Minnesota Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

MinneTESOL

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OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD 1991-92

Contents

Information for contributors to the *MinneTESOL Journal*

• **Editorial policy**

The *MinneTESOL Journal* seeks to publish articles of importance to the profession of English as a second language in the State of Minnesota. Articles in the following areas are considered for publication: instructional methods, techniques, and materials; research with implications for ESL; and issues in curriculum and program design. Book reviews and review articles are also welcome, as are short descriptions of work in progress on any aspect of theory or practice in our profession. Reports of work in the areas of curriculum and materials development, methodology, teaching, testing, teacher preparation and administration are encouraged, as are reports of research projects that focus on topics of special interest. Descriptions should summarize key concepts and results in a manner to make the information accessible to our readership. We also invite commentary on current trends and practices in the TESOL profession, and we encourage responses or rebuttals to any articles or remarks published in the *Journal*.

• **Manuscripts**

Manuscripts should conform to the style book followed by TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. They should include a brief (e.g., 100-word) abstract.

Submit six copies of each manuscript, along with six copies of an abstract of not more than 200 words. **Submission of a computer diskette (labeled with system and software used) is STRONGLY encouraged.**

Contributions to Volume 10 should be submitted to the editors:

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Introduction

A s the new co-editors of the *MinneTESOL Journal*, Adele Hansen and
I are very excited about our first volume. We believe that it
represents the variety of work that is taking place in ESL across the state
and that it offers something for everyone. We hope that you will find the
contributions to this volume of the *Journal* as inspirational and thought-
provoking as we do.

The first section contains articles of interest to teachers at all levels.
Diane Johnson's article, "Film as a Teaching Medium," although specifi-
cally geared toward teaching ESL at the university level, focuses on ideas
that can be adapted for all levels of students. Johnson argues that film
provides an excellent means for the ESL teacher to incorporate
contextualized authentic language in the classroom. She begins her piece
with a detailed rationale for choosing film as a teaching medium, and goes
on to describe the criteria to keep in mind when selecting films for
instructional use. Finally, using *Broadcast News* as an example, she
provides a thorough description of how to build an ESL class around film.

In "Culture Day: Emotional Support for ESL Students," Marge
Kaplan describes an innovative approach for providing emotional support
for the ESL students she teaches. She discusses the challenges and
frustrations she and the school social worker and a psychologist faced in
developing their ideas, and also explains how they met those challenges.
Her examples of what both the students and facilitators have gained as a
result of this experience are enlightening. Although this article is geared
toward teaching at the high school level, it contains many ideas and
thoughts that are relevant for ESL teaching at any level.

Also geared specifically toward ESL teachers of adolescent students,
Carol Quest's article, "Southeast Asian Literature for the ESL Class-
room," provides a rationale for incorporating literature written by South-
east Asian writers and literature about Southeast Asia and the refugee
experience. She suggests that not only does this literature provide familiar
and culturally relevant material for literacy development, but that it also
affirms the students' cultural heritages and provides support for their
individual concepts of self worth. Quest discusses eight works in detail,
including ideas for using them in the classroom. This article should be

shared with mainstream teachers in your schools!

The last paper in this section focuses on teaching ESL at the elementary level. Robyn Peterson, in "Your Textbook is in the Library—Or You Could Make Your Own," explains an alternative approach to teaching children. She describes how her students study stories or themes and then write and illustrate their own books about them while using additional resources, drama, and art. Peterson's article is enhanced by vivid descriptions of the projects her students do at different grade levels as well as by actual samples of excerpts from their books.

The next section, "Work in Progress," is new to the *Journal* this year. We encourage you to submit short reports or updates on work that you are doing in any areas of interest to our readers so that we can include this section in each volume. In this volume, Thomas Upton reports on research he is doing that focuses on recall protocols, which are used as tools in reading research. He explains the concerns that have been voiced regarding the use of this tool in second language research and describes a pilot study that he conducted last summer, which involved having ESL students do recall protocols in both their native and second languages.

Another section that has been added to the *Journal* this year is entitled "Students' Work." We are thrilled to be able to include poetry and illustrated essays by ESL students in Minnesota, and hope that teachers will help us to continue to publish their students' work in upcoming volumes.

The last section contains book reviews. Doris Heisig reviews *Second Language Teacher Education* by Richards and Nunan. In addition, H. Douglas Brown's recent *Breaking the Language Barrier* is reviewed by Ellen Mamer.

Adele and I were rather disappointed not to have responses to Volume 8 to include in "The Forum" this year. We invite you to submit responses or rebuttals to any articles or remarks published in this year's volume of the *Journal* so that we can include it in next year's. We also strongly encourage readers to volunteer to act as members on our Editorial Advisory Board. Please contact either of us should you be interested in joining us or should you wish to have further information. We look forward to hearing from you.

Diane J. Tedick

Film as a Teaching Medium

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In second language (L2) instruction there is a need for exposure to an abundance of contextualized authentic target language (TL) as spoken by many different people in many different situations. Furthermore, there is a need for teaching materials that are both vivid and relevant to the students. Commercial feature-length film[1] is one way of effectively satisfying these needs in L2 teaching. Although the use of film will be discussed here in the context of an advanced level university ESL film course focusing on the integrated skills of listening and speaking, much of the discussion can also be applied to the use of film as only one component of a single skill ESL course (listening, speaking, reading, or writing).

Through visual cues, film, when compared to other instructional media, provides a more complete context for the language learners, as well as supplying a greater diversity of linguistic and cultural input through the different film genres.[2] Although film is not authentic speech, the redundancy and speed of the speech in film closely replicate authentic speech. Possibly the most significant result of using film, a medium enjoyed by most students, is the enhancement of learner motivation.

Henry A. Garrity (1987) in his book, *Film in the French Classroom*, produced a credible model for using film as the instructional medium in teaching French. While Garrity offers a great deal of practical information on teaching French through film, he does not elaborate on what role images play in language comprehension, nor does he explain in much detail the specific criteria used in selecting films.

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[1] Hereafter, "commercial feature-length film" will be referred to as "film."

[2] Genres in film are familiar standardized forms, such as westerns, detective stories, love stories, etc.

In this article, there will be (1) a discussion of the relationship between images and language in film followed by (2) an enumeration and explanation of some criteria for selecting films. Last, (3) *Broadcast News* is used as a model, first to demonstrate the application of the criteria for selecting a film, and then to demonstrate the types of supplementary activities that can accompany a film and the principles that guide their development. To illustrate the points discussed, films used in the ESL Film class[3] at the University of Minnesota, as well as several other films, serve as examples.

BACKGROUND
    The use of film in language teaching is not a new concept; documentaries have long been used to bring the L2 culture as well as the language to students. In addition, there are carefully scripted films using adapted speech produced to be used in conjunction with language textbooks (*e.g.*, *Guten Tag, wie geht's*, Schneider, 1974).
    These types of materials have a valid place in language teaching, but they also have shortcomings. First, in the case of documentaries, the speech is authentic (if the documentaries are produced for an audience which speaks the TL natively) and the content is often inherently interesting to L2 learners. However, documentaries are limited in that they have a uniform speech style, generally didactic, with little or no conversation. The L2 learners do not encounter enough variety of input to adequately reflect the great variety in the spoken TL. Second, in the case of the films prepared to go with textbooks, while they offer conversation, it is not authentic and often stilted and flat. In addition, the topics of these films often do little to excite students' interest, which can lead to waning motivation for learning the L2.
    In the past, commercial film has been used much less often for ESL instruction.[4] Probably the greatest factors in the underuse of film are the lack of prepared teaching materials for them and the length (viewing time) of films. There are few published ESL materials for films and those

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[3] *Witness, To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *Broadcast News* were the core films used in the film class.

[4] While, in the past, film seems to have played a wider role in foreign language teaching, recently there seems to be a blossoming interest in film as a pedagogical tool in ESL instruction. This is evidenced by the inclusion of sections on commercial film in recent publications about the use of video in ESL instruction.

that are published are often quite expensive. In addition, when confronted with a two to three hour film, instructors who would wish to create their own materials might easily be overwhelmed in trying to decide what to do with the film, what points to teach, and how to do it. Printed film scripts are difficult to acquire, if not impossible for many films. Therefore, the instructor is required to spend a great deal of time viewing and reviewing the film in order first to make decisions about what to teach and then to transcribe the language that has been targeted.

RELATIONSHIP OF VISUAL IMAGES TO THE LANGUAGE IN FILM

The unique advantage of film is the visual images, which are an invaluable aid in language comprehension. What the students see may clarify and/or elaborate on the script, the language they hear. In fact, students may be able to understand a good deal of the message from a given scene in a film without understanding all, or for that matter any, of the specific language. For this reason the action film *Witness* is a particularly good film; much of the dialogue is accompanied by explicit actions that help reveal the linguistic message to the students.[5] For L2 learners with inadequate aural comprehension, this visual understanding can enhance the L2 learners' confidence, and give them a basis for hypothesizing about the language, which will ultimately create comprehensible input for them.

Accompanying images can explicate the intent of speech even though individual lexical items may not be easily understood by students. For example, in a scene from *To Kill a Mockingbird*, one of the characters, Bob Ewell, insults the main character, Atticus Finch, by calling him a "nigger-lover." When these words are presented alone out of context without any particular intonation, students do not usually interpret the words "nigger-lover" as an insult, nor can students really define their meaning. However, they have no difficulty understanding that when Ewell curls his lips into a grimace and growls "you nigger-lover" to Atticus Finch, these words are intended as an insult.

Films are also effective in activating students' prior knowledge of situations which are already familiar to them in the context of their own culture and language, thus creating linguistic expectations of the film

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[5] Student questionnaires confirmed that the supporting action in *Witness* was indeed an aid to comprehension; virtually all the students found this film to be the easiest to understand of all the films shown in class.

being viewed. These stereotypic situations, identified as scripts or sche-mata by Shank and Abelson (1977), are framed in scenes of a film and depict in the target culture and language: what the location looks like, the typical objects found there, the people involved, what they normally do in that situation, what clothes they wear, how they behave towards each other, the language suitable to the situation, and appropriate non-verbal communication of the speakers. For L2 students, film serves to help establish schemata in the TL.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING A FILM

The first and most crucial step in the use of film in language teaching is choosing the appropriate film(s); and this decision must be guided by the target audience, their needs, and interests. Garrity's model for a language class based on film made use of only one film for an entire semester. Although such a course may be feasible in some cases, there is the danger that such a course would be too slow paced for many students (especially at the college level). For this reason and others which will be discussed later, it may be advisable to consider making use of several (two to four) different films in an ESL film class. Indeed, the instructor's task of choosing a film is made easier. Instead of searching for a single ideal film, several different good films can be used.

1. Student Appeal:

It will seldom be the case that a university class is homogenous; it is more likely that there will be a wide range of ages and educational levels,[6] not to mention a variety of cultures. The students are likely to have dissimilar tastes in regard to films, which highlights the necessity of using a variety of films in order to appeal to the different constituents of the class (at least some of the time).

Not only is it important to have a variety of films, but also to choose films from different genres. The films chosen for the University of Minnesota Film class represent the following genres: action film (Witness), literary adaptation (To Kill a Mockingbird), historical film (Amadeus). Although not yet a clearly defined genre, contemporary profession is in the process of being defined by such films as Broadcast News, which was

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[6] The ESL Film classes have had both undergraduate and graduate students ranging in age from 18 to mid 40's.

used in class, and *Wallstreet,* which was not. In most cases a film will probably reflect a layering of two or three genres.[7] Again, a diversity of genres will have a broader appeal to a heterogeneous group of students.

In *The Video Connection* (1989), Rick Altman makes an assertion with which many language instructors might be persuaded to agree:

> One principle must be emphasized from the outset: if video is to be used in support of language or culture teaching, materials must be chosen *not for their inherent artistic value* but for their ability to fulfill a particular function in a particular course. ...its [artistic value] place should be appropriately subordinate. We are not choosing films for an Oscar...; we are selecting educational tools (p. 25).

I would like to disagree, however, with Altman's position. Students today are products of late 20th century society; and they are not only literate in regard to film, but also quite sophisticated. They have been viewing films—domestic and foreign[8]—in theaters, on television, via the VCR all their lives. A mediocre film selected primarily on the basis of its being a "good educational tool" will not be sufficient to engage these students' interest; they are not so easily impressed with moving images. If a film does not have an esthetic value that appeals to them, students will not become fully immersed in viewing the film, or worse, will not attend class regularly, and the linguistic input, stimulating cultural topics, and creative activities will be of diminished value without the students' full engagement. Moreover, there is an abundance of high quality films among which "good educational tools" can surely be found; and, when using a cultural medium such as film for teaching, the examples chosen should represent some of the finest American efforts in that medium. Finally, the creation of materials and activities is more enjoyable and facile when the artistic quality of the film is also satisfying to the instructor. Consequently, in the selection process, the artistic merit of a film ought to be a coordinate, not subordinate, factor with the film's pedagogical merits.

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[7] For example, *Witness* is both an action film and a love story.

[8] There have always been several students in each of the ESL Film classes who had already seen—in their own language—one, or even two, of the films that were scheduled to be shown in the Film class.

2. *Diversity of Linguistic and Cultural Input:*

There are also important pedagogical reasons for using different genres of films. These films will reflect the diversity of the English language. In doing so, they will also demonstrate the different levels of formality, and how these different levels are used between individuals or classes of people. In addition, within American English there is a wealth of dialects—Southern, urban black, and various East coast dialects, to mention a few. It seems worthwhile to introduce some of these dialects through film since they are vehicles for displaying the diverse aspects of American culture. A better understanding of the dialects and the culture the films are associated with will enhance the students' acquisition of English. With a variety of films, it is also possible to capture a larger amount of situation-specific language and a broader spectrum of vocabulary and idioms.

3. *Linguistic Difficulty:*

One of the most important considerations when selecting films is the linguistic difficulty of the film in relation to the proficiency level of the students. Films can be graded on their complexity of language. Some of the elements that increase the difficulty of understanding for students are: slang, dialect, topic-specific technical vocabulary, and fast-paced conversation with sparse accompanying action.

To Kill a Mockingbird can be difficult for students because it contains both rural Southern dialect and children's speech (fast-paced slang); and in *Amadeus*, there is an extraordinary amount of moderately technical musical terminology, which can baffle students. Although a film might have one or more of these features that make comprehension difficult, it may still be viable for classroom use. When students are properly prepared for the difficulties with pre- and post-viewing activities, such films can be made accessible to them. Both *To kill a Mockingbird* and *Amadeus* were used successfully in the University of Minnesota ESL Film class.

On the other hand, a film such as *My Dinner with Andre* (virtually one extended conversation) would never be considered for use because of its dense language based on abstract ideas without supporting visual cues. In contrast, *Witness* is fairly simple for most students to understand. It has fewer and shorter conversations than many other films, and vivid action that conveys a great deal of information.

In addition to pre- and post-viewing activities, segmentation is also useful in minimizing the difficulty of a film. In the University of Minnesota Film class, the students view a film in approximately 30-minute

segments, which gives them a broad context. However, for more difficult films (or difficult parts of a film), smaller segments (as short as 2–3 minutes) are repeated afterwards to facilitate comprehension.

4. *Culturally Loaded Films:*

It is also necessary to consider whether a film is too culturally loaded, meaning that the film intertwines many uniquely-American cultural themes which are both difficult to extricate from each other and difficult to explain to foreign students, but are crucial to understanding the film. Comedies in particular exemplify this.[9] Although a film might be rejected on the basis of being too culturally loaded, a good choice must necessarily contain some themes intrinsic to the culture of the TL.

John Fisk (1987) in *Television Culture* describes the interconnectedness of the themes of a film and society's cultural history with his theory of *intertextuality*: "The theory of intertextuality proposes that any one text is necessarily read [heard or seen] in relationship to others and that a range of textual knowledge is brought to bear upon it."[10] Native speaker instructors have at their disposal a whole range of texts from their native culture based on what they have read, seen/heard, and experienced during their lives. However, non-native learners lack many of these texts, because they do not have as much experience with the target culture.

An L2 learner's cultural understanding, therefore, can be enhanced when a film offers several clear cultural themes that can be exploited through linking these themes to the "texts" of the native instructor. For example, *To Kill a Mockingbird* has several such themes that can easily by separated out from each other and from the film: racism, the court system, and children's fantasy.

5. *Offensive Material:*

Another consideration in the selection of films is the presence of objectionable subject matter that might cause the students embarrassment or discomfort. Because the students come from diverse cultures, it is necessary to try to view the films from their perspective. Basic guidelines should exclude gratuitous violence, nudity, and obscene language. In addition, an instructor needs to carefully consider how to handle material that is culturally insensitive and insulting to any particular nationality.

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[9] For example, most of the Woody Allen films are too culturally loaded.

[10] "Text" is used broadly here to include any discourse—written, electronically recorded, or spoken live.

This is not to say that all the films must be scrupulously censored and rejected on these bases. For example, in *Witness* and *Broadcast News* there is some nudity and profane language. However, when it is minimal and well integrated into the story-line, as with these two films, it is less likely to be offensive to most students.

6. *The Instructor's needs:*

A final consideration, of no small importance, is the appeal of the film to the instructor. The instructor must not only be able to tolerate repeated viewings of the film, necessary in creating materials, but also view the film again with the class and generate enthusiasm for the activities before and after the film. Thus, whether the instructor finds the film truly worthwhile is a significant criterion.

BROADCAST NEWS: A MODEL

As one of the core films, *Broadcast News* is used for all the ESL Film classes at the University of Minnesota. It is viewed in four segments of approximately 30 minutes each over a three-week period. While viewing a segment in the language lab with stereo headphones, students make audio tapes of the sound track which they use for homework, personal study, and preparation for tests. Some time before showing the film segment, as well as the second part of each class, is used for language learning activities.

1. *Application of criteria for selection:*

Broadcast News is a good film, entertaining and appealing to a broad audience. The captivating story elicits an unforced attention from students, drawing them along in their listening/viewing to find out "what happens next." It is also an accurate reflection of a certain aspect of American society, namely, middle-class professional working life.

The setting/general topic makes this film a particularly attractive choice; television news broadcasting is a topic most people find interesting, are somewhat familiar with from their own culture, and would probably like to know more about. Moreover, *Broadcast News* is not culturally loaded. One of the main themes, which is fairly easy to grasp, is a love triangle. The other theme is an ethical question regarding news broadcasting—whether the news should be treated as entertainment or only factually reported—which provides a real issue for the students to discuss/debate. The setting of *Broadcast News* is unusually ripe with possibilities for materials development and activities.

Broadcast News makes use of contemporary conversational English

filled with the usual idiomatic speech spoken at a normal rate of speed, which is exactly the kind of speech that ESL students often find so elusive in comprehending. The film is a good instructional tool, because the conversation is simulated authentic (although not produced for pedagogical purposes) and not authentic.[11] It is well scripted, clear and understandable to the listener, and does not have some of the facets found in authentic conversation that inhibit comprehension: there is little extraneous noise interference, interruptions and more than one person talking at a time are minimal, and the speakers' lines follow the topic without wandering from the theme. In short, the life-like conversation of the film is, in reality, very controlled and serves as an aid for comprehension by non-native listeners.

2. *Supplementary activities and the principles guiding their development:*

In creating supplementary activities to use with a film, there are some guiding principles to be considered:

1) Whenever possible, relate fundamental themes from films to their real-life counterparts in the target society. This provides L2 learners with a more complete cultural context, a model of authentic language. In addition, schemata from the films are reinforced, broadened, and anchored in reality.

2) Give the students opportunities to practice production of the TL in a communicative manner, in addition to listening to the TL.

In preparation for viewing a film, students' existing schema (from their own country in their L1) for the general topic of that film must be activated, or if none exists, a schema must be developed. The schema provides the framework around which the L2 learners can organize all the information they receive from the film. The following activities were developed as pre- and post-viewing activities for *Broadcast News* in order to help develop/activate a schema about television news broadcasting for the students. The activities serve to highlight vocabulary, speaking style and non-verbal communication, as well as the appearance of the people involved and the appearance of the location. The final videotaped

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[11] cf. Geddes & White, 1978

student news broadcast gives students the opportunity to apply the schema they have been acquiring to their own oral production.

1. There is a field trip to WCCO television station in Minneapolis preceding the showing of the first segment of the film. This is helpful in initially introducing specialized vocabulary, both for television and the news, which would be heard in the film. The vocabulary is studied again as it comes up in the film. Also during the trip, the students are able to see the offices, equipment, and the people who are participants in real news production. This helps to concretize the meaning of the different jobs (news producer, editor, reporter) of the characters in the film. In addition, the students can get a broader perspective of a television news studio (all the different rooms, their sizes, what it's like behind the cameras) than the film affords, and they can make interesting comparisons between the studio in the film and a real one.

2. During the three weeks that the film is being shown, the students watch videotapes of authentic news broadcasts, both in class and on their own at home. These broadcasts serve as models for their own news broadcasts, which are videotaped at the end of the Broadcast News unit, and also give more depth to their schemas. The students analyze the format of the various broadcasts (Nightline vs. MacNeil Lehrer News Hour vs. local evening news), as well as, the types of news stories/reports (international news, human interest stories, sports, weather) found in the different programs. The students also analyze the various broadcasters' use of specific language, gestures, and visual aids (maps, graphs, pictures, films).

3. Near the end of the Broadcast News unit, the class watches videotapes of news broadcasts produced by other ESL classes and discusses what is good about them (what makes them interesting and understandable) and what is not (what makes them boring and unclear).

4. The students, in pairs or individually, prepare a five-minute news piece or some other kind of report (sports, weather, culture), which is videotaped later.[12] They are given time in class to choose a partner and to do some planning. However, most of the work for the videotaping is done

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[12] The students are given the videotaping assignment at the beginning of the Broadcast News unit, which allows them about three weeks to prepare their news pieces.

outside of class. Since partners do not have the same native language, use of English in the preparation stage is greatly increased. After the student news broadcast is videotaped, the instructor watches the tape and evaluates each student individually. On the last day of classes, these evaluations are given to the students to look at while the whole class watches the videotape.

5. In addition to the above activities, there are written exercises used throughout the showing of the film. These consist of: paraphrasing brief quotes from speakers; answering comprehension questions about facts in the film; making inferences about the characters (why they did/said something); paraphrasing idioms; defining vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

In real world language, the listener most often sees the speaker and/ or the context of the speech. However, in language classrooms where audiotapes and printed materials are mainly used, a great deal of information is missing, which is normally conveyed through a native speaking partner and the surrounding environment. The use of films provides this extralinguistic information, which is an invaluable aid in comprehension for L2 learners. Films also supply a contemporary, as well as contextualized, model of spoken English. Moreover, films are both relevant and intrinsically interesting to students, offering them a window on the American culture, and thus stimulating responses in students which lead to a more natural desire to use spoken English.

THE AUTHOR

Diane Johnson is a teaching specialist in ESL with the Department of Linguistics at the University of Minnesota. She created the ESL Film course, which she teaches each quarter, and she is involved with the preparation of international Teaching Assistants.

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Culture Day: Emotional Support for ESL Students

MARGE KAPLAN

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Learning when one is feeling depressed or alienated is difficult at best, and next to impossible for most ESL students. ESL teachers have been told that their main job is to help their students become academically functional. Even if one agrees that emotional support could serve a useful purpose, when is there time to do this? Furthermore, who is trained to deliver this type of service? This article explores and resolves some of these questions.

I f you believe that it is not possible to learn effectively unless you are psychologically ready, where does that leave many of our ESL students? Traumatized by departures from their native countries with or without their families, entering a culture that they perceive as having few or no similarities to the ones they have left, and ignored or received with hostility by their peers, high school ESL students new to the U.S. are seldom psychologically ready to learn, yet alone excel. Where then in the curriculum of teaching English is there time to meet these emotional needs? Furthermore, are teachers licensed in K-12 ESL qualified to undertake this task? Even if time and qualifications can be established, mental health issues for many cultures can be a taboo subject.

Given these questions and these parameters, it has taken several years to develop the knowledge and creativity to start an experimental class where mental health issues could be addressed. The class was conceived because a school social worker and a school nurse announced at a faculty meeting the possibility of starting additional support groups at Roseville High School. After further investigation and discussion with the school social worker, the principal, and the ESL supervisor, a pilot program for ESL students was established. The school social worker, a psychologist on

loan to the school district, and the ESL teacher became the leaders of the group.

INITIAL QUESTIONS

Several challenges faced the leaders of the group. One of the most significant issues was what to name the group. If the students were told it was a mental health group, they may not have understood the meaning of the title and would not participate. Clearly, they were not "crazy" and mental health support in their cultures was both stigmatizing and reserved for those with only the most desperate psychological problems. Besides, it was not the intent of the leaders of this group to give therapy. The objectives of the group were to use discussions and reading and writing assignments to identify issues newcomers to the U.S. confront. Hopefully, this would make the students aware that others in their class were dealing with similar problems. Since some students were already depressed, it would be important not to make a bad situation more difficult. However, at the same time, it was crucial to talk about things that were of emotional significance, or the purpose of the group would be defeated. Another challenge that was presented was the school social worker's and the psychologist's lack of experience in leading a group of ESL students. A final challenge was the restriction given by the LEP section of the State Department of Education that mental health services could not be delivered as a substitute for ESL instruction.

INITIAL ANSWERS AND MORE QUESTIONS

How, then, were these issues addressed? First of all, after investigating possibilities for titles for the group and topics to be discussed, it was clear that ESL texts provided a wonderful resource. Fortunately, several excellent books concentrated on acculturation, glossed significant vocabulary, and provided suggestions for group activities. Only a few additions and modifications were needed. It would also be possible to give written homework before and following the oral sessions. By doing this, the State requirements for teaching listening, reading, and writing would be met. After looking at several possibilities, the leaders decided to call third hour each Wednesday "Culture Day."

In order to provide the co-leaders who were not ESL instructors a better picture of who the students were and what they could expect in an ESL classroom, the ESL teacher invited them to come and observe an ESL class. The ESL teacher also familiarized them with some of the individual

experiences the students had faced as they left their countries, and supplied some background information about the cultural differences of the specific group. Further, the leaders learned to simplify their vocabulary and syntax, and discussion topics were broken down into bite-size portions.

Since some of the students had pronunciation problems, it was occasionally difficult for the social worker and psychologist to understand what they were saying. When this happened, a Vietnamese peer tutor would translate, or the ESL teacher would paraphrase the information. Because of these communication problems, the psychologist and social worker had to spend more time understanding the words being expressed and had less time to focus on processing the information. This also took time away from listening to other group members, and deciding how to pace group discussion. As the leaders became more familiar with the students, comprehending what they were saying became easier. Although the psychologist and social worker were experienced in dealing with American students, the approaches needed to lead an ESL group were somewhat different. Unlike groups of American students who volunteer for chemical dependency or grief groups, these students were not familiar with the process of sharing feelings in a classroom setting. Furthermore, they could not be expected to participate unless the leaders of the group modeled the behavior they wanted to elicit from the students. For example, the day the group discussed prejudice, one leader initiated the discussion by talking about his own family's value system regarding his dating someone outside his religious faith.

While in the process of formatting the group, other questions surfaced. What group of ESL students should be involved—intermediate or advanced? What was the optimal size for the group? How many hours of this type of service could be provided? Should scheduling be during an ESL class? Since this was an experimental project, no one knew whether discussions in small groups or large ones would be more effective. How many professionals should be involved in these groups? Additionally, other questions were unanswered. What topics should be discussed? In the beginning sessions, what would be relevant but not too emotionally taxing? How could personal issues be explored without the participants feeling "at risk"? Were there activities that would be more effective than others that could coalesce the group?

Although it would have been nice to have enough time to wrestle

with these issues and problems, this was not possible. Instead, the leaders started the group hoping for the best, and relying on previous experience in their respective fields. Furthermore, follow-up evaluations of each session were used as a guide for planning for future groups.

FORMAT

The designated time and place for "Culture Day" was second semester, third hour, one time a week during regular ESL time. Intermediate level ESL students from Vietnam, Liberia, Japan, Nepal, and China, ranging in age from 14 to 23 years old, were the participants. Culture Day began with a session on "Proverbs" taken from the ESL text *Face to Face*, (Zanger, 1985). This topic was chosen because it seemed unthreatening. Further, because of its interview format, the students could talk to people outside the classroom and get additional information about the topic. Two days before Culture Day, the ESL teacher talked to the office staff about the proverbs they used and liked, and asked them if they would like to participate. This initial contact was made so that the students' interviews would be more successful. In order to ease communication problems, the staff was given a preview of questions the students would be asking them. This also provided the staff with an opportunity to decide which proverbs they wanted to share with the students. The day before Culture Day, the students interviewed these adults and wrote down the information they discovered. During the first Culture Day session, the students were encouraged to share what they had found out the day before and were asked to write down proverbs in their own languages and in English. The results of the interviews and the ensuing discussion showed the students that the cultural values of the U.S. and their countries were more similar than they had previously believed. This type of response was what the leaders of the group had hoped would occur. Subsequently, the professionals discussed the first session in more detail and concurred that it was a huge success. "Culture Day" was official.

Due to the success of this format, subsequent sessions were modeled after it. A day before Culture Day the ESL teacher introduced the topic. During that time, new vocabulary and missing schema were explored, interviews could be conducted, and students were given a written assignment. They were expected to bring this along the following day. Essentially, Culture Day was a discussion day using materials students had written the day before.

TOPICS

After this format was established, the leaders chose topics for subsequent sessions. Many different subjects were explored. Some topics that were included were: men's and women's roles, parental responsibilities, perceptions of the American teenager, culture shock, and prejudice. Reasons for leaving one's country, successes and failures of first generation Americans, and survival issues when one is faced with political exile, were later added to the agenda.

GROUP INTERACTION

Once the topics were chosen, the professionals had to decide how many people were going to lead the group at one time and how large the groups should be. Sometimes, the discussion leaders shared the job of leading, whereas at other times, one person was in charge. As professionals with expertise in different areas, the leaders realized that the key for success depended on watching and listening carefully to each other, and allowing one person to proceed without interruption if the discussion was proceeding well. Initially, a large group format was chosen where everyone was asked to contribute as people were sitting around in a large circle. Occasionally, small group discussions ensued for half the hour, and large group reporting filled the rest of the hour. Four to six students were considered an optimal number for small group discussion, ten to twelve students for large group interaction.

REFLECTIONS

Some of the sessions which were most exciting for the students were the ones on male/female roles, culture shock, and specific problems of immigration. They were very curious about American dating and marital customs, and wanted to compare them to those of their own cultures. Since the group leaders were men and women with a range in age, it was possible to give the students ideas about women's and men's roles based on their own experiences, which provided the students with a broader perspective.

The students were relieved and pleased to learn about culture shock, because they did not know that there was such a thing. Furthermore, it was very supportive for them to find out that everyone in the group had experienced culture shock in the form of initial excitement, followed by various forms of depression as they adjusted and adapted to their new

surroundings. One of their biggest surprises was that so many people in the U.S. had been immigrants, and had experienced some of the same hardships—physical, emotional, and financial—that they were facing.

The professionals discovered that small group interaction allowed more people to talk, but that the large group was more fun. It also gave the shy or less expressive members more time to listen and put less pressure on them to speak if they chose not to. Even those who didn't always participate verbally wrote down their feelings about the group as part of ongoing journal entries or homework assignments. Both the social worker and psychologist changed their perceptions of students who were "at risk" since they had not previously considered ESL students to be in this category.

Dealing with the feelings expressed by the students was tricky. The ESL teacher always let the social worker and the psychologist handle issues of grief, separation, and depression. To acknowledge their pain, and, at the same time, not become too personal or make the student feel worse rather than better after sharing, was a difficult balance to achieve. The skills and experience of the psychologist and social worker made it possible to achieve this balance.

As people in the group developed a trust level with one another and a familiarity with the process, more sensitive and personal problems surfaced. The psychologist and the social worker deftly guided the group's members, helping them to talk about their trauma and teaching the other students to be accepting and respectful. The social worker, in a low-key way, said that he would be available to talk more about individual issues if someone wanted to discuss them. The students were told they could also do this by talking to him directly or by communicating in their daily journals.

Time to plan and to evaluate was always a problem for the group leaders. Because everyone was so busy, the professionals learned to discuss problems and make lesson plans very quickly. The ESL teacher was always the anchor-person, and telephone and post office boxes were used extensively when in-person discussions were not possible.

As the sessions drew to a close, the students were asked to evaluate their experience with Culture Day, first in writing and then in group discussion. All of them considered it a good use of time and had suggestions for next year's Culture Day sessions. Some wanted to discuss topics that had not been included, such as war. Others wanted to take a field trip. They liked having three different group leaders since it provided a change

of pace and a difference in style.

FUTURE PLANS

The group leaders are also excited about the prospect of another semester of Culture Day. They now have a better idea of what topics should be addressed, and how long it will take for these students to learn to work together. This year's students will have a chance to request their own topics and the leaders hope to expand Culture day to include units and video tapes provided by the program called "A World of Difference" (sponsored by KSTP, St. Paul Pioneer Press, and the Anti-defamation League of Minneapolis) which focus on prejudice in Minnesota. Additional issues that will be covered will include: treatment of the elderly, concepts of time, friendship across cultures, nonverbal communication, and past and present immigrant experiences.

CONCLUSIONS

ESL students need to see others share feelings before they themselves can open up. However, once they are familiar with the process the students are willing to participate at the level they find comfortable. The group sessions provide an outlet for ESL students that was, until now, not addressed by the school, but is crucial for emotional adjustments in and outside of the school milieu.

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Southeast Asian Literature for the ESL Classroom

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Southeast Asian refugees who come to the United States during adolescence experience the additional stress of searching for their personal identity at the same time they are making a radical cultural adjustment. Schools and teachers can facilitate this search and adjustment by providing a secure environment which affirms and supports the values of the native culture while introducing opportunities to explore the new culture. Using literature written by Southeast Asian writers and literature about Southeast Asia and the refugee experience can foster such an environment while providing the opportunity to build English literacy skills. The eight works discussed here are divided into three groups—legends and folktales, autobiographical narratives of Southeast Asian refugees, and novels about Southeast Asian adolescents. All of these work can be used to affirm the cultural background and to support the personal identity search of adolescent Southeast Asian refugees with limited English proficiency

L iterature set in Southeast Asia or written by Southeast Asian writers can be a valuable resource for teaching English to Southeast Asian ESL (English as a Second Language) students. This literature can empower the students by affirming their cultural heritage, supporting their individual concepts of self worth, and providing familiar and culturally relevant material for literacy development.

Cummins (1986) asserts the importance of affirming the value of students' native cultures by using materials based on those cultures. Because most literature taught in American schools represents middle class white America (Beach & Marshall, 1990), it takes a special effort to find literature which represents other ethnic groups. The following quote from Dr. Mai Van Trang provides insight on how different Southeast Asian culture can be from middle class American culture:

AN ASIAN VIEW OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

We live in time.

We are always at rest.

We are passive.

We like to contemplate.

We accept the world as it is.

We live in peace with nature.

Religion is our first love.

We delight to think about the meaning of life.

We believe in freedom of silence.

We lapse into meditation.

We marry first, then love.

Our marriage is the beginning of a love affair.

It is an indissoluble bond.

Our love is mute.

We try to conceal it from the world.

Self-denial is a secret to our survival.

We are taught from the cradle to want less and less.

We glorify austerity and renunciation.

Poverty is to us a badge of spiritual elevation.

In the sunset years of life we renounce the world and prepare for the hereafter.

You live in space.

You are always on the move.

You are aggressive.

You like to act.

You try to change it according to your blueprint.

You try to impose your will on her.

Technology is your passion.

You delight in physics

You believe in freedom of speech.

You strive for articulation.

You love first, then marry.

Your marriage is the happy end of a romance.

It is a contract.

Your love is vocal.

You delight in showing it to others.

Self-assertiveness is the key to your success.

You are urged every day to want more and more.

You emphasize gracious living and enjoyment.

It is to you a sign of degradation.

You retire to enjoy the fruits of your labor.

(Mai Van Trang, 1989, p. 64.)

In order to affirm the value of the cultural heritage of Southeast Asian students, it is important to include literature relevant to their culture and written by Southeast Asian writers.

Besides validating the culture of Southeast Asian students, using literature based on their culture supports their own self image at a time when adolescent students are searching for their personal identities. Refugees who come to the United States during adolescence experience the additional stress of searching for their personal identity at the same time they are making a radical cultural adjustment (Ascher, 1989). Schools and teachers can facilitate this search and adjustment by providing a secure environment which affirms and supports the values of the native culture while introducing opportunities to explore the new culture. Using literature written by Southeast Asian writers and literature about Southeast Asia and the refugee experience is one way to provide such an

environment in the classroom.

The eight works I have selected to discuss here can all be used in a variety of ways to affirm the cultural background and support the adolescent Southeast Asian refugees with limited English proficiency. These works can be divided into three groups: legends and folktales, autobiographical narratives of Southeast Asian refugees, and novels about Southeast Asian adolescents. I will discuss each group separately, pointing out how the works in that group can be used to develop English language proficiency while affirming ethnic background and promoting a strong personal identity.

LEGENDS AND FOLKTALES

The two works in the legend and folktales category are *Living Tapestries* and *The Brocaded Slipper and Other Vietnamese Tales*. Both of these works are written in simple English prose by native English speakers based on stories passed on through an oral tradition. *Living Tapestries* recounts 21 very short legends and folktales based on themes of trickery, jealousy, and honor in interpersonal relationships. One cultural notion that weaves its way through all the tales is the unity within nature. This unity is strikingly portrayed by the absence of boundaries between the animal, human, and spirit domains. Individuals in the legends and tales move back and forth within these domains as easily as if they were going to another village. A bird becomes a human by taking off her wings; a dragon becomes an old man; and a baby chick becomes the special guardian of an orphan without any explanation or expectation of surprise. Even though this element is also found in Western folktales, it seems far more pervasive and ordinary in these Hmong tales.

The five Vietnamese tales in *The Brocaded Slipper* are longer and more complex than the Hmong tales. Some of stories are reminiscent of Western folktales like *Cinderella* and *Rip Van Winkle*. The settings and values, however, are unmistakenly Asian. Reverence for ancestors expressed by honoring the anniversary of their death and respect for learning expressed by diligence and memorization of ancient wisdom are two recurring themes expressed in these tales.

Because both of these books are written in simple English, they would be good reading material for students whose English is extremely limited. Using the Donelson and Nilson (1989) model for reading development, teachers can introduce these tales at the very beginning of literacy and use them to practice simple decoding. As students increase their language competency, they can read the tales at a more sophisticated level, applying

the morals to their own lives. Then, as students are able to read and think more abstractly, they can use the tales to discuss social issues and make application to the society they live in today.

Because the stories are based on familiar cultural themes, the students would have the necessary background knowledge for understanding them. Still, because they are based on universal themes, the stories can provide the starting point for multilevel responses. An initial activity could be to simply read for information. For example, students could be asked to read a tale and then to list all the plants and animals described in that tale that cannot be found here in Minnesota. The list could then serve as the basis for discussion, contrasting environments or contrasting the real with the imaginary or mythical. Further, the discussion could focus on dragons. In many Southeast Asian cultures, dragons represent wealth, prosperity, and royalty. Discussing the place and meaning of dragons is one way to build upon and affirm the students' cultural heritage.

Identifying the moral of a particular tale is another way to open a discussion on cultural values. Discussing how one of the morals or values implicit in a tale applies or does not apply to life in America can increase the relevance of the tales. Dramatizing or illustrating the plot sequence gives students with limited English skills the opportunity to explore and expand the meanings of the legends in a way that is similar to how other students learn through writing (for example, by writing tales of their own). All of these activities can be expanded or limited depending on the language skills of the students. One important focus, however, will be using familiar background knowledge and cultural values as the means for building communication skills. Using folktales and legends as an introduction to literacy and literature is one way to link the students' culture to the learning and academic process of their school experience.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVES

The next group of literature I have selected is Southeast Asian refugee autobiographical narratives. This group includes three works: *The Land I Lost; Dark Land, Dark Sky;* and *Voices From Southeast Asia*. All three of these works describe life in Southeast Asia and the last two describe the perils of escape to a new land. Again, the English narrative of these works is very simple and straightforward. Considering students will have ample background knowledge, even those with very limited English can complete an assignment based on some of the shorter selections.

Some of the ways this literature could be used in an ESL class are:

- Summarize one experience you read about.
- Compare everyday life in Laos or Vietnam to life here in terms of climate, food, work, community, danger.
- Tell your story (or part of your story): describe your birthplace; tell an incident from your life; write a poem to express a memory; draw a picture of something you hold dear.
- How is life different (for example, for the Hmong in Minneapolis)?

Reading these selections could stir sensitive or protected memories. Nevertheless, a flexible and careful introduction of the literature could provide the opportunity to discuss and find new meaning in past experiences. Often the freedom of discussing someone else's experience, which happens to be similar to ours, provides a safer environment in which to consider our own. These stories can illustrate the relevance of literature and the power of literacy as a means of both expanding and unifying our experiences. Discussing a common experience of loss, courage, endurance, or love of a homeland could help to build a common vision for the future.

Reading this literature as a group will give the students the chance to talk about what is happening to them with others who are facing the same challenges. Reading about how other people succeeded in meeting these challenges can be inspiring. Sharing concerns and questions about the future and considering together how the treasures of one culture can be integrated into another may help to resolve some conflicts and clarify difficult questions. These are questions that help the students examine and choose an identity they can live with. Elkind (1984) points out that the stresses of the adolescent identity search don't have to be negative— they can be the basis for building a stronger self image. Reading and discussing literature that validates the students' cultures and experiences is one way to help them build this strong sense of personal identity.

Students who are more proficient in English may want to investigate other autobiographical literature. Finding out who the other people are who have come as immigrants to the United States, what hardships they have faced and how they have built a life for themselves in this new country may give them a sense of being part of a bigger people.

Many of those who have come to the United States still have strong ties in the country they left. *Voices of the Dragon Children*, presented by the ESL students of Southwest High School, was a program of dance and drama which eloquently proclaimed a love for the mountainous jungles of

Vietnam and Laos and a longing for friends and relatives left behind. Reading and writing about the desire and dream to be reunited with loved ones or to visit again the beloved land of their birth is fertile ground for moving from literacy to poetic expression. As I watched the dancing and listened to the stories of these young students, I was moved by their love and longing for their homeland. Much of the writing of *Voices from Southeast Asia* echoes this love and longing. On page 20, Quan Tran tenderly describes the joy her own letter brings her grandfather in far away Viet Nam:

> ...on the other side of the earth, there lies an old man sleeping in his salon. Except from the fragrant flowers fluttering under the sun's rays...the house seems to be extremely quiet and lonely. But look at the joyful face of the old man; we can tell he's smiling in his dream. On the table nearby a letter lies rustling with the cool, fresh wind...

This quote shows how literacy and literature can connect these adolescents with their past. It enables them to read about the experiences of other people, to write about their own experiences, and to write to those they have left behind.

ADOLESCENT NOVELS

The last category I am considering here is the adolescent novel represented by *A Long Way from Home*, *Rice Without Rain*, and *Jason's Women*. *A Long Way from Home* is the simplest of the three. The story begins with Kien in a refugee camp in Hong Kong and follows him to his new home in the United States. Kien is wordly-wise. Not only did he escape by boat from Vietnam to survive the desolate life of a disease-filled refugee camp, but he also became the older brother and protector of two younger children. After so much responsibility and independence, the controlled routine of high school in the U.S. doesn't seem like a reasonable option. When bullying and prejudice compound the problem, no one is surprised that Kien strikes out on his own—leaving his sponsor and looking for a new home. Prejudice follows him, however, and Kien finds himself in the middle of a town battle: the Vietnamese fishermen against the white fishermen.

The problems Kien faces are the same problems most Southeast Asian refugees face trying to build a new life in a country that wants to forget about the war that brought them here. That Kien becomes a hero by

helping to end the conflict between the white and Vietnamese fisherman may not be realistic. However, the frustration and pain of finding a new life in America are very realistic and relevant. Along with Kien, many Southeast Asian students must overcome:

- being orphaned and separated from all those adults who share their values and customs;
- feeling stranded and isolated in a culture they don't understand: the language feels slippery, all of the food tastes sweet, and they just don't fit anywhere;
- experiencing hatred and persecution in a land proclaimed to be the home of the free.

These are real issues—issues that need to be addressed.

Rice Without Rain is different because it does not deal with refugees and immigration. The story takes place in Thailand—where many Southeast Asians escaped to and lived for extended periods of time in refugee camps. But this story isn't about refugees at all. The story revolves around the unjust ownership of land and the cost of changing this unjust system. The story is told through the eyes of Rinda who watches idealistic university students come to her village during their summer vacation to rally the peasants into a land reform movement. The plight of the peasants has been exacerbated by several years of drought. When Rinda's father, the village leader, decides to resist the normal rent collection, the established power kills him as brutally as it later massacres the university students when they return to Bangkok to resume their classes. Rinda sees the price that has been paid to fight injustice and must reconcile her suffering and confusion with the need to go on living.

Injustice and suffering are familiar themes to refugees. They are also contemporary themes everywhere in the world today. Rice Without Rain is a painful book because it describes the plight of so many people in so many places. Still, the book presents a hope that somehow the ancient wisdom and cultural values will provide the strength to begin again to search for an answer. It is not an American hope with our reliance on technology for new, all-encompassing answers. Rather, it is the hope which lives in an older, more patient culture. Some of the characters in Rice Without Rain may be stereotypical but the poignant theme and the careful description of life in Thailand give the book real value.

Jason's Women is really an American book about an American teenager's search for himself. The author—Jean Davies Okimoto—who is also a psychotherapist, uses an 80-year-old eccentric named Bertha Jane to counsel Jason. Although at times Okimoto becomes a little too obvious

and preachy, Jason's struggle is a real struggle, and Bertha Jane helps him identify what is important and what is illusion. So does Thao, a Vietnamese refugee girl who lives with Bertha Jane. By introducing Thao into the story, the values and customs of American society come face to face with those of Vietnamese society. In this book, however, the person feeling the stress is the American. That means the book gives those who are new to American society a chance to see and understand some of the insecurities and anxieties all teenagers face—not just those who have been uprooted from their homelands and brought to a strange new country. Thao becomes Jason's first real friend and the success of that friendship gives him the courage to let go of fantasy and invest his efforts in others. It is a story of hope that friendships made across cultures can be empowering.

In all three of these books the teenage protagonist suffers because of real and universal problems. How these problems relate to the lives of teenagers living in Minnesota—whether they were born here or came here as refugees—is fertile ground for writing. This writing will reflect the language skill, interest and openness of each particular student. Identifying the conflicts, drawing parallels between the stories and actual life, and extending the stories by telling what happens to one of the characters after the book ends are all ways to build literacy and personal understanding.

Moving from the legends and the autobiographical sketches to the full length novels is a leap. It is still another big leap to move on to a full length adult novel. But the eight books discussed here are not intended to be a self-contained curriculum. Building fluency and automaticity in a second language is only the beginning. Students need to continue developing their literary competency so that they move from the level of simply enjoying a story to finding themselves in the story and then to going beyond to look at society and ask questions about justice, freedom, and personal rights (Donelson and Nilson, 1989). This development happens one step at a time. Because the students in an ESL class are usually extremely diverse in educational background and cultural heritage, an ESL teacher has to be familiar with a broad range of literature. Any of these eight books can be a starting point to develop language skills, affirm the cultural heritage of Southeast Asian refugees, and provide encouragement to adolescents as they strive for a strong sense of personal identity

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Folktales and Legends

Numrich, C. H. (1989). *Living Tapestries*. Lima, Ohio: Fairway Press. Twenty-one Hmong legends and folktales retold in a simple English narrative. Illustrations are line drawings adapted from Hmong needlework (79 pages).

Vuong, L. D. (1982). *The brocaded Slipper and Other Vietnamese Tales*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley. Five Vietnamese fairy tales retold in simple English. Exquisite drawings by Vo-Dinh Mai (111 pages).

Autobiographical Narratives

Moore, Dave,(Ed.). (1989). *Dark Sky, Dark Land: Stories of the Hmong Boy Scouts of Troop 100*. Minneapolis, MN: Tessera Publishing. Sixteen stories of beginning life in war-torn Laos, then escaping to desolate refugee camps and, finally, adjusting as an adolescent to a new life in a new country (191 pages).

Nhuong, Huynh Quang. (1982). *The Land I Lost: Adventures of a Boy in Vietnam*. New York: Harper & Row. Sixteen memories of growing up in a peaceful Vietnam. Very easy to read narration with exquisite drawings by Vo-Dinh Mai (115 pages).

Risser, Larry, and Kathy Suzuki, (Eds.). (1982). *Voices from Southeast Asia: A Collection of Art and Writings by Students in the Minneapolis Public Schools*. Minneapolis: Minneapolis Public Schools. Episodes, drawings and poems by 28 students of Vietnamese, Hmong, Cambodian, Lao, Thai, Chinese and Korean backgrounds (57 pages).

Adolescent Novels

Ho, Minfong. (1990). *Rice Without Rain*. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books. Teenage village girl witnesses the death of her father and the massacre of university students as resistance to institutional injustice is forcibly squelched (236 pages).

Okimoto, Jean Davies. (1986). *Jason's Women*. Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press. A 15-year-old American boy overcomes his self image as a "wimp" with the help of an 80-year-old mentor and a young Vietnamese refugee (210 pages).

Wartski, Maureen Crane. (1980). *A Long Way from Home*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. Kien, a 15-year-old Vietnamese refugee, comes to the U.S. to face prejudice in school. Kien runs away to a California fishing village where he becomes a hero by successfully confronting the racially motivated discrimination of the townspeople (154 pages).

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Your Textbook is in the Library— Or You Could Make Your Own

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Elementary level ESL students come with a great variety of needs and abilities, and traditional second-language teaching methods don't seem to work very well with them. This article discusses an alternative method, where the students study stories or subjects and then write and illustrate their own books about them, using outside resources and various artistic and dramatic methods on the way. Projects at different grade levels are discussed in detail.

I am an ESL teacher in a public school. My students are immigrants from war-damaged areas of the world, mostly from Laos and Cambodia. At home the students speak languages other than English and they practice the traditional cultures of their parents' homelands. At school they attend class with their English-only age-mates. My job is to instruct them in English and in the culture of the U.S. Their job is to find a way to live in both worlds at once.

There is Bao,* a Hmong girl from Laos. New to the school, she has spoken English only about three years and is confused much of the time. Bao is good at laughing at her predicaments and laughs a great deal, but sometimes frustration overwhelms her. She is sensitive and feels hurt when others are impatient with her, but she always tries again.

There is Vanh, a boy from Cambodia. Vanh knows many things, and he can sometimes explain them well orally and in writing, but he makes many grammatical errors. He seldom seems to hear directions or know exactly what's going on. Vanh finishes everything quickly and wants more work, but he is not interested in improving the old work.

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*All the student names have been changed.

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There is Souyaa, a Cambodian girl. Mostly silent, she sometimes knows the answer, but will not be drawn out. She seemed very capable when younger, but others are now passing her by. She seems to be very dependent on her friends.

There is Foua, a boy from Laos. Full of noise, he would rather draw monsters than do almost anything else. Foua loves adventure and drama; he gives eager attention and wants to answer all questions when the topic is exciting, but otherwise, he would rather tease around with his neighbors.

There is Lia, a Hmong girl born in Minnesota. Lia is never quick, never the first to finish, or even to start. When others were writing their first two-sentence stories, she listed random words she knew how to spell. When others wrote adventures, she did short sentences. But little by little, year by year, she makes progress. Lia has opinions and knows how to make decisions, silently asserting, "I am here, too."

> I, to the classroom teacher: "How is Souyaa doing?"
> "She gets her work done. She never asks any questions. I wish she would talk to me."
> I, to the science teacher: "Is Vanh understanding your class?"
> "Yes, I guess so. He never says a word."

Bao, Vanh, Souyaa, Foua, Lia, and six others like/unlike them, are together with me in a class for 45 minutes daily. During the day, there are five other groups like/unlike this one. Most groups have a mix of two grade levels; each has at least two ethnic groups; each has a range of abilities. I must teach them English so that they will be able to succeed with their English-only peers in the mainstream classroom. Where do we start? What is their common need? How will they progress? What test could I give them that would sort it all out?

HOW I BEGAN

When I began as an ESL teacher 12 years ago, I went through some years of a kind of search, trying to find what would work, what would motivate, what would cause progress to occur.

Let's try grammar drills. Let's practice a piece of language such as the question-answer sequence, "What is this?" "It's a ____." We glue pictures, practice orally, write the sentences. They like the cutting and pasting; they wish to continue that for more days. Some learn the sentence patterns and some do not. Oral drills tire us all out very quickly and don't

seem to help much. Most students can use grammar patterns correctly in tests but they continue to make all the same errors in daily speech.

Okay, let's learn vocabulary. Here's a packet of pictures of animals. Let's learn the names. We practice. We play games with the cards. They like this. They know when they are right and when they are wrong. If anyone ever shows them a picture of a lion and asks what it is, they will be ready. But the words they need to know in their mainstream classes are so much more complicated, so much more abstract.

How about workbooks? We read a conversation page together and we do the practice exercises. We try to make up conversations about similar situations. We are able to do it. It's dull. It doesn't lead us anywhere.

Let's try the ESL book science pages. Here's information about elephants. We read it and each student answers the questions. They are quiet and work hard. Some get the answers right and some don't. Should we do it together next time, so everyone will be right? Would small groups have worked better? They don't seem all that interested in elephants.

Among the things I tried was telling/reading a story and having the students retell it in pictures and in their own sentences. This was so much more interesting and so much less frustrating than most other exercises, that it began to take up more and more of our time. Projects tended to expand; an Aesop's fable about a fox and a crow would lead to the song "The Fox Went Out on a Chilly Night," and then we needed to study how to draw foxes, and the books that we copied from had some interesting facts about how foxes live. . . . Student participation increased dramatically because each student could follow up her own particular interests and contribute according to her own ability.

It seems to me that the thing my students need to do most in order to learn to speak English, is to *speak English*. And in order to get them to do that, I have to arrange the environment so they need to speak in order to accomplish something *else* that interests them, and so that they feel comfortable doing so. If we are going to learn grammar, or vocabulary, or science facts, it needs to be in the context of some project we are trying to do. And the project we have come to love to do is making our own books.

MAKING BOOKS BASED ON A STORY

Bao, Vanh and the other students I have described are in the fourth grade, approximately 9–10 years old—a very lively age. By this age my students have usually been in school for a few years; they can understand

a great deal in English, they can write, and they *love* stories. So this year I found a story for them that was full of adventure, kings and queens, robbers and giants and smart women who could trick their way around them. We built several months' worth of activity around this story. It was called "Three Golden Hairs" (Denan, 1980), and it's the story of a boy who was born lucky, and the king who tried to get rid of him.

This story is very long, and the language is not excessively easy for children to understand. We got a number of books out of the library, all about castles and the people who lived in and near them. Each day we would gather together and I would read a few pages of the story to the students; we would discuss vocabulary and plot and make predictions, and then the students would look at the books and draw castles, royalty, rooms in houses and whatever else was in the story. It took a number of days to complete this first stage.

After that, each student chose an episode from the story, made an illustration, and wrote sentences about it. This provided an initial check on comprehension. I found that the pictures were good but the students hadn't understood the story well enough to write their scenes very well. So I gathered their sentences together and we worked on them as a group, clarifying the meanings and filling in what was missing. After that, I typed up the final product and this became the narrator's script for a puppet play.

We divided up the story's characters (there are many) and each student made one or two stick puppets, again using books as resources. They then drew large backdrops for our puppet stage. We divided up the narrative among those who wished to read it, and we were ready to rehearse.

A student would read one or two sentences from the narrative and then the characters in that scene would speak the dialogue, which was not memorized and therefore varied slightly each time we did it. After a few rehearsals, we videotaped the play. The students really had to concentrate in order to come in at the right times and do their dialogues correctly. They did very well.

Naturally, the students chose to make the stick puppets that expressed their own personalities. Foua, the boy full of noise, played the loud, nasty giant. Bao, the confused girl, played the ferryman who tricked the evil king, and Lia, the slow quiet one, was the mother who argues against giving up her baby to a rich man for adoption. They all succeeded admirably; we have the tape to prove it.

For the culminating part of the project, I cut up the narrative sheet and allowed the students to choose the sentences they wished to illustrate. They made large pencil drawings of their scenes, and I laid their stick puppets on these and made photo-copies. The students then added conversation balloons on their own or other students' pages (see Figure 1); I made final copies which we bound into books, and the students took them home.
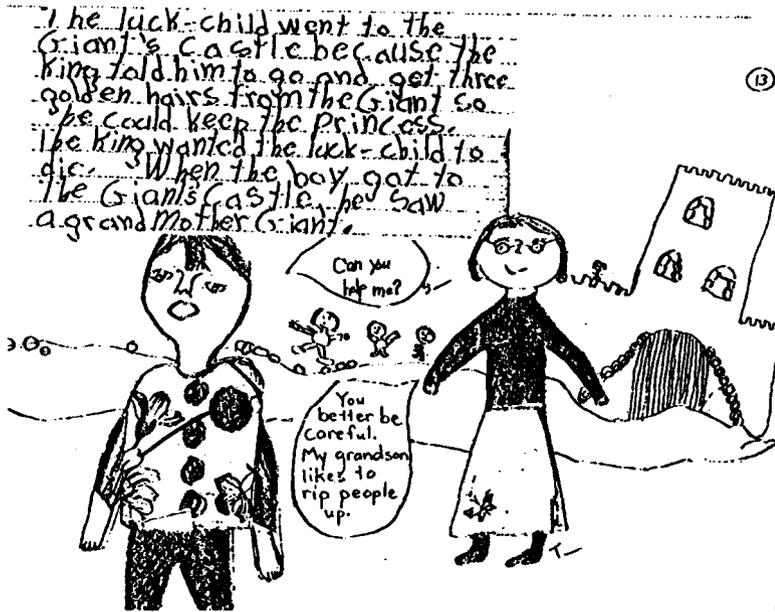

Figure 1. A Student Page from "Three Golden Hairs"

MAKING BOOKS WITH KINDERGARTNERS: STORIES TOLD IN PICTURES

Even five-year-olds who don't speak English love to present stories to others, and they also love to make their own books. So we combine these activities. I read them a good repetitive story such as "The Three Little Pigs," pantomiming, dramatizing, and showing pictures (and when possible, having an interpreter translate it). Then little by little, day by day, we learn the vocabulary for it by assembling the characters ("Please give

me a head" . . . "Is this a foot?" . . .) (see Figure 2). They also paint, glue and draw the background scenes (from library books) on pages in their individual tagboard books. When all scenes and props are complete, we practice as though it were a play. I read the story, the students chime in on the repetitive parts, and at the same time, they show the action by moving their characters about on their pages. When it is learned, we perform it in the same way for their kindergarten classmates, who are quite impressed.
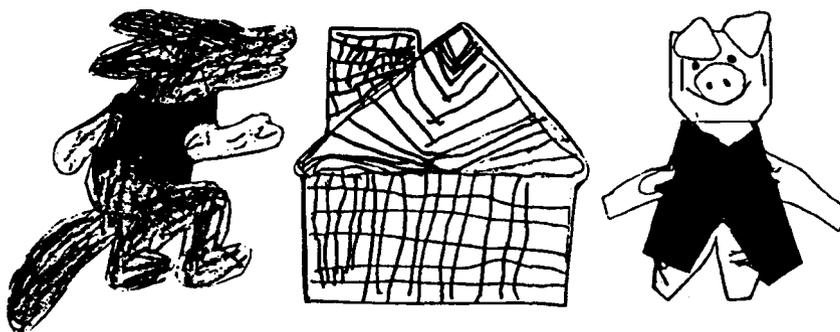
Figure 2. Kindergarten props for "The Three Little Pigs"

Later each student looks at the scenes she has made and she tells me as much as she can about them in English, and I write down what she says in her book. This provides a valuable progress check, and the students will take the finished books home to show their families.

MAKING BOOKS BASED ON A SONG
One of my favorite yearly projects is the book we make in second grade, based on the song, "Over in the Meadow." It exists in many versions, but the one I use is by John Langstaff (1957). Each verse names a different animal, its home, and an activity it does. There are ten verses, all on this pattern:

Over in the meadow, in the sand in the sun,
Lived an old mother turtle and her little turtle one.
"Dig, said the mother. "I dig," said the one.
So he dug and was glad, in the sand in the sun.

For each verse, we do a number of activities. The students copy and memorize the words, reciting them individually, and we sing the verse. They reproduce a library book illustration of each animal, using cut paper, origami, drawings and/or paint. Using information from library books, I read or tell them facts about the animal's life cycle and habits, from library books, and they each write several sentences from what I've told them, adding drawings to illustrate what they've said.

After that, we study a fiction story which features that animal. This is fun because the plot of such a story very often hinges on a trait of the animal that we have already studied—for instance, the trickiness of the fox, the busyness of the beaver, or the frog's loss of a tail. Such stories are found in cultures all around the world.

After I read them the story, we rework it in some way. Sometimes they retell it to me as a group. In that case, we keep trying to restate ideas in new ways until I can "capture" sentences that make sense and are grammatically correct. I may write down the story in the words they've said and duplicate it to read the next day, or I may cut it up and reassemble it, or cut it up and ask each student to illustrate a part. I duplicate these illustrations.

Sometimes each student rewrites a story individually. Any time they write, they read their work to me; this helps them see if it makes sense and is complete. After that, we correct spelling and punctuation. While I don't correct grammar with younger children because it is too confusing for them, I try to teach grammar in other ways, through repetition (as in the song), through reading, and through example.

Sometimes we do a group reassembling of the story. The students each draw many pictures of the characters in the story. I choose among these, picking drawings that show all the scenes but also represent each child's work. I glue the drawings onto paper and draw the conversation balloons. Each child has a copy, and together we make up sentences to write in the balloons, or each student writes her own (see Figure 3).

The "Over in the Meadow" project takes most of the year to complete. All the work done in this whole project is glued into bound books which the students will take home at the end of the year. The children like it very much and they're justifiably proud of the books they produce. These tend to show amazing progress from the beginning of the year to the end.
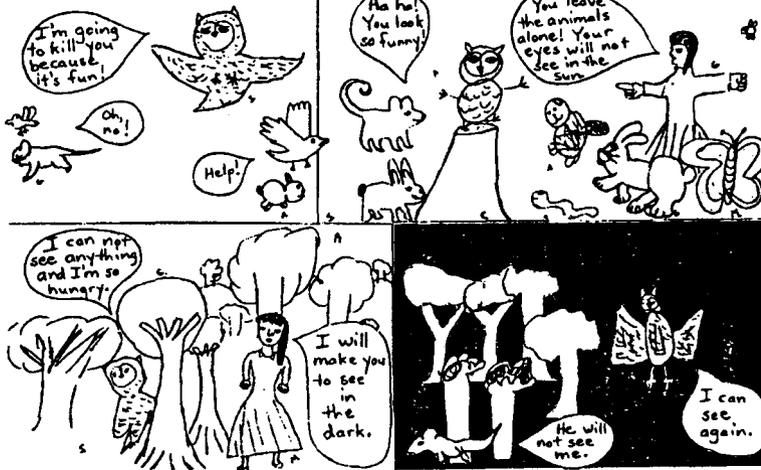
Figure 3. A Second-grade Group-assembled Story

MAKING BOOKS WITH OLDER CHILDREN: REAL-LIFE SITUATIONS

When they reach fifth and sixth grades, students are no longer as interested in stories found in books. They want to know about what's real. Interpersonal relationships are their favorite topic. The problem is not in getting them to talk, but in getting them to be quiet for a moment. They like to ask me for personal information about myself. They like to discuss people and why they behave as they do.

We continue to produce books, but they are on more personal topics: an imaginary trip around the world (using *National Geographic* magazine), a handbook about Webster School, a field trip to explore the downtown skyways (see Figure 4).

WHY WE MAKE BOOKS

Book-writing has come to be the central activity in my curriculum, because it fills so many of our needs.

First of all, it gets all students actively involved, despite their diversity. Each is able to make a valuable contribution to the whole product. Each student produces work that is real, rather than the artificial products

A Trip to Down Town

Well I saw an old lady around with her cane. And men helping each other on the I also saw ladies dress up

who was walking I saw two old skyway.

A___ was looking for something. Then she picked out some rain candy but she put it back. K___ was looking for the candy that A___ bought, but when she found it, it was too short so she didn't buy it. Then R___ wanted to buy something but she couldn't find it. P___ and D___ didn't want to go to stores like the girls did. P___ wanted to buy jewelry. Then Robyn said "Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry." -B___

Can I help you?

Books here

Figure 4. A Sixth-grade Field Trip Newsletter

generated by workbook exercises. Each student's work can be collected, and can be compared to last week's, and last year's, so her progress becomes easy to see. The extensive use of outside sources exposes the students to a much larger range of vocabulary, sentence patterns, and ideas than would otherwise happen, and each student assimilates what she is able in her current stage of development. The work produces quality products that the students can be proud to show to other people. But most of all, the projects are fun. The students come in eager to work, they begin right away, and they express enthusiasm for what they do. Book-making is a process that works for us.

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Work in Progress

MinneTESOL Journal invites readers to submit short reports and updates on their work. These summaries may address any areas of interest to Journal readers.

Recall Protocols and L2 Reading Research

THOMAS A. UPTON
University of Minnesota

The ability to investigate and analyze the processes involved in L2 reading is obviously hindered by the fact that it cannot be directly observed—it is a cognitive activity. As a result, instruments have had to be devised which permit researchers to investigate the intricacies of the reading process indirectly. One such tool is the recall protocol. With written recall protocols, readers are asked to first read an L2 passage and then write down everything they can remember from the passage without referring back to it.

A major concern that has been raised about this instrument, however, is the issue of whether the language of recall (the L1 or the L2) influences the quantity and/or quality of the concepts recalled. Lee (1986) recognized that there was a potential complication in comparing research studies using recall protocols because some studies asked the subjects to recall in their L1 (e.g., Bernhardt, 1983) and some asked the subjects to recall in their L2 (e.g., Carrell, 1983; Carrell, 1984; Connor, 1984). To determine whether there were any significant differences in the quantity recalled if a recall protocol was written in a subject's L1 or L2, Lee conducted a study using 320 Spanish as a Second Language students enrolled in 1st - 4th semester Spanish at Michigan State. At each semester level he divided the students into two groups, gave them a passage to read and asked one group to do a recall protocol in English (L1) and one group to do a recall protocol in Spanish (L2). His findings were that more of the passage was recalled by those writing in their L1 than those writing in their L2.

Since Lee's study was published, must studies using recall protocols to evaluate the L2 reading processes have had the readers recall an L2 text

41

in their L1, often citing Lee's study as a the basis for their decision (e.g., Barnett, 1988; Hammadou, 1991; Lee & Musumeci, 1988; Taglieber, Johnson, & Yarbrough, 1988). However, a recent study that I carried out that used recall protocols to look at reading strategies of ESL students suggested to me that the L1 may not always be the ideal language in which to elicit recall. When I instructed the 6 ESL subjects in my study to write a recall protocol in their L1 (Japanese or Indonesian) based on a text they read in English (their L2) *all* of them asked if they could write the recall in English instead. When asked why, they said it would be much easier for them.

I was left to wonder why my students would find recalling in their L2 easier than in their L1 while the study by Lee suggests the opposite to be true. I hypothesized that the reason Lee's study showed that student's recall better in their L1 than their L2 was due to the fact that the L2 language proficiency of the students in his study was relatively low, probably only ranging from Novice to Intermediate-High (at most) on the ACTFL scale. From what we know of the L2 reading processes as well as the processes of second language acquisition, there are several possible explanations for why low proficiency students would recall an L2 text better in their L1:

1. For these students, a lot of their cognitive processing of the L2 text likely resulted via translation into their L1.

2. Since their production skills in the L2, in this case writing, likely lagged behind their receptive skills in the L2, in this case reading, it is quite likely that these students could produce better recalls by writing them in their L1 since they had the information but were not proficient enough in their L2 to write out what they recalled.

3. It is also quite possible that many students are *trained* to read in the L2 via a grammar-translation method, and thus at lower levels of proficiency are still conditioned to understand L2 texts based on their translation of them into the L1.

The students in my study, however, all had a fairly high level of L2 proficiency as indicated by TOEFL scores of 525 or better. Based on these students' expressed preference for recalling an L2 text in the L2, I hypothesized that students with a "high" level of L2 language proficiency would do equally well, or possibly even better, on recall protocols of an L2 text if they wrote the protocol in their L2 as opposed to writing it in their

L1. The bases for this hypothesis were as follows:

1. It is likely that higher proficiency L2 students do almost all of their processing of an L2 text in the L2 with little or no reference/translation to their L1.

2. Higher proficiency L2 students will not have major difficulties producing the L2 language required to express what they have "receptively" understood.

3. It is possible that some L2 students will have difficulty translating concepts/terms that they have learned in their L2 (but not in their L1) into their L1.

To test this hypothesis, I ran a small study during the summer of 1991 to act as a pilot for a larger study to be carried out in 1992. The following is a brief description of the study and the results obtained.

PROCEDURES

Six native speakers of Japanese attending an intensive English language program at the University of Minnesota were asked to participate. These six students were divided by their Minnesota Battery of English Language Proficiency (MN Batt) scores. Three students had total scores below 70 (69, 67, 68) and three had scores above 75 (77, 81, 82). Each student was asked to read two articles in English that had been taken from two different newsmagazines (*Newsweek* and *U.S. News and World Report*). Both articles were less than 400 words long and both had seven difficult or unusual words glossed (e.g., "Twinkies"). Students were informed beforehand that they would be asked to recall the text when they were finished, but they were not told which language they would be asked to use to write the recall.

Johnson's (1970) procedure for analyzing recall protocols was used to analyze the students' protocols. Two native speakers of English divided the two articles into "pausal segments" which were then ranked by relative importance and given a weighted score, with 25% of the pausal segments rated as most important and given a score of 4 points each, 25% rated as next important and given a score of 3 points each, etc. The recall protocols were then scored using this scoring rubric. Recalls in Japanese were translated directly into English by a native speaker of Japanese, and the English translations were scored.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Comparing the differences in scores between the recall protocols written in the L1 and in the L2, two of the students who had MN Batt scores above 75 received a score equivalent to or higher than the scores that resulted when they recalled in the L2. For the three students who had MN Batt scores below 70, only one scored higher when recalling in the L2.

Due to the fact that there were only six students involved in this study and two different articles were used, a statistical analysis of the scores is impossible and any interpretation of these results needs to be done with caution. However, what this study does suggest is that L2 readers may not always recall information from a text more thoroughly when recalling in their L1 as opposed to their L2. While no conclusions can be made, this pilot study does indicates that it would be fruitful to conduct a more extensive study examining the relationship between L1/L2 proficiency and recall more thoroughly. If it is true that higher proficient students do recall an L2 text better in the L2 than in the L1, this would have major implications on the design of future studies.

THE AUTHOR

Thom Upton is a Ph.D. student in Second Languages and Cultures Education at the University of Minnesota, and he teaches ESL students in the Learning and Academic Skills Center. He is also First Vice President of MinneTESOL. His main focus in the area of research is second language reading.

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Students' Work

Poetry

On Success . . .

When I succeed I feel
like a butterfly flying in
the sky.
When I succeed I feel
like a dog eating rice.

When I succeed I feel
like a monkey jumping
in the trees.

When I succeed I feel
like the sun is shining
through me.

Yong Moun
Cambodian
Grade 9

When I succeed
I feel like I live on the moon.
I feel like a beautiful flower.
I feel like a world without war.
I feel like freedom.
I feel like a person falling in
love.

LeMai Nguyen
Vietnamese
Grade 9

On Failure . . .

When I fail I feel like a smashed
potato.
I feel like a heart that is
broken.
When I fail I feel like people
are spitting on me.
I feel like a sun going
down at night.
When I fail
I feel like ice melting very fast.
I feel like crying like a
pig.
I feel like I'm the end of the
road.

Rizwan Farooq
Pakistan
Grade 8

When I fail I feel
like a tornado came into town.

I feel like the kite without
string.

      I feel like the dark sky
      without stars.

I feel like much that
everyone likes to step on.

      Uyen Nguyen
      Vietnamese
      Grade 8

On Color . . .

White

White is a color of light.
White is a color of a star glowing
in the dark.
White is a color of roses that
have
been torn.
White is a color of singing in the
streets.
White is the color of the moon
and the star shining down at me.
White is the color of lonely love.

Samean Son
Cambodian
Grade 7

What is Blue?

Blue is the color of the Pacific ocean.
Blue is the color of a T shirt.
Blue is the color of a folder.
Blue is the color of the sky.
Blue is the color of American eyeballs.
Blue is the color of starlight.

Maley Nou
Cambodian
Grade 7

All poetry was written by students
from Willow Creek Junior High in
Rochester, Minnesota.
Our thanks to their ESL teacher,
Jennifer Jesseph.

Illustrated Essays

My house was in China. There the mountains were not near my house. My father, mother, and friends built my house. My house was made of brick. The roof is tiles. I lived there 13 years. I have 5 people lived in my house, they are my mother, father, brother, sister, and me. There four families lived around me. I have five rooms, they are bathroom, kitchen, living and two bedrooms. We have clost, chair, table, and desk. The bathroom is between two bedroom. My house by many tree, they are bananas, and apples tree. I have cat, dog, chicken and cow, and I have roses in my garden. My father worked in the city, and I went to school. I like my house because is comfortable.

<div style="text-align:right">

A Me Lam
Chinese
Grade 9
Harding High School

</div>
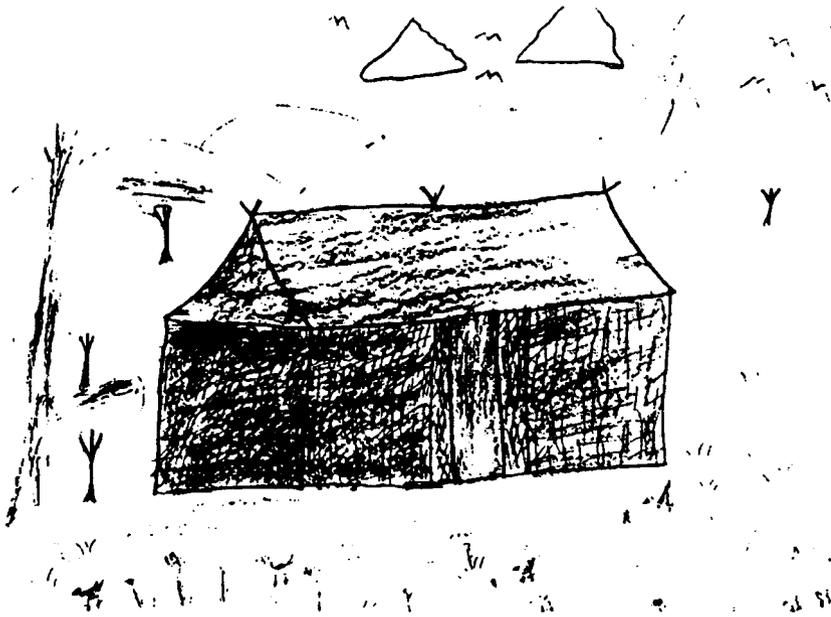
My house was in Laos. The mountains in every near my house. My father and my brother built my house. My house mede of bamboo. The house mede of bameboo. I there 10 years.

7 people live in my house. There 3 rooms. Kitchen and living roomd and bedroom. The bathroom outside the house. Three trees were by my house. I have banana tree and pineapple tree and papaya tree.

I have chicken and duck and pig. I grow a cucunber and papper tomatoes and escargle in my garden. My father is farmer. I did go to school I help my mother and my father in the farm.

I like my house because have many tree. My house have duck and pig and chicken and many ducke. I like to go to the farm. My house is not very nice.

Shoua Xiong
Hmong
Grade 9
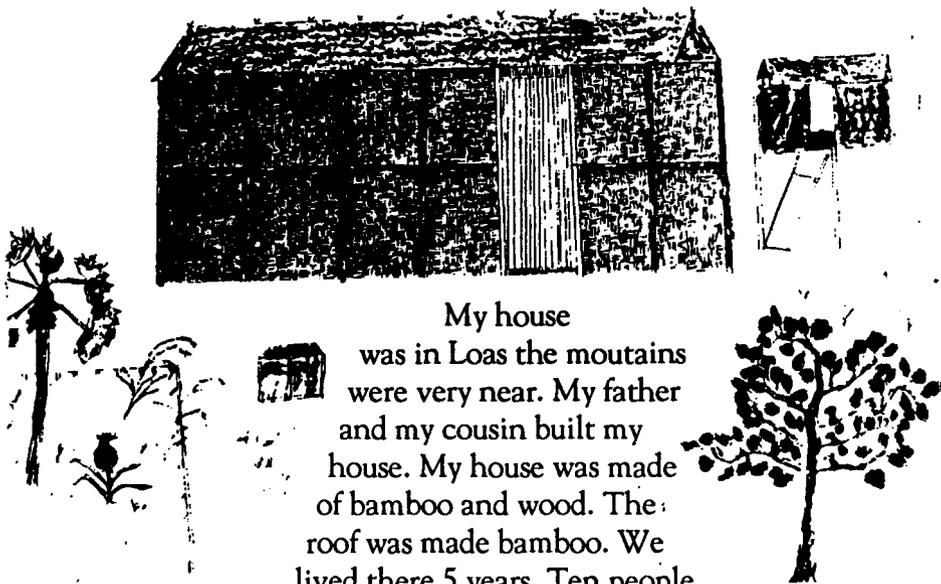
My house
was in Loas the moutains
were very near. My father
and my cousin built my
house. My house was made
of bamboo and wood. The
roof was made bamboo. We
lived there 5 years. Ten people
lived in my house. Ten families lived
around my house.

My house has three bedrooms, kitchen and livingroom together. The kitchen has big table and 6 little chair. We're ate fruit, rice and vegetable.

The bathroom was outside. I have banana, papaya, mago trees and pineapple. My families have cows, pigs and chickens. We grow bananas papayas and magos in the garden.

My father takes care of the family and takes care animals. I help my mother, but my brother went to school. I liked my house because my house has big room and cows, pig chicken.

<div align="right">

Mai Youa Xiong

Hmong

Grade 11

</div>

These essays were written by
students from Harding High
School in St. Paul, Minnesota.
Our thanks to their ESL
teacher, Darlene Kunze.

Reviews

The MinneTESOL Journal welcomes evaluative reviews of publications relevant to TESOL professionals. In addition to textbooks and reference materials, these include computer and video software, testing instruments, and other forms of nonprint materials.

Second Language Teacher Education
edited by Jack C. Richards and David Nunan. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990. xii + 340 pp.

R ichards and Nunan have compiled a text that makes great strides in redirecting second language teacher education toward the development of professional teachers. It is both theoretical and concrete. The book explains approaches that facilitate innovative teacher preparation. Teacher educators, student teachers, and cooperating teachers in the schools will all find this volume useful. Included are insights on implementing reflective teaching, on intervention in student teaching, on the supervision of preservice teachers, and on conducting classroom oriented research. The book is also designed to function as a course text for student teachers. Questions for discussion are posed at the end of each major section.

The articles in the first section are concerned with general issues in and processes for teacher education. A distinction is made between teacher training and teacher education or development. Teacher training is taken to be the simple provision to preservice teachers of low inference, learnable classroom skills, methods, and techniques. Teacher development, on the other hand, seeks to educate future teachers so that they become professionals in the classroom, and become able to understand and act on the principles of second language education, to be decision-makers, and to be able to function as investigators of their own teaching. The distinction between teachers as independent, professional decision-makers and teachers as technicians of classroom skills and techniques— i.e., between teacher education and teacher training—is important. This book focuses on professional teacher education and development. This focus is one of several purposes for the book: to provide teacher educators and future teachers with an understanding of the basic concept of teacher

development; to offer innovative avenues toward practical implementation of teacher education; and to present research issues and findings in second language teacher education.

If teachers are to be considered professionals, preservice and inservice programs need to provide them with a means of observing and analyzing their classrooms. One section of the book is devoted to investigating teachers and learners in classrooms. Day, after reviewing both qualitative and quantitative research methods, presents a guide for systematic observation of the classroom. Included in this section is an examination by Wright of the importance of focusing attention on values, beliefs and attitudes towards language, knowledge and learning that teachers and learners have. Wright also calls for action research, which is the focus of Nunan's chapter. Action research provides a mechanism for teachers to further their own professional development by investigating their own practice.

Several chapters on self-observation give insight into reflective teacher development. Bartlett not only describes critical reflective teaching but also provides principles to guide that process. Bartlett points out that writing is important to the reflective process. His point is that written description is a stepping stone toward reflection. The next two articles explore mechanisms for reflection through writing. First, the use of diary studies in teacher education are reviewed by Bailey. She describes keeping a teaching journal as a tool for self-evaluation. Second, the benefits of writing a journal are described. Journal writing in teacher education develops a professional approach to learning, which emphasizes learner needs, uses learner input, and focuses more on process than product. Since teacher educators advocate that these approaches be taken with language learners in classrooms, not only is it appropriate that preservice teacher education model such approaches but that student teachers themselves benefit from self-observation through journal writing.

Intervention in practice teaching and student teacher supervision are taken up in two additional sections. Outlined are options in intervening in practice teaching and how interaction in a teaching practicum can provide an opportunity for student teachers to change their teaching behaviors. Fostering change in student teachers will have an impact on the ability of new teachers to make their own teaching decisions. Alternative models for student teacher supervision are given by Gebhard and Fanselow. The supervision process described by Fanselow directly challenges the delivery model of student teacher supervision. He describes a process whereby visiting teachers and student teachers construct

knowledge jointly. In this approach teachers come to see their own teaching differently, rather than being told how or what is best to teach or by being helped to do so.

These are innovative approaches! Providing education that departs radically from student teachers' previous experience is a good idea. If teacher educators expect students to teach in novel ways, then they should incorporate innovation into the teacher development program. This is nothing more than practicing what we preach. However, implementing innovative intervention and supervision is itself insufficient. Student teachers must be engaged in a dialogue about the overall purpose of participating in supervision or intervention in these innovative ways. In addition such dialogue should occur at various points throughout the student teacher's experience. Discussion must not stop when the introduction and inception of the new strategies begins. Although students may cognitively accept the rationale for innovative education, they may become frustrated as implementation of an unfamiliar process unfolds. Participating in innovative approaches may clash with long and closely held, but largely unexamined, beliefs about the way things should "really" proceed.

In the article on career growth in this book, Pennington speaks of the need for developing favorable attitudes toward change and growth. Engaging in innovative education, whether specifically in intervention and supervision or in other areas, will directly touch the attitudes students have developed toward education and toward change. The attitudes, values, and beliefs of student teachers concerning their expectations, which are in part based on their previous educational experiences, should be discussed and then re-examined at intervals throughout the preservice teacher education program. Reflection, dialogue, and discussion regarding students' basic beliefs and about their current experiences must be ongoing in order to foster better self understanding and open up channels to change.

The final section of the book is composed of four case studies that address aspects of teacher education programs. First, a graduate level teacher development program is designed and described. Then a program focusing on the teacher's use of language in the classroom with English as the medium of instruction is presented. Next a procedure that enables teacher educators who work in a foreign language context to take the perspective of participants as a starting point for inservice preparation is outlined. Finally, the COLT (Communicative Orientation of Language

Teaching) observation instrument for use in describing language class-rooms is described.

Second Language Teacher Education successfully lays a base for think-ing about and implementing innovative teacher education. This text is as much a practical tool as it is a forum for discussion about the direction teacher education could and should take. Prospective teachers are consid-ered developing professionals rather than pupils to be trained as efficient technicians. This book focuses on the education of teachers as profes-sional decision-makers and provides teacher educators with mechanisms that can begin to effect such change.

THE REVIEWER
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Breaking the Language Barrier: Creating Your Own Pathway to Success

H. Douglas Brown. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1991. 200 pp.

W hat does it take to learn a foreign language? What makes a language learner successful?

It is ironic that some states in the United States have mandated English-only laws while others have re-introduced requirements for foreign language study. Nevertheless, the current majority population remains monolingual in English. As language teachers know—and Senator Paul Simon mentions in the foreword—the U.S. may be reaching a point that endangers its future in a global economy primarily because few people in the U.S. are fluent in foreign languages. *Breaking the Language Barrier* is directly addressed to both English-speaking Americans who want to learn another language and their foreign language teachers, but the ideas are also relevant to ESL learners and their teachers.

H. Douglas Brown, the author of this book, is a past president of TESOL and former editor of *Language Learning*. He works at San Francisco State University as English professor and American Language Institute director. According to the Preface, he learned nine different languages as he grew up in Africa and Europe. He studied other languages in graduate school and gained some fluency in still others during international travel. These experiences plus 20 years of teaching and research in second language acquisition qualify him as an expert on how people learn languages. With this book, he shares his gift for language learning with others.

In *Breaking the Language Barrier*, Brown speaks directly to his readers, whom he assumes to be adult foreign language learners. While showing the way to successful language learning, he provides a brief but comprehensive review of the literature on language learning and psycho-cognitive learning theories. His style is intelligent but not intellectual. One wonders, though, how the book will reach its intended audience. How many adults who failed to learn another language as children are highly motivated to do so now? The book is, however, a way for teachers to look at their own teaching from a learner's perspective.

The best environment for classroom language learning, according to Brown, incorporates the following: an energetic teacher who is fluent in the foreign language and able to choose appropriate teaching methods; a

course based on genuine communication, in which students are motivated towards excellence and fluency; inspiring materials that balance speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills, with little need for translation; and a classroom centered on the needs of its 15 or fewer students, with provisions made for faster and slower learners. Brown admits this is idealistic. His purpose is to show the ideal, recognize that it is only an ideal, then shift responsibility for learning onto the learners. In this book, which offers a variety of self-help strategies for becoming better language learners, Brown emphasizes that it is important for language students to "take control of [their] own language learning and assume responsibility for [their] success or failure" (p. 6).

Breaking the Language Barrier is refreshing for ESL teachers to read since it is written for adult *learners* of a second language. Thus its coverage of first language learning and its comparison of first and second language learning specifically address how knowledge gained from that research relates to adults learning a second language. For example, Brown notes that first language learning is an amazingly complex task (sounds, words, grammar, pragmatics) that almost everyone succeeds at. One difference between adults learning their second language and children learning their first is that children *must* learn their first language for survival and for power (to get what they want), while most adults have a choice about adding a new language. Children are more fortunate language learners than adults in that their cognitive developmental stage—before abstract rationalizing—allows them the relative freedom to learn languages without analysis or comparison. Brown says they have less "intellectual baggage" (p. 35). Children are not necessarily better language learners than adults, just different. The risks with language that children take in order to be understood are taken in stride, along with the other risks they take in learning to walk or to make friends. Adults, therefore, may need to take more risks and maintain a "mild level of facilitative anxiety" (p. 81). Additionally, children learn their languages—L1 and L2—for socializing and for communicating; grammar comes later. Brown suggests that adults try learning language in this order and incorporate some of these strategies. Ideally, adults will practice language by combining a child-like lack of inhibition with adult powers of analysis.

Brown applies to language learning some interesting ideas from psychology. Following B. F. Skinner, Brown says that intrinsic rewards (when someone understands what we are talking about) are positive reinforcers of language, while punishment (for errors, for example) can be

a negative reinforcer. Hence, learners should focus on the positive and not punish themselves for errors. Also, just as Skinner's mice who found their own way through mazes remembered better than those who were prodded, we become better language learners if we make our own way through the maze. Those who learn language according to their own personal goals will retain more than those who rely on a teacher or materials for motivation.

In addition, Brown notes the research by psychologist Howard Gardner, who labels seven kinds of human intelligence: linguistic, logical or mathematical, spatial, musical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal (p. 46-47). The first two types are usually emphasized in schools, but the other five can play a huge part in language learning. The point Brown makes is that both learners and teachers should be aware of and open to new learning styles.

One chapter of the book traces a history of teaching methods, entertainingly written as a consumer's guide to language courses. For each method, Brown gives background, strengths and weaknesses, and supplies addresses where readers can write for further information. He starts with dictionary + grammar book, grammar-translation, audiolingual with language labs, then adds self-study programs (four different firms), Berlitz, Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning, the Silent Way, total immersion, computerized language lessons and interactive video, and ends with—predictably—"the eclectic ideal." The problem, Brown says, with any of these methods taken alone is that either they do not really help students learn to communicate in the foreign language, or they start out in appealing, innovative ways that a learner grows weary of over time. Hence, when choosing a language program, learners should look for one which uses an eclectic approach.

Drawing on his own language learning experiences and his years of teaching ESL, Brown says that fluency in a second language helps a person gain a "second cultural identity" (p. 97). On the one hand, learning a second language is like gaining entrance to a "club" of people who speak that language. Foreigners learn what is important to the people of that "culture club" at the same time that they learn the language to interact with them. On the other hand, patterns of language learning parallel those of culture shock, from initial joy at being understood and living in a new culture, to frustration at not being fluent and having to deal with new systems. Research shows that there is a "critical stage" (p. 104) where culture shock meets linguistic plateau. The depression which results can be overcome by an increased effort at language learning and often results

in adjustment to both language and culture. These ideas should please teachers whose classes integrate language learning with acculturation.

Breaking the Language Barrier does more than talk about language learning. It also provides concrete tools to guide learners through the language learning process. It offers five mini-tests for students to determine their own learning style and a 12-step self-directed "program for language learning." Brown suggests that students keep a weekly journal to analyze and describe their own learning processes. He asks learners to review the principles of language learning as found in the chapters of this book—one topic per week—plus analyze their level of self-confidence for language learning. Students are to respond to such questions as:

> •What are your personal goals for learning this language? (Review this frequently.)

> •In which ways do you learn best? (Refer to the self-tests.) Based on what you know about your cognitive style, how well are you using your whole brain to learn?

> •What kinds of errors are you making, and what can you learn from them?

Students are also supposed to express feelings of self-doubt or anxiety while learning the new language, then apply confidence-building activities.

> •Are you worrying too much about using the language correctly? Do you need to loosen up to improve fluency?

By writing and rereading this journal each week, students should know in a short time which strategies help them to learn. However, these questions seem time-consuming and difficult to answer in a second language, and it is not clear whether Brown intended this journal to be written in the native or new language. It might be better to use the questions for class discussion, perhaps with written follow-up. Or, if we teachers request responses to teaching/learning strategies that we use, we can learn which strategies are most effective with the students currently in our classes.

In sum, this book is useful as a guide for students who wish to learn a

foreign language, as an introductory text for pre-service language teachers, and as a reference for in-service language teachers who want to be sure their classroom methods are up-to-date. The design of this book is appealing: the table of contents is annotated with focus questions for each chapter, subtitles within chapters are highlighted, main points are enumerated at the end of each chapter, references for further study are in endnotes, and there is an index. I hope that Breaking the Language Barrier finds an audience among foreign language classes, and among ESL teachers who want to read an entertaining review of issues in the field.

So, what does it take to learn a foreign language? A knowledge of self—knowledge both intuitive and analytical—plus a genuine desire to communicate. What makes a language learner successful? An independent will to succeed, and a copy of this book to coach the learning process.

THE REVIEWER
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