned with the first two elements; input and activities, both of which relate more specifically to the task itself, having already considered what learners bring to the learning situation and the

mediating role that teachers can play. The influence of the setting will be described in the next chapter. However, it is important to stress at the same time that it is impossible to consider these factors without some reference to the others. Nunan's model is helpful as it serves to underline a point we have already emphasised, that these elements necessarily affect one another in a dynamic and interactive way.

A different perspective on the elements that constitute a task is provided by Legutke and Thomas (1991),[20] who see tasks primarily as a part of an interactive process whose rationale lies within a social and an educational framework rather than a purely psycholinguistic one. They identify three major elements of such an interactive process; the individual, the group and the theme; which they call I, We and Theme dimensions of tasks. These maintain a 'dynamic balance' in what they term theme-centered interaction. Their model is shown (see appendix 1). These three dimensions are in addition subject to the influences of a 'global dimension' consisting of institutional and societal pressures.

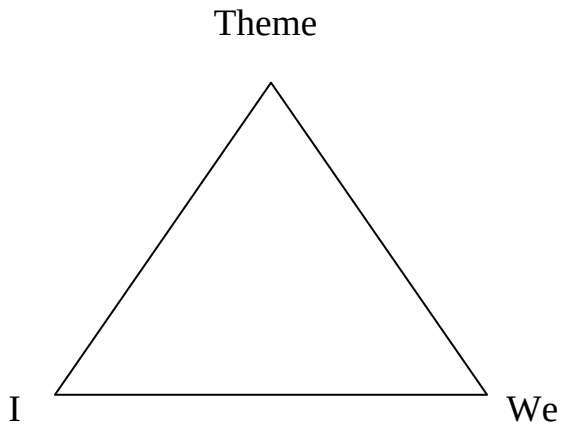


Figure 1. Theme-centered interaction (Legutke and Thomas 1991).

Legutke and Thomas's model deserves particular mention because of its emphasis on the interactive nature of tasks as well as the dynamic nature of the contributions made by the different dimensions. Under the I dimension is included all that the individual learners and the teacher bring to the learning situation. Both are significant as it is teachers who set up learning events in the classroom, but also learners who contribute to setting up these points of encounter and who interpret

[20] Legutke, M. and Thomas, H. 1991. Process and experience in the language classroom. Harlow: Longman.

them in their own ways. For the learner, the I dimension encompasses both implicit contributions that learners bring, such as experience, feelings, attitudes and skills, and also what they contribute explicitly through language such as information or perceptions. This same distinction applies to teachers as well. Their implicit attitudes, empathy, self-knowledge, etc. affect their explicit contributions to the learning situation, such as the choice of whether they act as informant and transmitter or co-ordinator and facilitator.

The We dimension is a particularly interesting addition to the debate. Legutke and Thomas argue that learning takes place within the framework of the group, and any interaction generated by tasks is affected by group processes such as group anxieties, taboos, rejections, power, goals and agendas, and rivalries.

Their third dimension, the Theme, represents more than a topic or subject. It is seen as 'a dynamic element taking shape in an interactional process which mediates learners' interests . . . with the interests and preferences of the teacher' (1991:24). It is thus jointly constructed and is related to and determined by such aspects as the learners' world knowledge and culture. We would add that the way in which any lesson unfolds is a joint construction between all the participants, including learners and the teacher. Thus, tasks will be jointly interpreted in this way by the participants involved.

The models of Nunan and Legutke and Thomas have some similarities. Both highlight the interactive nature of tasks and point to the futility of taking an oversimplistic view of tasks in isolation without considering the role of the other elements. In any discussion of tasks it is important to consider how all of these elements interact with each other. A task may have a sound psycholinguistic underpinning, as we described above, that is, it may fit neatly within a task-based approach and be designed to generate meaningful interaction between the participants. However, it is ultimately the way in which learners and teachers interact with tasks in a specific context that will determine how they are actually used in practice. So, for example, a task that is designed to promote interaction will not in itself guarantee that it is used to achieve that purpose. It could equally well be used by some teachers in a very mechanical way.

Another point worth mentioning here is that while both models include the teachers' contributions, neither gives us any detail as to how teachers carry out their different roles or how they act as mediators in designing or presenting tasks to learners. We have covered this aspect, but it is worth re-emphasising here that any consideration of presenting tasks to learners must include the mediating role of the teacher as well as the actual design of the task itself.

Other important issues that have been addressed by those working in this field are the categorisation of tasks, task authenticity, interactional features of tasks, how to select or design tasks, and how to grade and sequence them. Since these concerns have been well surveyed by Nunan (1989) and others, we shall confine ourselves next to a brief mention of the grading of tasks in foreign language teaching to provide a background to our subsequent discussion of the cognitive processes involved in carrying out tasks.

Grading tasks and task difficulty.

The grading of tasks is a particularly complex issue because of the many different elements that contribute to task difficulty, all of which overlap and influence each other. It is also notoriously difficult to determine what is easier or more difficult as this will vary from person to person and from one situation to another.

Nunan (1993-116) [21] provides a useful analysis of some of these factors. First, task difficulty can be affected by the input provided. This includes:

- the grammatical complexity of the text;
- the length of the text;.
- the propositional density (i.e. how much information is contained in the input);
- the vocabulary used;
- the speed of listening texts and the number of speakers involved;
- the explicitness of the information;

[21] Nunan, D. 1993. Task-based syllabus design: selecting, grading and sequencing tasks. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

- the genre, discourse structure and sequencing of items in the text (see also Brown and Yule 1983);
- the amount of support in the form of pictures, etc. (see also Bransford and Johnson 1972).

A second way in which the difficulty of tasks can be affected is by changing the activity that the learners are required to carry out. A particular piece of text can be used in a variety of different ways. For example, learners can be asked to sequence pieces of the text, or to transfer the information provided to a different form such as a chart, to say whether they agree or disagree with the text, or to use it as a basis for discussion. Thirdly, Nunan discusses the effect of learner factors, which include all that the learner brings to the task, such as confidence, motivation, prior experience, learner capability and knowledge, and cultural awareness, issues we have considered in previous chapters. It is worth noting here that Nunan does not include a discussion of the cognitive operations required to carry out tasks. This is a factor we shall elaborate on in the next section of this chapter.

A different perspective on the question of task difficulty is provided by Prabhu (1987:87-8),[22] who identifies five contributing factors:

1 the amount and type of information provided;
2 the amount of reasoning or cognitive operation needed;
3 the precision needed;
4 the learners' knowledge of the world and familiarity with the purposes and constraints of the task;
5 the degree of abstractness of the concepts dealt with in the task.

Prabhu's second factor is in fact concerned with cognitive processes. However, he does not provide us with a categorisation of these processes.

Nunan (1989:109-12) reviews three other categorisations of factors relating to task

[22] Prabhu, N.S. 1987. Second language pedagogy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

difficulty, which we shall now summarise. In the first of these, Candlin (1987) [23]offers a taxonomy which focusses solely on the nature of the task. The factors that he identifies are:

- cognitive complexity;
- communicative difficulty;
- whether the task follows a general sequence of operations or whether this is unclear;
- linguistic complexity;
- continuity between tasks.

Candlin and Nunan (1987), on the other hand, offer a list which is based upon the cognitive operations required of the learner:

- attending to or noticing or recognising the input;
- making sense of the input, e.g. how the language is organised and structured;
- processing information (e.g. hypothesising, inferring);
- transferring and generalising what is learned.

This list shows some similarity to aspects of Feuerstein's cognitive map, which will be discussed below, particularly with regard to the notion of phase.

A third set of categorisations is offered by Brindley (1987) who suggests that difficulty is determined by the following factors:

- relevance to the learner;
- complexity (number of steps involved, complexity of instructions, cognitive demands, quantity of information);
- amount of context provided and knowledge of the world required;
- language demands;
- assistance given;
- accuracy required;

[23] Candlin, C. 1987. Toward task-based learning. Englewood Cliffs; N.J.: Prentice Hall.

- time available.

Brindley has widened the range of significant variables to contain some related to the activity itself, some to the learner and some to the teacher.

Thus, it can be seen that different people have approached the question of task difficulty in a variety of ways. There is, however, one further important influence on task difficulty that has received considerable attention, that is, the different kinds of interaction generated by different types of tasks.

§ 2. Tools for activating materials and tasks.

Most teachers have seen the reactions students can .have to tasks and activities that they do not find engaging: the glassy or rolling eyes, the unfocused behavior, and the cries of "Not again!" This paragraph provides practical techniques that help me learn better "activate" materials and tasks in the English language classroom while tapping into students' interests, needs, and aims. Activation techniques, then, are tools to make materials and tasks more interactive and more learner-focused, encouraging students to take more responsibility for their own learning. This paragraph demonstrates activating techniques through three strategies: elicitation, gapping, and adaptation/ extension.

Elicitation.

Elicitation is the process of drawing out something, of provoking a response. Using elicitation as a questioning strategy in the language classroom focuses discussion on the learners—on their ideas, opinions, imagination, and involvement. Classroom discussions that use elicitation as a technique allow students to draw on what they know—on existing schemata/scaffolding—and provide for a rich sharing of ideas within a sociocultural context (Huong 2003). Graves[24] (in Nunan 2003) points out that elicitation, "because it emphasizes learners' experience and knowledge," helps "to take the focus off of the text as the source of authority and helps learners become more self-reliant" (237). Elicitation is also an excellent lead-in to many other activities that

[24] Graves, K. 2003. Coursebooks. In practical English language teaching. New York: McGraw-Hill.

exercise critical thinking and inquiry (Ngeow and Kong 2003). As illustration, here are two elicitation activities: extended brainstorming and a top-down vocabulary elicitation game.

Extended brainstorming.

Brainstorming has but one rule: there is no such thing as a mistake. Anything goes; all ideas are equal and welcome. To practice brainstorming, teachers should draw on topics that students know and care about. As a, teachers, we always enjoy learning about student interests, aims, and cultures through Frierian problem-posing, through collaboration and negotiation, and by focusing on loaded, culturally significant topics (Kabilan 2000; Engiander 2002).[25]

With a Frierian problem-posing approach, the classroom focus moves from a "banking model," where "memorization and regurgitation' and "right answers" are emphasized, to a learning environment where students are asked to reflect critically, where exploration is encouraged, and where there are multiple ways to construct solutions to problems (Serendip 2003). My teachers taught me the importance of negotiating topics and activities to make them more relevant to students' needs and interests. When I was teaching a large, mixed-level, mixed-background English as a Second Language (ESL) class during my practice and the textbook often left the students uninterested and feeling that the lesson was irrelevant. Many expressed this disconnect by not paying attention and by engaging in behaviors disruptive to other Students. So, instead of going page by page through the textbook, I had the students reflect and ask questions about the subject matter to link to topics they knew and cared about studying, such as low-rider cars, something most of the students had a high level of interest and expertise in. We covered much of the same language-learning content of the chapter in the textbook—which was on travel by car—but we did it through focus on a topic the students truly cared about discussing. The interest was such that the students enthusiastically "published" their own handwritten and typed newsletters, which they posted in the classroom and shared with other students. And if students are

[25] Kabilan, M.K. 2000. Creative and critical thinking in the language classroom. English Teaching Forum.

not excited about cars, other topics could include regional or traditional foods, activities, hobbies, or current events.

The first step in the process of brainstorming is to elicit responses from students as a group. Students should be encouraged to respond quickly with the first things that come to mind and to call them out to be included together on a map on the board. As the students give their responses, the teacher e**,** can help them see the connections between the generated vocabulary producing a mind map that links like terms together by circling key concepts and drawing lines to connect circles.

After the teacher has mapped out the brainstorm, the next step is to ask students to take on the roles of investigative journalists and look at the various facets of the topic under examination through these primary questions:

WHAT?

WHO?

WHERE?

WHEN?

HOW?

WHY?

Students work in groups to brainstorm the topic and one or more of the investigative questions. Depending on the size of the class, we might have each group work with one question word, or one group work with WHAT and WHO and another with WHERE and WHEN, and so forth. But it is important that the groups share the results and that WHY questions or the WHY group be last, as WHY is the existential question, the question that requires highest-order thinking skills. This overall approach allows the class to investigate findings together, come to conclusions, and perhaps develop thesis statements for potential writing projects.

The activity generates a list of vocabulary items and/or questions. About the topic of "falafel," for example, students could generate either a list of words or questions in relation to WHAT (What is it? What does it look like, smell like, taste like, feel like, or sound like while you eat it? What are the ingredients?). The brainstorm can generate questions that the students answer later, and/or a list of words or phrases that link the

topic with WHAT. WHO typically generates questions such as Who is involved in eating or preparing falafel? and related questions such as How wide is the distribution of people who partake in the phenomenon of falafel? Do people of all ages and social standing know about falafel? WHERE and WHEN generate questions and vocabulary about locations where falafel is made (Where is it made? Where is it most popular?) and contextualize the times and rituals associated with it **(**When do people typically eat it?). The HOW questions help students focus on processes: How is falafel made? How is it eaten? How of en does one eat it? Finally, WHY helps students understand how to organize their research and agree upon conclusions: Why is falafel such a popular food? What research findings from the other questions support the conclusion? As this "WHY" example shows, students are free to add follow-up questions that do not necessarily begin with the same question word; the key is that the questions will lead to an investigation of the topic.

What results from this collaborative effort is a focused, collaborative look at a topic, a preliminary way to organize a great deal of material (the falafel brainstorm might generate a thesis such as, "Falafel is a popular traditional food in the Middle East because it is cheap, tasty, and quick to eat") and establish the basis for writing class publications/ newsletters and cross-cultural exchange projects. These publications can be handwritten, typed, or printed on paper, or they can be published via email, blogs, social networking sites, or other online forums (see http:// oelp.uoregon.edu/learn.html for examples of keypal and cross-cultural exchange sites). Because students are interested in the topic to begin with, they naturally want to learn more about it and are eager to share what they learn.

Elicitation vocabulary games.

Another way elicitation can help students develop questioning skills and strategies is through vocabulary games. The one students particularly enjoy has many permutations. In the game, a student or group of students elicits from other students a list of words headed by a title concept. A typical vocabulary set could be about nouns for example, Things in a School: blackboards, students, teachers, desks, pencils, erasers, chalk, textbooks. A vocabulary set could also be defined by the first letter of the words

or by rhyme, such as Words That Start with "B": boys, book, bicycle, bird, big, blue and Words That Rhyme with "Eye": I, my, cry, high, lie, buy, why. The set could include actions: Things to Do at School: study, discuss, explain, write, read, listen, learn, teach. It could be a more complex list of emotions: happiness, sadness, loneliness, frustration, surprise, relief. The number of the words in a list can vary; rules and difficulty can be adjusted for student level. The pedagogic value of the task is in the amount of involvement and practice that the students experience. Typically, the topic and the list of items appear on a card; in pairs or small groups, students try to elicit the vocabulary items on their card from their partner or others in their small group, or from the whole class.

To get the game started, the teacher can demonstrate by using a card that has a topic with vocabulary items that should be familiar to the students; the teacher gives clues so that the class can guess each of the words on the list. Topics can be of general interest or drawn from a recent lesson or class unit. The idea is to foster oral communication, so all clues should be given verbally no pointing, gesturing, or mimicking an action with a set time limit, typically one to three minutes. While demonstrating how the game works, the teacher should pattern the interaction before students work together, illustrating elicitation strategies such as the following:

- giving definitions (what something is or is not);
- providing attributes (large, small, red, square);
- giving functions (used for X; not used for doing Y);
- comparing or contrasting;
- providing a word that the target word rhymes with;
- telling what letter the word starts or ends with (if the students get stuck).

Students get their cards, with a topic and a list of vocabulary items, then prepare and practice in pairs or small groups to give clues that will elicit the vocabulary from the rest of the class or, more precisely, from the other groups. In large classes, limiting the guesses to one per group helps all groups listen more carefully; it also prevents groups from shouting our random guesses, and it forces the speaker to continue providing information about the target word so that groups can gain confidence that

their one guess is correct. Another option is to keep a tally of points each group scores as it successfully elicits the vocabulary items from the other groups.

At first, the teacher will have to prepare cards showing the topic and the list of vocabulary items to be elicited, but once the students learn the rules and have practiced eliciting successfully, the next step is to have the students write their own vocabulary cards, essentially creating the content of the game. Students at different levels of proficiency can come up with their own topics and make their own cards by listing words for each topic. Students can draw subject matter for the cards from vocabulary and topics covered in class as well as from topics of interest. Collaboratively developing their own cards and elicitation strategies allows the students to reflect on what they know and to use critical-thinking skills to order their vocabulary. It also helps the students take the lead in their own learning, to write and help construct materials. And those materials help the teacher, too; as the students produce a portfolio with more and more cards, the teacher can keep a copy of the new materials to use as review or to use with other classes.

Gapping.

Gapping refers to the authentic purpose for communication: transferring information, or bridging the gap, from one person to another. In a language classroom, using gapping activities means that each learner needs to negotiate, collaborate, and exchange information toward a common goal. Gapping also provides variety and fosters group work with existing readings and materials. As illustration, we can look at three gapped activities: Riddle Schmooze, Monster Madness, and Grids Galore. These activities can be modified to integrate additional vocabulary, prompt a new lesson, or review grammar.

Riddle Schmooze.

To "schmooze" is to exchange information, or to chat informally; to come up with a gapped schmooze activity, one needs to have pieces or parts to complete a communicative act. Participants might have parts of a picture and need to find complementary pieces to make a whole. Or they may have different sections of a

printed text (sometimes referred to as a jigsaw reading). Schmooze activities provide students with an opportunity to move about a room, make some (communicative) noise, and practice different registers: for instance, how to greet someone and how to politely interrupt ongoing conversations (e.g., "If you wouldn't mind, I'd like to ask your assistance"; "I'm sorry to bother you ..."; "Hey, dog/dude/man, give me a hand!").

To begin the riddle schmooze activity, the teacher gives each student two slips of paper. On one is a riddle question and on the other is an answer—the answer to a different riddle (see Appendix 2) Students have one to three minutes to memorize both. Then they fold the riddle and answer and give them back to the teacher. Next comes the noisy mayhem of a classroom of English language learners bridging the gap—chatting with other students to find the answer for their riddle and the riddle for their answer. The teacher should give a time limit and have the students sit down as soon as they have found their riddles and answers. In a variation of this activity, instead of riddles, each student can be given a vocabulary word and the definition for a different vocabulary word and asked to match the word to a classmate's definition and the definition to a classmate's word. In all cases, students are bridging the gap as they fit pieces of information they have with pieces of their classmates' information. (With larger classes, the teacher can copy sets of riddles/answers or vocabulary/ definition sets and have the students work in groups. For example, a class with 50 students could divide into two to five groups, with each group receiving identical sets of riddles.)

A secondary assignment once students finish schmoozing and sit down is to have them jot down alternative answers to their riddles or come up with any other riddles that they know. When the time is up, the teacher calls the students together and has each student ask his or her riddle to the whole group and goes over the responses. And if riddle answers are not clear to everyone, some students may be able to do the explaining.

Teachers can adapt schmooze activities to work with any question/answer format and with pictures or graphics. And once students have learned how schmoozing works, they can readily develop schmoozing materials by using class lessons or topics of interest, so that, as with the elicitation vocabulary games described above, students end

up generating content for future classes. Whatever the content, schmoozing gap activities provide a fun, interactive way to review vocabulary or practice for a test.

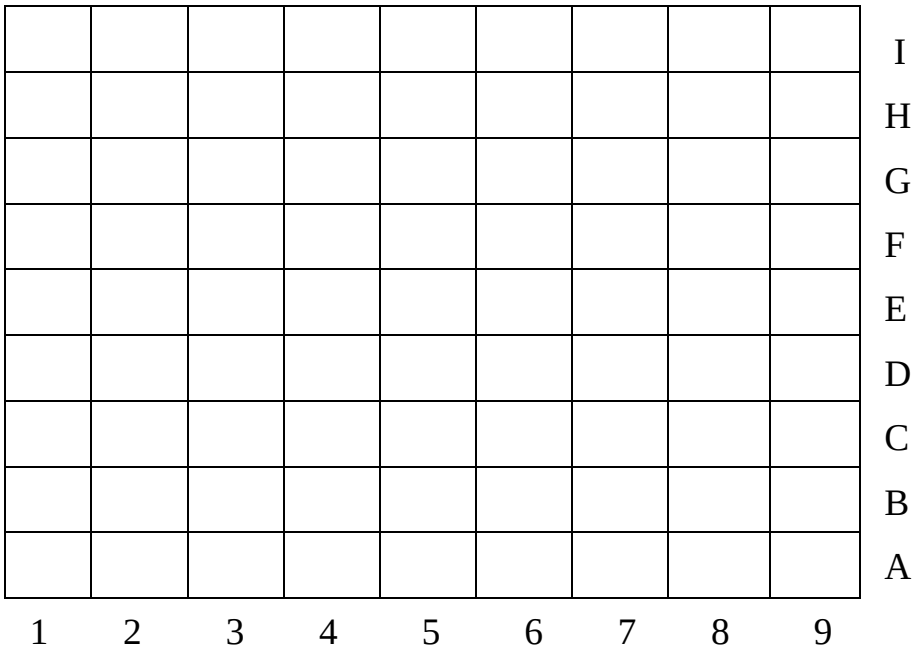
Monster Madness.

In this activity (thanks to Eric Dwyer from Florida International University), students draw a monster using only geometric shapes. The students then pair off, sit back-to-back, and describe what their monsters look like. The students alternate between describing their own monster, and listening to the description of their partner's monster and reproducing it. Preparation for the activity can include reviewing how to describe shapes (square, rectangle, circle, etc.), how to give directions and locations ("Start by drawing a two-centimeter square in the upper left-hand corner; then ... "), or how to compare and contrast ("The circle is twice as large as the square"). For a wrap-up activity, have students summarize how the gapped picture is different from the original. Spin-off activities include having students describe differences in photographs or drawings.

Grids Galore.

Grids provide many possibilities for gapped speaking practice. They allow the teacher and students to use the format with all kinds of content that is created by and for a particular teaching context. Grids also work with a variety of teaching levels. The directions are much like those for Monster Madness: each participant (or group) gives verbal directions to a partner (or other members of the group), who fills in boxes on the grid (that each of the participants has) without showing it to her or his partner(s). The students then compare the original grid with the grids filled in by each listener. The result can take the form of a correct final destination (for example, Box Al), or the result can be a picture that the listeners create by filling in the appropriate squares.

Grids can be almost any size, and it is fine to have students draw the grids themselves to prepare for the activity. Here is one example with varied question content:



Partner A directions

1.If the past tense of go is gone, mark an X in the box in Al. However, if the past tense of go is went, mark an X in the box in A2.

2.If the plural of tooth is tooths, mark an X two boxes to the right, one box up. But if the plural of tooth is teeth, mark an X three boxes to the right, two rows up.

3.If the middle name of U.S. President Barack Obama is "Harry," mark an X on the next box to the right, same row. But if President Obama's middle name is "Hussein," mark an X on the next box to the right, one row down.

4.If the plural of child is children, mark an X six rows up, on the same column. But if the plural of child is childs, mark an X six rows up, one row to the right.

5.If reading is more fun than singing, mark an X two boxes to the right and four boxes down. If, however, singing is more fun than reading, mark an X three boxes to the left and one box down.

Partner B directions

1.If the past of see is seen, mark an X in the Al square. However, if the past of see is said, mark an X in the A4 square.

2.If the past of see is seen, mark an X in the Al square. However, if the past of see is said, mark an X in the A4 square.

3.If falafel is a plant, mark an X one box to the right, one row above. But if falafel is a tasty food, mark an X one box to the right, one row down.

4.If people who don't eat meat are called veterinarians, mark an X in the column to the left, same row. But if people who don't eat meat are called vegetarians, mark an X in the column to the left, two rows up.

5.If English is easier than math, mark an X four boxes to the right, in the same row. If, however, English **is** more difficult than math, mark an X two boxes to the right, in the same row.

Once students become familiar with grids, even more learning and interactive fun take place when the students write their own grids to practice vocabulary or grammar or to review content covered in class. Valuable interaction and negotiation take place as students practice their listening skills and follow directions and when they discuss why and how they came up with different solutions or even how the questions could be changed to be clearer or more concise. Open-ended discussion questions (such as in each #5 above) can also be included as springboards for debates or to link to upcoming topics and themes. The communicative value of the activity, then, comes as much as or more from the process (providing added language practice) than from producing the finished, "correct" grid.

Extending and adapting.

Extending and adapting are Techniques that offer a practical way for teachers to draw on realia and authentic materials to spice up classroom activities. Adapting allows for materials to be drawn from unlimited sources that the students already know and care about. With teachers’ guidance, students can readily identify fun formats and adapt

them to the classroom. Ideas from board and card games, from local game shows (see Appendix3) and from puzzles can be applied to learning English. Other possibilities for adapting or extending materials and activities from students' ideas and other resources follow.

Scenarios and role play.

These activities can be used in conjunction with a loaded theme of interest to students. Many students respond to a scene of conflict at work or between parent and child. These scenes or strategic interactions (Alatis 1993) can also be taken from a picture or news report, and students can be asked to discuss one role (or one side of an issue) in a small group; they then either elect one student to represent the group or, better yet, act out the scenario collectively after planning together. This activity is not to be confused with reading aloud a dialog or the parts of a play because in these strategic interactions, no one knows the outcome of the exchange in advance. Students must actively negotiate toward a solution or to clarify the situation. And the activity can be beneficial even if students do not reach a clear-cut solution, as learning occurs throughout the process of performing scenarios, regardless of the outcomes. Teachers can focus on providing language forms (such as modals, expressions, idioms, and verb forms) to help the students prepare for the exercise and, as a wrap-up or debriefing, provide a summary of language-learning points learned or needed. Students can also summarize who they feel "won" the exercise, explain why, and make their own observations on language used or language they needed in order to be more effective in expressing their ideas.

Topics for scenarios can come from students' personal lives, their communication with other students and teachers at school, work environments, or scenes taken from readings or literature. Two scenarios, with role cards for students (see Appendix 4 a,b).

Group presentations, reports, and newscasts.

Students take a theme or topic and work together to present their ideas in a cohesive format. They can write individual or group reports and then work together to present to the rest of the class a program, or a newscast, that has an introduction and a conclusion.

This activity can be done as a daily or weekly presentation that allows students to share topics of interest. The class can post presentations and reports on blogs, on social networking sites, or as collaborative, cross-cultural exchanges.

While blogs or networking sites would be problematic (or impossible) in contexts where access to the Internet is limited or not available, in-class newscasts can work anywhere, and teachers can incorporate them as a regular feature of their classes. Students, individually or in groups, are responsible for the newscasts on a rotating basis, whether they are done daily or weekly, and take on roles such as reporter, interviewer or interviewee(s), anchorperson, and so on. These roles can change as the group's turn to present the newscast comes around again. Not only do students get opportunities to practice speaking and to use vocabulary they might not otherwise use, but newscasts also give students opportunities to introduce and discuss issues of international, national, local, or schoolwide interest.

Peer review and publication committees.

Student publications can include class newsletters or newspapers for which the students function as writers, peer editors, and editorial writers. Students identify topics of interest and relevance and do research on their topics. The teacher functions as a co-worker or senior editor on the publication, offering consultation and guidance as needed. The longer and more elaborate the publication, the more time and collaborative effort will be required.

Another option for class newsletters is to publish shorter articles on a class blog (www. blogger.com is one example) or on collaborative, customized social networking websites such as www.ning.com. For newscasts, students can make live ptesentations to the class or record their sessions and save them as podcasts or post them as videos on sites such as www.youtube.com.

Student evaluation and practice test writing.

Students work in groups to come up with practice quizzes and exercises to review for upcoming tests. The teacher helps the students reflect on what they have learned by prompting them with a list of language objectives reached (from lesson and unit planning, for example) and through guiding the students to compile portfolios to list and

share what they have accomplished in class over a set period of time. Students can develop practice activities in the form of elicitation cards, grids, games, or scenarios (as derailed above) or as review questions or language review exercises. Many students enjoy playing the role of "teacher," asking questions to the class or developing short quizzes for their peers.

If the class has access to computers, the program Hot Potatoes is an easy-to-learn and fun-to-use tool to draft exercises that will work on any computer or that can be easily posted online (see http://hotpot.uvic.ca/ to download).

§3. Task-based activities.

The functions of topic and task.

This paragraph looks at some key components that make for successful oral fluency activities. A good way to study these is through the group experiment suggested below; or simply look briefly at Box 3, and then read on to the following sections.

Group experiment: Comparing two activities.

Stage 1: Experience

In Box 3 is a description of two oral fluency activities. Try them out in small groups, one after the other, allowing about five minutes for each. You can do this with colleagues, or with a class of learners whose English is fairly advanced. During the activities, try - even if you are participating yourself - to keep an eye on how things are going: how much people are talking, the kind of language they are using, how interested and motivated they seem to be.

Stage 2: Comparing

Now compare the two: which was more successful in producing good oral fluency practice? If you felt that one was noticeably more successful than the other, can you put your finger on some of the reasons why? Was it the topic? The task? The organization?

BOX 3: TYPES OF ORAL FLUENCY ACTIVITIES

Activity 1

Discuss the following conflicting opinions.

Opinion 1. Children should be taught in heterogeneous classes: setting them into ability groupings puts a 'failure' label onto members of the lower groups, whereas putting more and less able learners together encourages the slower ones to progress faster, without penalizing the more able.

Opinion 2. Children should be divided into ability groupings for most subjects; this enables the less able ones to be taught at a pace suitable for them, while the better students do not need to wait for the slower ones to catch up.

Activity 2

A good schoolteacher should have the following qualities. Can your group agree together in what order of priority you would put them?

sense of humour	enthusiasm for
honesty	pleasant appearance
love of children	fairness
knowledge of subject	ability to create interest
flexibility	ability to keep order
clear speaking voice	intelligence

Topic- and task-based activities.

The main difference between the two activities in Box 3 is that the first is topic-based and the second task-based. In other words, the first simply asks participants to talk about a (controversial) subject, the main objective being clearly the discussion process itself; the second asks them actually to perform something, where the discussion process is a means to an end.[26]

Topic. A good topic is one to which learners can relate using ideas from their own experience and knowledge; the 'ability-grouping' topic is therefore appropriate for most

[26] Hyland, K. 1991. Developing oral presentation skills. English Teaching Forum, 29,2 pp 35-7.

schoolchildren, schoolteachers or young people whose school memories are fresh. It should also represent a genuine controversy, in which participants are likely to be fairly evenly divided (as my own classes tend to be on this one). Some questions or suggested lines of thought can help to stimulate discussion, but not too many arguments for and against should be 'fed' to the class in advance: leave room for their own initiative and originality.

A topic-centred discussion can be done as a formal debate, where a motion is proposed and opposed by prepared speakers, discussed further by members of the group, and finally voted on by all.

Task. A task is essentially goal-oriented: it requires the group, or pair, to achieve an objective that is usually expressed by an observable result, such as brief notes or lists, a rearrangement of jumbled items, a drawing, a spoken summary. This result should be attainable only by interaction between participants: so within the definition of the task you often find instructions such as 'reach a consensus', or 'find out everyone's opinion'.

A task is often enhanced if there is some kind of visual focus to base the talking on: a picture, for example.

Tasks that stimulate writing.

Tasks given in textbooks to stimulate writing do not always do so very effectively. When you are selecting activities or designing your own for a class, you are teaching, what arc your chief considerations? In Box 1 are some of my own, expressed as questions.

Box 1: Some criteria for the evaluation of textbook writing activities.

1. Would my students find the activity motivating, stimulating and interesting to do?
2. Is it of an appropriate level for them? Or would they find it too easy/difficult/ childish/sophisticated?
3. Is the kind of writing relevant to their needs?
4. Would I need to do some preliminary teaching in preparation for this activity?

5. In general, do I like this activity? Would I use it?

The task below asks you to criticize various types of writing activities as vehicles for promoting writing skills. An alternative to the task is simply to study the list of activities in the light of the following Comments.

Evaluating writing activities.

In Box 2 are some writing activities of types commonly found in coursebooks. How would you evaluate them for use in a particular class? The class can be one you are teaching or have taught; or one you remember participating in as a student; or even a hypothetical one, which you can imagine teaching. If you answered the question above, then you have a list of appropriate criteria ready; otherwise you might find it useful to refer to those provided in Box 1.

Box 2: Some textbook writing activities.

1. Write a report of a book you have just read.

2Write a review of a book you enjoyed and would like to recommend to other people in the class.

3Write an instruction sheet for something you yourself know how to do well e.g. prepare some kind of food.

4. Write a narrative based on a picture or series of pictures.

5. Describe an occasion when you were disappointed (or afraid, surprised, relieved ...).

6. Look out of the window, and describe the view you see.

7. Describe someone you know very well.

8. Write imaginary descriptions of five people, based on photographs and some information about their professions.

9. Write an answer to a (given) letter of complaint.

10. Write a letter applying for a job as babysitter, stating your qualifications for re job.

11. Think of a change you would like to see introduced in your country, home community or place of work/study. Write a recommendation to the authorities, explaining why it is desirable and suggesting how it might be effected.

12. Read a newspaper article reporting e piece of news, and notice the kinds of information provided. Write a similar article of your own on an imaginary event.
13. Imagine your ideal school. Describe it.
14. Describe the process represented in a flowchart or other kind of diagram.
15. Listen to a piece of music. Describe the plot and atmosphere of the film for which it is to be the background music.

Comments: Writing tasks.

1. Book report.
Can be a fairly routine, rather boring, exercise; usually done in order to check that students have read a book, rather than for the sake of the writing. Some preliminary guidance is sometimes needed on content and organization.
2. Book review.
About the same level as (1), also needing some preliminary guidance; but the writing is more purposeful, audience-oriented and interesting to do. There is some point in rewriting and polishing the reviews for publishing within the class (on a class noticeboard, for example).
3. Instruction sheet.
Students usually find this interesting to do, and a little easier than (1) and (2). You may wish to give some advice on the layout of instructions.
4. Narrative.
A fairly interesting task that can be adapted for most levels. It does depend on preparation of suitable pictures, perhaps cut from magazines.
5. Personal story.
On the whole students are motivated to write (and read) about personal experiences; also, each can write at his or her own level of proficiency. Preparation: perhaps a brief sample of a personal story contributed by the teacher or a volunteer student.
6. Describe a view.

This can be interesting, but should be kept fairly short; it can be done at various levels of proficiency. If no window with a view is available, students can be asked to recall and describe a view they are familiar with.

7. Describe someone.

Fairly easy to do, and straightforward to present; can be interesting both to write and read.

8. Describe people.

Of about the same level as *(7);* can also be interesting, because of the stimulus to the imagination - but of course demands more preparation.

9. Answer a letter.

Usually a highly motivating task, fairly advanced, with a clear audience and purpose. As it stands, you need to prepare the original letter; an alternative is to ask all the students to write letters of complaint, and later answer each other's letters. Some pre-teaching of conventional letter formalities and layout in the target language is necessary.

10. Job application.

Again, some conventions about letters like this will need to be taught, and perhaps some details about the exact job being applied for.

11. Propose change.

Advanced writing, involving the organized and convincing presentation of an argument. You may or may not feel it necessary to read a similar piece of writing with the students in advance, to supply a model.

12. News report.

This is clear 'model-imitation' writing, which is perhaps useful, but not very interesting to do. It may be more interesting if it is a report of a genuine local event. In preparation, you may need to draw learners' attention to the typical features of this genre of written discourse.

13. Ideal school.

A task which is interesting and relevant for schoolchildren. Little preparation is necessary, apart from, perhaps, some preliminary brainstorming of the kinds of topics they may wish to include.

14. Describe process.

A more sophisticated task, requiring precise and orderly representation of facts: suitable particularly for learners in science or technology.

15. Film music.

A stimulating, fun task for imaginative students, but it may take time to select and prepare a suitable piece of music.

Reading text and task.

Combining skills.

Tasks that are based on more complex thinking are likely to involve a more complex process. Also, in general, more advanced language work of any kind tends to involve longer, multi-stage activities, in order to explore to the full the opportunities to engage with the language in different ways. It is therefore very likely that activity before, during and after the reading itself will entail extended speaking, listening and writing.

Task Criticizing reading materials.

In Boxes 14-18 are five examples of texts in English for intermediate to advanced readers. The first three are accompanied by tasks; the last two are not. What would be your comments on the first three? And can you design your own tasks for the others? Some suggested answers to these questions appear after the boxes.

Box 14: Reading text and task.

EXERCISE

Choose the best answers.

a. The Bay Window is

-a bar

- a restaurant

- a theater

b. You can order dinner at the Bay Window Restaurant

- on weeknights
- every night
- on weekends

c. Bay Window Restaurant advertises

- seafood only
- meat dishes only
- both seafood and meat dishes

d. Bay Window Restaurant is next to

- the Paramount Theater
- the Bayside Theater
- Bay View Community College

e. Bay Window Restaurant's telephon number is advertised so you can

- order dinner
- arrange for parking
- make reservations

Box 15: Reading text and task (2).

The following excerpt is taken from Alice in Wonderland. The Dodo (a kind of bird) is suggesting a way in which the whole party, who are very wet, can get dry. What is ridiculous about this excerpt?

A Caucus Race.

"What I was going to say," said the Dodo in an offended tone, "was that the best tiling to get us dry would be a caucus race."

"What is a caucus race?" said Alice; not that she much wanted to know, but the Dodo had paused as if it thought that somebody ought to speak, and no one else seemed inclined to say anything. "Why," said the Dodo, "the best way to explain it is to do it."

(And as you might like to try the thing yourself, some winter day, I will tell you how the Dodo managed it.)

First it marked out a race-course, in a son of circle ("the exact shape doesn't matter," it said), and then all the party were placed along the course, here and there. 1 here was no "One, two, three, and away," but they began running when they liked and left off when they liked so that it was not easy to know when the race was over. However, when they had been running half an hour or so, and were quite dry again, the Dodo suddenly called out, "The race is over!" and they all crowded round it, panting, and asking, "But who has won'". This question the Dodo could not answer without a great deal of thought, and it sat for a long time with one finger pressed upon its forehead (the position in which you usually see Shakespeare, in the pictures of him); while the rest waited in silence. At last the Dodo said, "Everybody has won, and all must have prizes."

We all have concepts of what "a race' is". In what ways does this passage challenge the usual concepts?

Look up the word "caucus" in your dictionary. In the light of the dictionary definition, can you offer a deeper interpretation of the passage than "a description of a silly game that Wonderland characters play"?

Box 16: Text and task (3).

Beat the Burglar.

Don't invite crime-take basic, sensible precautions. Your house and property are valuable and must be properly protected. When you buy a lock, you buy time-and this is the one thing a burglar can't afford. Most thieves are casual opportunists to whom the best deterrents are delay and noise which could mean discovery.

When you leave it-lock it!

First of all, fit security locks to all doors and windows and a safety chain on the front door. Secondly, use them! And use them every time you go out, even if ifs only for a short time. If you have any ladders or tools, don't leave them lying about in the garden, lock them away or at least immobilize them. Don't rely on "safe" or "secret" places for

keys and valuables - nine times out of ten, they are the first place a thief will look.
When you move house…

When you move into a new home, even if it is fitted with security locks, change them. You don't know who may have duplicate keys When you are new to a district, you are particularly vulnerable. Never let anyone that you don't know into your house. An official-looking cap is not enough, ask for proof of identity and look at it carefully - if you are still not satisfied, don't let the person in.

Valuables need special protection.

Really valuable items, such as jewellery, should be given special protection -preferably by leaving them with your bank. But a small security safe, properly installed, should protect you against all but the most determined burglar. It is also most important to maintain an up-to-date list of valuables and their descriptions In the case of fine art, paintings, ceramics or jewellery, colour photographs can sometimes be of assistance to the police should you be unfortunate enough to have them stolea Enter the details on the back of the pictures But don't keep such documents in your house, keep them at the bank or with your insurance company.

Going on holiday?

Don't advertise the fact that your house is empty. Do remember to cancel the milk and newspapers and also to draw curtains back Don't leave notes for tradesmen and try not to talk about your holidays and future plans loudly in public
Operate a "Good Neighbour" scheme to ensure that mail is taken in, the house checked regularly and that lights are put on. If you plan to be away for a long time, make sure that your lawn is cut

Call at your local police station and tell them you are going away. Make sure that they know who has your spare key and how you can be contacted in case of trouble.
Especially at holiday time, don't leave cash or valuables in the house - take them with you or lodge them with the bank.

Box 17: Text (4).
Human rights for everyone.

The main Declaration of Rights, covering human rights for all people, was proclaimed by the United Nations in 1948. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, has thirty articles. These are some of the most important.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person, No one shall be held in slavery or servitude. No one shall be subjected to torture- or to cruelty, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile. Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(Nan Berger, Rights)

Box 18: Text (5)

Good marriages.

I know some good marriages. Second marriages mostly. Marriages where both people have outgrown the bullshit of me-Tarzan, you-Jane and are just trying to get through their days by helping each other, being good to each other, doing the chores as they come up and not worrying too much about who does what. Some men reach that delightfully relaxed state of affairs about age forty or after a couple of divorces. Maybe marriages are best in middle age. When all the nonsense falls away and you realize you have to love one another because you're going to die anyway.

(Erica Jong, Fear of Hying**)**

Comments on the material in Boxes 14-18.

Text and task 1

This is an authentic-looking text, made accessible to not very advanced learners by its shortness, supporting graphic devices (different typefaces, illustration), and carefully focused following questions. Note that these questions do not just test 'technical' comprehension of content: they elicit the kind of information that a reader of the advertisement looking for somewhere to eat might really want to know. Not all the text needs to be read and understood by the reader in order to answer the questions, which require selective scanning- again, the way one would approach such a text in real life. This sort of exercise is a good introduction to more advanced authentic reading tasks using unsimplified texts.

Text and task 2.

This is an excerpt from a classic of children's literature, published and read in translation in many parts of the world: many students may therefore already know the story. There is a special kind of extra interest in reading a text like this: it is familiar, yet seen from a new angle - and there is the satisfaction of knowing that you are reading it in its original form; it is authentic unsimplified writing, yet not too difficult; and students are able to apply previous knowledge while reaping the benefit from the reading of a 'new' passage. There is also the sheer literary value: plenty to talk about and enjoy beyond the mere comprehension of information.

The tasks are appropriate to this kind of text: the pre-reading task directs attention to the absurdity of the race described; and the following question goes more deeply into the same issue, inviting analysis and application to other life situations. Note that there are no 'comprehension questions' as such (compare this to the previous example), but rather an invitation to consider the story as a whole, and go straight into written or oral discussion of its events and ideas. Learners are, indeed, directed to look up a word: but it is clear that this is not for the sake of reading comprehension as such (the children for whom the book was written were surely not expected to know what the word means), but as a way into another angle from which to consider and analyse what the writer might be getting at.

A side benefit of using such texts is that they may stimulate students to go on and read more of the original from which the excerpt was taken.

Text and task 3.

The learner is asked to read, pick out particular types of information, draw conclusions and formulate written questions: these are then used as a basis for interview-type discussion and further writing. This is a relatively lengthy, multistage activity, involving analytic and logical thought and extended speaking and writing as well as the basic reading. The task as well as the text has an authentic flavour, in the sense of being based on an imaginable real-life situation.

The directive to 'write down five questions' is perhaps disproportionately limiting, considering the length and amount of varied information in the text. Alternatives might be: 'Write at least five questions' or 'Write as many questions as you can in fifteen minutes'.

Text 4

The text sets forth a series of principles, which are presented in a format similar to that of laws. It would make sense therefore to study them as if they were a series of laws and consider questions such as the following, through discussion and/or writing:

- Can you define in simple language what each item is saying that you can or cannot do?
- Can you suggest other similar items?
- Can you suggest examples from your own knowledge of cases where one or more of them have been violated? Or maintained?
- Choose one which seems to you difficult to implement in practice. What are the difficulties, and how might they be overcome?
- Can you think of any circumstances where you would think it right to disobey any of them?
- Can you suggest a series of perhaps more detailed rights that would be appropriate for your own particular community or institution?

Text 5

This passage is expressing an opinion about marriage - specifically 'good marriages'. Thus an appropriate response might be a reasoned, critical expression of a counter-opinion on the part of the reader. Having made sure my class understood exactly what kind of good marriage' Erica Jong is in fact describing (mature, relaxed, etc.), I might invite students to exchange different points of view in open discussion: in what ways do they agree or disagree with the ideas put forward here, and can they support their ideas with examples, anecdotes, quotes. A good summing-up activity might be a piece of writing, of similar length to the original, expressing the individual student's notion of what a good marriage is.

Notes. Beginning-of-reading workcards and worksheets.

The workcards and worksheets shown on this and the next page are designed for beginner learners of English who are learning the Roman alphabet for the first time. They implement the suggestions given in the last section of Unit Two, and can be used as self-access tasks, or as a basis for class- or homework. Note that they are presented here as illustrations of tasks for the teaching of reading, but in fact many of them are also directed at the learning of writing. They can be made specifically reading-oriented by changing the 'copy' instructions to 'circle', 'mark' or 'delete'.

Each 'set' shows two samples of tasks, which are models for a whole set of similar short worksheets or cards; each such set may serve as the basis for a reading/writing practice session. The instructions, given here for the reader's convenience in English, would in the original have been given in the learners' mother tongue. (See Appendix 5).

Set one

Task 1
Draw lines linking the English letter with the Russian one which sounds the same

p	n	R	o	T	L
К	з	т	щ	Д	Е

Task 2
Draw lines linking small with capital letters

F	Y	D	f
t	T	y	d

Reading task-based activities.

Task 1.

Select four or five reading passages from different places in a reading coursebook, randomize them and distribute them to students who have been placed in small groups. Ask the students to rank the passages from easiest to most difficult. Record and analyze the discussions. How much agreement is there among the groups? Which factors seem to be significant?

Task 2.

Select four or five reading passages representing different genres, for example, a narrative, a description, an instructive text and a didactic text. Make sure that the texts are approximately the same length. Carry out the same procedure as task 1. Does genre seem to be a significant factor in text difficulty?

Task 3.

Select an authentic reading passage which is beyond the current skills of your students. Design a series of exercises which gradually increase the processing demands on your learners. Get your learners to undertake the tasks in small groups and then discuss with them the difficulties they had. Record and analyze the discussion. What generalizations can you derive about learner perceptions on the nature of reading comprehension from the discussion?

Task 4.

Administer a gap or multiple choice reading test to a number of students. Review the test with each student individually and get them to explain to you why they gave the answers they did. Record and analyze the interviews. Did you find, like Aslanian (19S5), that coming up with the correct answer does not necessarily indicate adequate comprehension? Did some students who gave incorrect answers actually have an adequate overall grasp of the passage?

Task 5.

Record a reading lesson or segment of a lesson and analyse it following the procedure set out by Richards. What views on the nature of reading emerge? Do you think it was a

'good' lesson? Make a list of the principles of reading which seem to underlie the lesson.

Task 6.

Record and analyze a reading lesson. What is the percentage of time devoted to listening, speaking and writing? What might learners be reasonably expected to learn from the lesson? Is there a mismatch between the lesson as intention (as revealed by lesson plans, materials etc.) and the lesson which actually emerged?

§ 4. Self-study: Encouraging Learner autonomy.

"Autonomous learning" and "cooperative learning" are terms that recur over and over recent TEFL literature. Teachers who view language learning as an individualized process encourage their learners to be autonomous. Others go a step further and expose their students to cooperative learning in the classroom.

In a paper entitled "The Ethnography of Autonomy," Philip Riley (1988)[27] refers to the importance of group creation, group discovery, group negotiation, and group sharing. This idea of group interaction establishes a valuable framework in which individual learning processes can develop. Moreover, the sharing of learning processes in teams not only strengthens the language skills that students are to learn, it also exposes them to important social skills.

Along similar lines. Michael Legutke's discussion of experiential learning (1991) touches upon the culture of the foreign language classroom and emphasizes self-direction within group learning. Legutke's holistic view of language learning encourages learners to bring their own experiences to the classroom, and in doing so to take control of their own learning. The teacher's role in the classroom then shifts from the classical teacher/textbook model to the more innovative language/facilitator model. In this situation, the teacher sets tasks around the learners' experiences, conducts continuous evaluations of learners to guide them in the learning process: and develops an acceptable criteria of performance for the collective whole.

[27] Riley, P. 1988. The ethnography of autonomy. London: Modern English Publications. E.L.T. Documents.

In our attempts to make learners more responsible for their learning, we do not take them by the hand through grammar exercises and verb tenses. We work towards creating a collaborative and interdependent setting in the classroom. However, due to cultural and/or personality factors, confusion may result as there simply may be some language learners who do not care to be independent or to learn with/from other classmates. Such students are very successful in the traditional language setting, where the teacher leads activities, and students respond to controlled tasks; they do not want any changes. Language learners fit different profiles depending on their age, socio-cultural, ethnic, or linguistic background, as well as their level of education. And the interstice between dependent and independent language learners should be recognized and respected by the teacher. Students should be able to choose whether the want to direct their own learning or be directed by others.

In classes, teachers are working with students are aware of what options are available for their development. In the language classroom, a decision-making process should be nurtured and developed. In fact, the learning process should be considered as a management process. Anita Wenden (1987) describes this process as a series of decisions taken by both teacher and student, with continuous planning and monitoring of language activities. In such an environment, learners are active managers of their own learning, and the teacher becomes a counselor who creates an environment to promote autonomous learning.

Autonomous learners want to direct their own language learning. They want to know-how to find learning resources, how to identify their learning strategies, and how to evaluate the development of their own language skills.

In order to give learners the chance to make choices and decisions in learning a new language, we must give them the opportunity to reason and reflect on their performance in the classroom. The concepts of autonomous learning and cooperative learning extends the adult learner's skills into linguistic areas where teachers are regarded move as language facilitators than textbook interpreters. The criteria that have been discussed in this paper can be summarized in the following points for teachers and course designers interested in fostering a communicative interactive learning setting:

1.Flexibility: Within a tightly lured syllabus, the course should allow students to have voice in determining the tasks they should be expected to perform. Moreover, students should be given the freedom to study at their own pace and rhythm.

2.Project: A series of small activities leading to a major classroom project fosters group sharing and negotiation and establishes a significant framework for individual learning.

3. Course Objectives raid Self-Assessment**:** English classes need to inform learners what is expected of them and what they, in turn, can expect from the course. Therefore, at the beginning of each course, learners should be informed of the objectives of the class. They should be aware of the value of the skills that the teacher wants them to learn, and they should be encouraged to take control of their own learning and discern their learning styles and needs.

Learning Centres.

Learning Centres promote autonomous learning, which is learners' "capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making and independent action" (Little, D. (1999) Learner Autonomy 1: Definitions, Issues and problems. Authentik: Dublin). Simply put, learner autonomy is a learner's ability and willingness to take charge of their own learning and to make informed choices about What, Why, When and How they are going to learn. Autonomous learning implies the following:

- shifting the focus from teaching to learning
- self/peer assessment
- peer- support and co-operation
- on-going needs analysis, reflection and action planning
- use of portfilo to record and trace a learner's progress
- development of life-long learning skills.

The role of a LC Counsellor is to facilitate learners' language learning by providing advice and guidance on the language, resources and activities a learner can benefit from. However, it's important to remember that counselling is not teaching or tutoring

because a Counsellor's ultimate goal is to empower learners and help them become more autonomous.

Autonomous Learning.

Objectives:

- to let learners explore and share why they want to learn English;
- to help the learners to identify where to start learning and set their goals;
- to help learners to plan how they are going to reach their goals;
- to raise learners' awareness of the respective roles of a LC Counsellor and a learner;
- to raise learners' awareness of what learner autonomy means in practice.

Activity 1. Learner's ideal goal in learning English.

Objectives:

- to give learners an opportunity to get to know each other;
- to let learners explore and share why they want to learn English.

Procedure:

- Welcome session participants and tell them that in this session they will discuss why they need to develop/learn English and identify their level of English in order to be able to plan their further steps. They will also learn about the importance of decision-making, their roles in the learning process and the roles of a LC Counsellor.
- Divide learners into 2 or 3 groups. Ask them to introduce themselves to each other and share why they need English in their groups. Give them 5-7 min to complete the task. Then ask each learner in a group to introduce one member of their group telling the whole group his/her name and why s/he needs English. Then this person introduces another person in the group and so on until everyone is introduced.
- Distribute Worksheet 1 to each learner. Explain that the star represents their ideal goal in learning English. Ask learners to write why they need English in the star on the

Worksheet. Give examples to help learners, "I want to continue my education abroad", "I want to use English fluently at work and make presentations in English" etc.

▪ Ask learners to share their answers.

▪ Summarise the activity by saying that in order to reach their ideal goal in learning English they need to know where to start, in other words where they are with their English skills at the moment.

Activity 2. Learners' current level of English.

Objectives:

- to help the learners to identify where to start learning and set their goals
- Ask learners the following question:

Do you know what your level of English is?

- Elicit random answers, but that not all learners can be ready to define their level and may simply say “I do not know”. In this case, ask them to tell what their approximate level is; this might include such answers as “I have a poor/low level” or “I am average”. Do not insist on such terms like elementary or intermediate level; just tell them that in a few minutes they will be able to say where they are.
- Ask the following question:

What can you do in the English language being at the level you think you are (starter/elementary/pre-intermediate)?

- Elicit random answers and make a summary by saying that it is important to understand what you can do at a certain level.
- Tell learners that assessing and monitoring learning can be carried out autonomously/independently/ by learners with the help of different tools available in the LC. One of these tools is the Self-assessment Grid of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) which can help learners understand what specifically they need to be able to do at a certain level.
- Show the CEFR Grid and explain to learners that it is a table with language skills (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking) in the vertical axis. Draw learners'

attention to the fact that Speaking is divided into Spoken production (the ability to produce a monologue) and Spoken interaction (the ability to take part in a dialogue). There are levels scaling from A1 to C2 horizontally where A1 represents a beginner level and C2 represents an advanced level of English.

- Distribute Worksheet 2 (CEFR Grid). (See Appendix 7). Ask learners to identify where they are with one of their skills for example Listening or Reading in the Grid. Advise them to start with the level they initially thought they were at. For example, they can start reading the grid at B1 if they think they are at pre-intermediate level. Allow them about 2-3 minutes to complete the task.
- Once they are ready ask them to identify where they are with the rest of their skills in the Grid. Explain to learners that their skills can be at different levels. Allow about 7 minutes to complete the task.

NB! If you see learners are having difficulty with understanding the Grid in English, let them read it in their mother tongue.

- Once learners have identified their levels on the CEFR Grid ask the following questions and elicit random answers:

Did you find your Listening, Writing, Speaking and Reading to be at the same or different levels?

Do you think you need to have all 4 language skills at the same level to reach your goal?

- Ask learners to look at the CEFR Grid again and identify where they would like to be with each of their skills. Refer learners to their ideal goal in learning English. Explain to learners that they can plan to be at the same or different levels depending on why they need English. Bring in an example: you are a travel agent and you mostly communicate with your foreign customers/tourists in English via telephoning and/or face-to-face. When it comes to written communication you just send letters and reply to enquiries. Thus, you probably need your Speaking and Listening skills at level C1, however, it may be enough to have your Writing and Reading skills at level B1.

- Tell them that it is very important to think realistically about their ideal goal and the time they need to achieve it. Draw learners' attention to the fact that to move from B1 to C2 they need to take a step by step approach, that is to start with B1, then move to B2 and so on. Also mention that moving from one level to the next might take more time than they thought initially and this depends on various factors. Thus, advise them to plan realistically taking into account their membership period.

- Summarise the activity by saying that now learners know at what level to start

their learning and where they want to be. Add that it is important to check whether they had any progress after some time (a month, 2/4/6 months). Say that learners can use the same grid to monitor their progress.

Activity 3. Making decisions about learning.

Objective:

- to help learners what can help them to reach their goals

Procedure:

- Refer learners to the previous activity and tell them that they have decided why they should learn English (Activity 1), where to start (Activity 2) and where they want to be. Now they need to think what can help them to reach their goal.
- Ask learners to remember their experience of learning English and answer the questions in Worksheet 3. Distribute Worksheet 3 and allow them 8 min to complete the task. (See Appendix 8).
- After learners have fished ask the following question and elicit random answers:

Who took more responsibility in your learning experience? You or others (your teacher, parents, friends)? If you had taken more responsibility for your learning, do you think you would be more successful?

- Summarise the activity by saying that taking more responsibility by making decisions about learning and becoming more autonomous as a learner can help them become more successful.

Activity 4. A learner's roles in the learning process.

Objectives:

- to raise learners' awareness of the respective roles of a LC Counsellor and a learner
- to raise learners' awareness of what learner autonomy means in practice

Procedure:

- Tell learners that becoming an autonomous learner is a gradual process and learners might need support and help at some stages. To help them learn how to make decisions about their learning there is a Counsellor in the Learning Centre. To make best use of their study in the LC learners should have a clear understanding of what can be expected from a LC Counsellor and what is expected from them as learners.

- Distribute Worksheet 4 to each pair. Invite learners to look at Worksheet 4 and identify the roles of a LC Counsellor and a learner. Tell them to put **'C** for a counsellor's role, 'L' for a learner's role and 'B' if they think the role can be shared by both a learner and a counsellor in the column *C, L* or *B.* Allow 4 minutes for them to complete the task.**NB!** Some roles in the Worksheet 4 may be difficult to understand, so make sure you walk around and observe learners at work. In case there is a difficulty in understanding some words you might wish to help them either by explaining or translating these words into their native language.

- Invite learners to share their answers with the whole group. Go through 4-5 role items together and ask learners why they decided to put C/L or B. Encourage them to bring in examples.

- Establish that most of the roles in the learning process can be shared between a learner and a counsellor. The main role of the LC Counsellor is to help learners become more effective and autonomous by advising on learning and offering a wide range of self-study materials. Learners are expected to take more responsibility for all the roles. Mention that they have already taken responsibility for some of the roles in their learning in this session by setting their goals and identifying their level of English.

Session summary:

Summarise the session by saying that:

- success in language learning depends on the autonomy of learners, in other words their ability to take more responsibility for their learning.
- the Introduction to Learner Autonomy Session is one of the stages of their journey as a learner which can be followed by various other training sessions, counselling sessions and other LC activities that help to develop their language learning skills.
- the ELA Guide, available in the LC, is specially designed to help learners to become more autonomous. It consists of a Language Learning Portfolio, self-study materials such as Skills for Language Learning and Skills for Life.

IV. Conclusion.

Autonomous learner can follow the most helpful suggestions in self-study to learn another language; for practicing outside the classroom, which include the following:

- Contact with native speaker.
- Listening to native speakers through media – radio, television, cinema; studying grammar books.
- In general: reading newspapers, magazines and books in English. Also, listening to the radio and television.
- Listening to songs and singing songs, watching television, videos and movies; reading interesting novels, and reading other media such as newspapers, magazines, advertisements, booklets, all for pleasure; visiting English-speaking countries where you can communicate with native speakers.
- Practising through conversations and using the media, especially television with subtitles and newspapers. You must have someone who is proficient in the language to speak with in order to learn the language sufficiently well.
- Social interactions (exposure and practice in the use of the language) at home and with friends.

Things that will help:

- Conversation with English speakers /in groups
- Finding opportunities to practice outside class .
- Accessing media — radio, television, newspapers
- Formal classes/learning with a teacher
- Motivation
- Reading
- Grammar rules/drills
- Listening.
- Pronunciation
- Vocabulary

Conversation practice inside and outside the classroom and opportunities for activating English outside class are the most nominated things which facilitate development.

▪ Buy a copy of an English language newspaper. Locate the classified advertisements. Find a car/bike/television/washing machine, etc. which would be suitable for you. Say why it is suitable.

▪ Listen to an English language news and weather broadcast on the radio. Find out how many separate items there are. What is the forecast maximum temperature for tomorrow?

▪ Go into a hotel where English is spoken. Find out the cost of rooms and the availability of facilities.

▪ Go into an international airline office. Enquire about the economy/business, first class fares to various places.

▪ Go to a bank and fill out an application for a credit card. Visit foreign embassies and make enquiries from the educational, trade and cultural representatives.

▪ Go to an American Express office and fill out an application for a card.

▪ Look in the telephone book and find the name, address and telephone number of an English language school, the British Council, etc. Call and enquire about English classes, y. Buy a newspaper and find the employment section. Find all the jobs you would like. How-much do they pay? Are they full-time or part-time, permanent or casual?

Here are some additional suggestions:

1. Look in your local paper for the restaurant guide. On Saturday evening you want to go with a friend to a restaurant. Your friend likes seafood. You want a restaurant with a view. It should not be too expensive. You want to pay with a credit card. Look in the Yellow Pages. Find two seafood restaurants, two licensed restaurants and two restaurants which are open seven days a week.

2. (a) Get a map of the city from the tourist bureau. Find where you live. Find where you learn English. Trace the route from your home to school.

(b) Look in a street directory. Use the index to find the page where you live. Now find the spot on the page where you live.

(c) Write an invitation to a party at your place. Describe how to get there from the city centre.

3. Think about a place you would like to rent. What suburb is it in? How many bedrooms has it got? Is it a house, or a semi or a unit or a townhouse? How much per week is it? Buy a newspaper. Find in the 'Rent' section the classified advertisements. Find a place you would like to rent. Look in the Yellow Pages. Find some real estate agents. Call two or three agents. Ask: 'Have you got a house townhouse / flat / semi in (suburb) to rent?' If the answer is 'no'—> say 'thank you.'

Hang up.

If the answer is yes'—> ask How many bedrooms?'

How much is the rent?' 'Thank you.' Hang up.

Imagine you have $1,000,000 to spend. What house would you buy? Look in the newspaper and put a circle around the places you would like to see. Bring the newspaper to school and discuss it with the teacher and the other students.

4. Buy a television programme or find a programme in the newspaper. Put a circle around all the programmes you like. Watch tonight's television news or listen to the radio.

5. Organize a class party. Make a list of all the things you need to buy. Write invitations to a friend, or some friends (e.g. someone in another class) to the party. Don't forget to include the following information:

- the address
- the date
- the time of the party
- the reason for the party

6. Look in the telephone book. Find the address and telephone number of a Medicare office near where you live. Find the name and telephone number of two private health insurance funds. Collect some empty medicine bottles and containers. Bring them along to class to discuss with your teacher.

7. Find the entertainment section of the newspaper. Find three things you would like to do and write them down. Tell a friend about these things. Look in the telephone book. Find the page which says: 'Dial it Services'. Find the number for 'What's on in Sydney for your city)'. Dial the number. What's on? I tow many different items did you hear? Write down one thing you hear.

Much of the research into learning strategy preferences has been concerned with identifying learning strategy preferences with a view to isolating those characteristics of the 'good' language learner. Rubin and Thompson (1983)[28] suggest that 'good' or efficient learners tend to exhibit the following characteristics as they go about learning a second language.

1. Good learners find their own way.
2. Good learners organize information about language.
3. Good learners are creative and experiment with language.
4. Good learners make their own opportunities, and find strategies for getting practice in using the language inside and outside the classroom.
5. Good learners learn to live with uncertainty and develop strategies for making sense of the target language without wanting to understand every word.
6. Good learners use mnemonics (rhymes, word associations, etc. to recall what has been learned).
7. Good learners make errors work.
8. Good learners use linguistic knowledge, including knowledge of their first language in mastering a second language.
9. Good learners let the context (extra-linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world) help them in comprehension.

[28] Rubin, J. and Thomson, I. 1983. How to be a more successful Language Learner. New York: Heinle and Heinle.

10. Good learners learn to make intelligent guesses.

11. Good learners learn chunks of language as wholes and formalized routines to help them perform 'beyond their competence'.

12. Good learners learn production techniques (e.g. techniques for keeping a conversation going).

13. Good learners learn different styles of speech and writing and learn to vary their language according to the formality of the situation.