Inside this issue:

Hawai'i TESOL, the local affiliate of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.), is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building a community of professionals teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in the state of Hawai'i.

Every Bit Counts: English as a Third Language

By Dr. Gonzalo Isidro Bruno

Have you ever thought that after learning a second language it would be easier to learn a third language (L3)? Have you experienced this yourself? Intuition and common sense tell me that there is an advantage. And if this is the case, would it be useful to identify which of our students are approaching English as an L3 in our classrooms?

To gather more this kind of information, it would suffice to ask students directly during class or to prepare a short language background questionnaire for them to complete at home. Their answers could help us, their English teachers, make more informed decisions concerning the teaching/learning strategies that would work best for them. It is likely that in any given classroom there might be one or two L3 learners with specific strengths and challenges.

What does research tells us? L3 learning/acquisition studies are relatively new and have expanded in many areas from second language research. Most L3 studies agree that successful L3 learners are able to transfer language learning experiences, knowledge, and strategies from their L1 and L2 to the new language. It is very important to point out that during early stages of L3 acquisition/learning, most learners deal with their limited L3 knowledge/use by relying on cognitive compensatory strategies. This means that they try to understand what is going on as they are dealing with the new language much like L2 learners do.

It some cases L3 learners are not aware of the linguistic and learning resources that they have already developed as L2 learners. If the L2 experience was recent and it was not too stressful, then it is more likely that the L3 process will go smoothly. In the case of bilingual individuals who grew up using two languages and who were formally educated in at least one of the initial languages, then the L3 process could be more similar to what has been described as L2 acquisition/learning. To be precise, L3 learning/acquisition is still subject to several linguistic and cognitive variables depending on the learner, the language, the learning context and educational resources.

In the case of English as a third language, the learning task remains equally challenging and complex. The L3 learner still needs to devote hundreds of hours to structured study time. So in order to facilitate and shorten the process, it would be helpful to raise an awareness of the successful strategies that these learners have already mastered so that they are able to transfer them when they need them. Many learners transfer their strategies automatically. However, not all of them do. The more proficient they are in L3, the easier it is for them to put L1 and L2 strategies in action. Unfortunately, the less proficient they are in the new language, the more they need to practice using or adapting various language learning strategies.

Being aware of various ways to negotiate meaning helps all language learners/users be more successful and strategic. This awareness is the first step in activating their meta-cognition (knowing and taking control of how they learn). L3 learners can reflect upon their previous experiences in dealing with a foreign or second language and they can determine what worked for them, how and when. This is not to say that they have a magic formula to learn languages. It is more to suggest that they can shorten the road by eliminating the unnec-

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essary paths that they know did not work for them or by taking the shortcuts that they developed when learning their L2.

L3 learners might not be necessarily different from any other language learner, particularly if they are not aware of the repertoire of resources that they might already have. However, savvy L2 learners are a step away from being very successful L3 learners. In most cases, they are not only bilingual, but also bicultural and biliterate. Literacy and cultural competency in a second language defi-

nitely brings a wealth of resources to L3 learning. If English is the third culture for some of our students, then it is likely that they would be more receptive to the educational norms and written conventions that make it possible for a person to be literate in English.

Not only might we have trilingual learners in our class classrooms, but we might also have developing tricultural and triliterate individuals. They can truly say "they have been there, and done that" when it comes to L2 learning. The great news is that they can be a great resource in our classrooms with a winning "can-do" attitude. It is true that many of them might still have limited English. That is the one reason why we want our L3 students to feel successful from day one even if it is by telling them that their L2 learning experience of whichever language really counts in the English class.

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Lesson Plan on Speaking Strategies

By Yvonne Kruschel

Introduction

In order to help English learners to recognize the power of learner strategies and to help students to gain learner autonomy and self-direction, educators can integrate learner strategies into their English classes. The goal of explicit strategy instruction is to raise students' awareness of the range of possible strategies that they can consciously select, during language learning and language use, to enhance their performance. Today's language classrooms are supposed to be more interactive and communicative, instead of being static and teacher-centered. Therefore, the learners themselves need to become more responsible for their own language acquisition and less dependent on their teacher to meet their own individual language needs. Through effective strategy instruction, students can improve both their learning skills

and their language skills (Cohen 2011, 116-117).

The goal of this lesson plan is to present speaking strategies to a class of English learners, to explain their purpose, and to raise students' awareness of the importance of the usage of speaking strategies (see page 16). This lesson plan is based on the approach to strategy instruction by Pearson and Doyle (1987) and involves explicit modeling and explanation of the strategies. This plan will function as the first two steps of the Pearson and Doyle approach, which includes initial modeling of the strategies by the teacher and direct explanation of the strategies' use and importance. Moreover, a guided practice of the strategies, as an awareness-raising activity, is included in the lesson (Cohen 2011, 122).

Lesson Plan on Speaking Strategies (continued)

Conditions

It is important to consider certain things when designing a lesson plan of explicit strategy instruction for language learners. Specifically, the needs of the learners and their current level of proficiency have to be considered (Cohen 2011, 147). This lesson plan is designed for learners at an intermediate level, for a unit of 1 or 2 lessons of either 90 minutes or 45 minutes each. It should be embedded into a unit of explicit strategy instruction and preferably be taught in the beginning of a school year, so that the students can practice the strategies and use the learned strategies throughout the year (Cohen 2011, 148). Since the lesson's topic is speaking strategies, the lesson plan contains tasks that involve communication and interaction.

Detailed Course

Firstly, the teacher needs to introduce learner strategies to the class, which the introduction and preparation phases in this lesson plan incorporate. After welcoming the students to class, the teacher introduces the topic by showing the students a video of an awkward communicative situation (see page 16). Following the video, the students are given time to interpret the scene and to guess what it is about. In the next step, the instructor asks the students if they have ever been in a similar situation and, if so, how they felt in that situation.

Next, the teacher asks the students if they can think of any tricks or strategies they use when they have difficulties communicating. The teacher then collects the students' ideas on the board. When the students run out of ideas, the teacher completes the list and explains all of the collected strategies, in detail, to the students. The teacher offers the learners the opportunity to get to know the characteristics, effectiveness, and applications of the different speaking strategies.

In this stage, it is essential for the teacher to present each strategy with a specific explanation and help learners understand how to use each strategy in a given situation. For example, the teacher can instruct learners on how to explain a word with vocabulary they know, if they cannot think of the actual word (ie., paraphrasing).

This way of strategy instruction is called "informed strategy instruction", which is a form of explicit strategy instruction. This kind of instruction is the so-called "third level" of explicitness in strategy instruction. There are four levels of explicitness; most research indicates that the more explicit the instruction the more successful it is (Oxford 2011, 181).

It is very important to introduce and explain a variety of strategies to the class because most learners will find different strategies helpful. There are no "good" or "bad" strategies, but there are strategies that are more effective for the individual learner in the completion of a language task than others (Cohen 2011, 119). The instructor should explicitly teach the students how, when, and why strategies can be used to foster their efforts in learning and using a foreign language. Moreover, she or he should create a supportive and encouraging environment for the learners to engage with speaking strate-

gies, in order to help them to recognize which strategies they already use, how they use them, enhance their current use, and to expand their repertoire of speaking strategies (Cohen 2011, 119).

In order to offer hands-on practice for language learners to use speaking strategies, and to raise initial awareness, collaborative work with classmates is effective in the next phase. The teacher assigns students into teams of two (pair-work) in which learners complete the awareness-raising task "connect the dots." In this stage, it is important to encourage students to use some of the speaking strategies that have been collected and explained during the former phase. This activity should raise learners' awareness for communicative strategies and put them in a situation where they are lost and need to make use of the strategies. This task is one of the first steps of the strategy instruction process, which is often described as a cycle. The chosen type of activity is impossible to complete without communicating with each other, therefore students are forced to use speaking strategies, since most of the learners will reach their language limits at some point (Oxford 2011, 184). During this activity the teacher should act as a kind of surveillant because he needs to monitor that students communicate in English only while completing the task, and that they do not show the solution of the task to each other.

Moreover, giving students the chance to evaluate the usefulness of speaking strategies is critical in the next phase of the lesson. In this case, the teacher distributes a question-

Lesson Plan on Speaking Strategies (continued)

(Continued from page 3.)

naire for the learners to gain an overview of the applied speaking strategies and to express their feelings towards using speaking strategies. A list of speaking strategies is provided and students can mark those they have used and decide which are most helpful to them. This phase of the applied strategy instruction would be the second step in the strategy instruction cycle, developed by Rebecca Oxford, a professor of language education and research from the United States. The awareness of the students increases through analyzing the used strategies, after the "connect the dots" activity (Oxford 2011, 184).

As a follow up activity, after filling out the questionnaire individually, the learners again form small groups of two in order to discuss with their peers the strategies they used for completing the former task (Cohen 2011, 153). Thus, the students reflect their usage of speaking strategies and get to explain why some strategies are more helpful and why some are less helpful. Afterwards, the teacher can collect the questionnaires. Therefore, both students and teacher can evaluate to what extent the introduction of speaking strategies to their classroom was successful. Finally the lesson will end with an open discussion in which every student can talk about their experiences consciously using speaking strategies. The teacher acts as the moderator of the discussion and asks questions such as: "Who used speaking strategies to complete the task? Which strategies were the most helpful to you? How did those strategies help you?" The discussion phase of the lesson is a helpful summary for both students and teacher of the students' experiences with the conscious usage of speaking strategies.

Discussion

Finally, the optimal goal of language learner strategies, such as speaking strategies, is to guide students to become better, autonomous, and confident learners. In order to encourage students to depend more on themselves instead of the teacher, the teacher needs to ask students to use effective learner strategies in classroom contexts and in daily life as well. This lesson plan is designed to introduce speaking strategies to a class of English learners and to raise their awareness of the importance of these strategies. Certainly, those strategies that have been introduced and explained to the learners in this lesson plan need to be practiced much more, in different contexts, and with different tasks. No single strategy is appropriate for everyone because the variables of learner strategies interfere with the learners' personalities, their experiences with languages, their learning style, and many others.

Since this lesson plan is just a fragment of a whole unit of language learner strategies, it does not cover all areas of learner strategies. Conversation / speaking strategies are strategies for language use, which are especially important since learning a foreign language takes place through communication. Communication fosters learning because a language has to be used to develop and to stay in a person's long-term memory. However, there are many other important strategies of language use and also of language learning that should be promoted in the language classroom. It takes time for learners to understand how to successfully incorporate learner strategies in language learning. Language teachers must apply language learning strategy instruction patiently, and learners should be advised to use the strategies consistently.

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* Activity	Macrofunction	Microfunction	Grammar
Connect the dots (only English spoken)	Using speaking strategies and practicing them	Connecting the dots, finishing the picture; helping each other	Numbers, directions, clarification requests
Questionnaire about speaking strategies / Discussion with partner about preferences	Reflect the usage of speaking strategies during the "connect the dots" activity / to foster the functioning of different speaking strategies by explaining them to someone / get to know other students' strategy preferences, foster respect for and awareness of diversity in learning styles	Filling out the questionnaire, find out about preferred speaking strategies / find out about the partner's preferred speaking strategies	Expression of opinion (I think, in my opinion etc.), Wh-questions, vocabulary to explain speaking strategies

Lesson Plan on Speaking Strategies (continued)

Phase	Time	Content	Social Form	Material/ Media
Welcoming	3 min	Teacher welcomes the students and presents the topic of the lesson to the class	Teacher-student-interaction	
Introduction	12 min	Students watch the video and interpret the situation	Plenum	Video clip, computer (laptop), projector
Preparation	15 min	Students think about speaking strategies they use when they have difficulties to communicate / teacher collect strategies on blackboard and explains them	Plenum	Blackboard
Awareness- Raising / Practice*	30 min	Students are out in a situation in which they are forced to use speaking strategies; they practice using speaking strategies and their awareness of speaking strategies will get raised	Pair work	Worksheet
Comprehension*	15 min	Students fill out worksheets with speaking strategies (questionnaire) and mark the strategies they used and decide which were helpful; after filling out the worksheet, they will discuss the used strategies in pairs	Silent work / individual work, pair work	Worksheet
Discussion	15 min	Students discuss their experience of consciously using speaking strategies; the teacher functions as the moderator of the discussion	Plenum	OHP, discussion questions on slide

Fundamentals of Explicit Instruction of Comprehension Strategy in English Language Classrooms

By Al Tiyb Al Khaiyali

One of the major goals of English language learners is to understand what they read (Dole, Duffy, Roehler, & Pearson, 1991). Despite this unquestionable goal, many English language learners do not understand what they are reading. One of the main reasons for this problem is the lack of explicit comprehension strategy instruction in most language learning classrooms (Pressley, & Wharton-McDonald, 2006). In many of these classrooms, teachers are not aware or not sufficiently prepared to explicitly teach comprehension strategies (Duke, Pearson, Strachan, & Billman, 2011). In the same vein, teachers do not know

what explicit comprehension strategy instruction is, and what its main components are. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to briefly shed light on the main elements of explicit comprehension strategy instruction and how understanding these elements could help English language teachers (both in ESL and EFL contexts) implement explicit comprehension strategy instruction in their classrooms.

Definition of Explicit Comprehension Strategy Instruction.

Explicit comprehension strategy instruction is a systematic teaching approach

through which teachers demonstrate step-by-step using think-aloud what the strategy is, how it should be used, and when and why it should be used. At the beginning of this instructional approach, teachers dominate the teaching process. Later, they gradually release the instructional responsibility to their students to practice and use the strategy(ies) independently.

Essentials of Explicit Comprehension Strategy Instruction.

One of the main problems of the paucity of comprehension strategy instruction in language learning classrooms is the lack

Fundamentals . . . (continued)

of teachers' knowledge and awareness of explicit comprehension strategy instruction (Pressley, & Wharton-McDonald, 2006). In order to facilitate the teachers' understanding of some basic principles of explicit comprehension strategy instruction, the following essentials are suggested:

Defining the Strategy.
Before they start teaching the strategy, teachers are encouraged to explain what the strategy means. Strategies should be introduced in isolation and each strategy should be presented based on the lesson's objectives and the students' needs. Teachers' definition of the strategy should be simple and meaningful. For example, in presenting the strategy of summarization, teachers should start by defining what summarization means to their students using simple language (e.g., Summarization is a simple version of the text).

Explaining the Importance of the Strategy.
After defining the strategy, teachers are encouraged to underscore why learning the strategy is important. This can be

through telling the students the rationale of using the strategy. It is obvious that the common purpose of using all reading comprehension strategies is to facilitate understanding the reading text (Ness, 2011). Nevertheless, each strategy has its own unique significance. In this sense, the teacher's mission is to determine why a particular strategy was selected. The purpose of explaining the reason of using a specific strategy is to encourage the students to learn and use it confidently. For example, one big reason of teaching summarization strategy could be to help students elicit the gist of the text they are reading.

Explaining When to Use the Strategy.
Many reading comprehension strategies are used differently and through various time segments. For example some reading comprehension strategies are recommended to be used before reading the text (e.g., predicting, guessing, questioning...etc.), others are used during reading the text (e.g., connecting, visualizing, monitoring...etc.), and some others are used at the end of reading the text (summarizing, synthesizing, determining big ideas...etc.). These strategies might

be used in deferent times and all that could be determined by the teacher. Teachers are encouraged to show their students when and why they should use a certain strategy.

Modeling the Strategy.
After providing a general overview of the strategy and introducing it, teachers are recommended to show how the strategy is used. Modeling is informed by think-aloud. Teachers are encouraged to demonstrate the strategy using think-aloud. For example, after introducing summarization, the teacher could provide a summary to a certain text and demonstrate to the students what she/he did to make this summary using think-aloud.

Using Guided Practice.
The idea of guided practice is built on the fact that teachers should involve their students in multiple practice opportunities where the students could have multiple exposures to the use of the strategy. Teachers should monitor the students while they are practicing the strategy and provide any needed constructive feedback and scaffold. Guided practice is considered the first step to
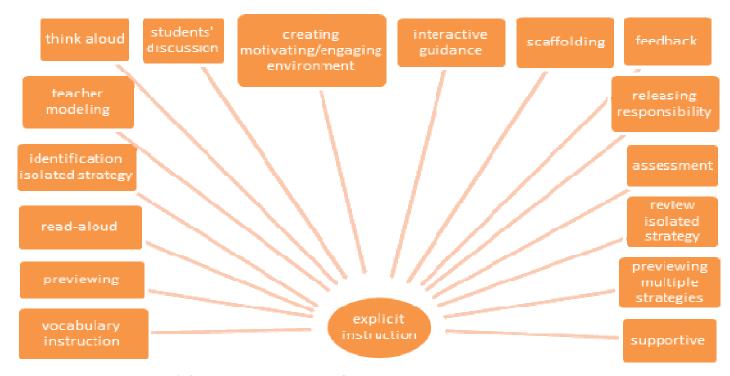

Figure 1. Sub-categorical elements of explicit comprehension strategy instruction

Fundamentals . . . (continued)

the student's independent use of the strategy. To sum up, comprehension strategy instruction should be explicit, flexile, and transactional. In language learning classrooms, strategies are encouraged to be taught in isolation in order to save time and not confuse the students. Additionally, teachers should identify what the strategy is, how, when, and why it should be used. Other subcategorical elements of explicit comprehension strategy instruction are listed in Figure 1.

As filtered by ATLAS.ti 7 (a qualitative data analysis and research software), Figure 1 shows other important subcategories that are needed in English language learning classrooms whenever explicit comprehension strategy instruction is used.

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Grammar Points that Can Be Demonstrated Through the Use of Reed-Kellogg Diagrams

By Larry Rhodes

For many years now, I have taught English grammar to ESL students by making use of Reed-Kellogg diagrams. For the most part, my students have responded with a high level of enthusiasm—often to the point that they begin their own questions about grammatical structures by presenting me with at least partially-attempted sentence diagrams. Indeed, diagrams have become the vernacular through which my students and I communicate most of our ideas about grammatical structure. Students often reach the point where verbal explanations become merely supplemental to their more fundamental understanding of these "pictures" of English grammar.

I recently asked my students to submit a list of points that they had learned from sentence diagramming that they had failed to learn in their years of previous ESL studies. Following are five points that my students commonly identified. *(*Note: The diagrams themselves are not presented in this article. Many readers will already be familiar with Reed-Kellogg diagrams. I hope that those who are unfamiliar with them will become inspired to learn about them upon discovering how students have found them to be useful in learning English grammar.)

Point #1: Prepositions are always followed by object nouns or pronouns.

While native English speakers take it for granted that prepositions are followed by objects, many ESL students are unaware of this rule and only follow it in the most obvious situations (e.g., "under the *table*," "for my *mother*," "from *Japan*," etc.). The difference in "to" as a preposition and "to" as part of an infinitive may not be obvious to them. Consider the following sentence:

> I am looking forward to
> meeting your uncle.

"To" is a preposition, so it must have a noun (or a noun form, such as a gerund) as an object. Many ESL students think that the "looking forward" portion of the expression is the complete idiom in itself and that the "to" that follows it is part of an infinitive. Therefore, they often say, "I am looking forward *to meet* your uncle."

Students need to learn that true prepositions are incomplete without objects. Teachers should, therefore, try to get their students in the habit of identifying prepositions and their objects. (One useful technique might be to have students sing, "Over the river and through the woods, to Grandmother's house we go" whenever they fail to identify a preposition and its object.) Furthermore, teachers should require that their students use the word "object" in describing the noun form that follows the preposition. In some countries, the word "object" is not used to describe this

Points that Can Be Demonstrated. . . (continued)

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noun. Students from these countries often feel uncomfortable saying that a noun is an *"object" of a preposition*, but they need to learn to use the terminology that appears in ESL textbooks.

Since prepositional objects can take any noun form, they may not seem apparent as objects at first glance. Take, for example, the following sentence:

I was not accustomed to his behaving as though he were a baboon.

Many ESL students would not know, for example, that "his behaving as though he were a baboon" is a gerund phrase used as the object of the preposition "to." A diagram can make this visually apparent.

Point #2: Particles in phrasal verbs are not the same as prepositions.

While particles in phrasal verbs have much in common with prepositions (e.g., they are followed by gerunds instead of infinitives), they are not the same as prepositions. Consider the following sentence:

This is the sort of bloody nonsense up with which I will not put.

This sentence, often attributed to Winston Churchill, is used to demonstrate how silly it is to follow the "rule" that sentences should never end in prepositions. The example, however, fails to make that point because of a flawed premise. The "up" in "put up with" is not a true preposition; it is a particle in a phrasal verb. Churchill should have said:

This is the sort of bloody nonsense with which I will not put up.

The "rule" that sentences should not end in prepositions could be amended to accommodate exceptions for true prepositions *in idiomatic phrasal verbs*, in which case, Churchill would have been allowed to say:

This is the sort of bloody nonsense which I will not put up with.

This would, of course, result in the total collapse of Churchill's argument.

Point #3: Relative pronouns usually serve the grammatical functions of subjects or objects within adjective clauses.

A diagram will visually demonstrate that, when a relative pronoun is used as a direct object, it can be dropped (and, conversely, that when it is used as a subject, it cannot). Consider the following sentences:

The woman (that) I met at the party was very friendly.
The boy who is playing the piano is my cousin.

In a correctly diagrammed sentence, students should be able to see that "that" is a direct object in the first sentence, and "who" is a subject in the second sentence. Since relative pronouns used as direct objects in adjective clauses are unnecessary, the "that" in the first sentence can be omitted (while the "who," which is used as a subject in the second sentence, cannot).

Point #4: The words "it" and "there" are frequently used idiomatically in English and often have no meaning or are used redundantly.

A diagram of the appositive use of "it" in a sentence can help students see that it serves little useful purpose in terms of conveying meaning. Consider the following example:

It's fun to go hiking.

What does "it" mean in this sentence? It means "to go hiking." But since you are also saying "to go hiking" in the same sentence, the "it" is unnecessary. We could, of course, say:

To go hiking is fun.
Or
Going hiking is fun.

Diagramming these sentences allows students to observe the peculiarities of English grammar and to accept them as

such. As odd as the sentence with "it" may be, it is the preferred form of speech for most Americans.

Similarly, the word "there" often has no real meaning in English sentences. Consider the following:

There are four or five books about language acquisition in the teachers' room.

The expletive use of "there" in this sentence is made clear when we rephrase it as:

Four or five books about language acquisition are in the teachers' room.

The "there" disappears without any resulting change in the meaning of the sentence. A diagram will simply show the expletive "there" as floating in the air, unconnected to anything else in the sentence.

Point #5: Dependent clauses relate to specific words or elements in a main clause. They *depend* on such words or elements (hence the name) and cannot stand on their own.

Points that Can Be Demonstrated. . . (continued)

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Let's consider adverb clauses. Most ESL students can understand a simple time clause, but the meanings of other adverb clauses may not be so obvious to them. For example:

I've studied hard, so I will pass the test.
I've studied hard so (that) I will pass the test.

The first example shows a sentence with two independent clauses. The second example shows a sentence with one independent clause and one dependent adverb clause. The sentence with the adverb clause answers a question relating to the verb of the main clause—namely, *"Why* have you studied hard?" The meanings of the sentences are different, the structures are different, and their corresponding diagrams visually demonstrate those differences.

Many ESL students also have trouble using adverb clauses that modify adjectives following "so" and "such." Consider the following sentence:

She's so fat (that) she can't get on the elevator without touching both sides of the door.

The teacher can help students understand the meaning of this adverb clause by playing Johnny Carson. The teacher can say, "She's *so* fat." Then have the students say, "How fat is she?" That, of course, is the question that the adverb clause is answering. The teacher can then provide the full sentence: "She's so fat she can't get on the elevator without touching both sides of the door." When drawing the diagram, the teacher should have the students pay close attention to the fact that the adverb clause explains "how *fat"* she is.

Similarly, consider the following sentence:

It's such a beautiful day (that) I think I will go to the park.

After the Johnny Carson routine, the teacher should ask the students to identify the question that is being answered by the adverb clause. The students should be able to say, "How beautiful is it?" Adverb clauses should answer questions such as "how," "when," and "why" as these questions relate to verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

The same line of reasoning can, of course, be applied to noun and adjective clauses. The nature of the information supplied in the dependent clause should indicate the type of clause it is.
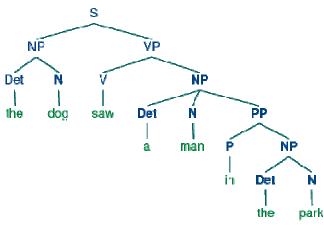
These are only a few of the points that Reed-Kellogg diagrams can be used to demonstrate. All grammar concepts are by their very nature abstract. When we say, for example, that a direct object "receives" the action of a verb, students who are poor at abstract reasoning are at a distinct disadvantage in trying to process the meaning of this purely verbal explanation. Diagrams, on the other hand, make use of an additional input stimulus. The "pictures" of sentences carry their own internal logic that can have great appeal to visual learners when combined with verbal explanations.

It has been argued (I would say erroneously) that the use of diagrams in analyzing the grammar of one's native language is useless because we have already become "hardwired" to speak and write as we do—correctly or incorrectly, as the case may be—and that our understanding of our language has become implicit at a young age. Whether this be the case or not, such an argument clearly cannot be made in the case of students who are learning English as a second language. Their understanding is not implicit; explicit means must, therefore, be employed to convey the logic of grammar. Diagrams can be especially useful in this effort.

About the Author: For several years Larry Rhodes was a reporter on international affairs for a Japanese television station, where he hosted his own series. He came to Honolulu to study at the University of Hawai'i, but took leave to join the Economics Department of Shinshu University in order to conduct research for a Ph.D on youth employment. in political science. There, he was granted an audience with Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan to discuss the results of his research, which was subsequently published. Having been thoroughly immersed in the language and culture of another country, Larry is sensitive to the difficulties that students face while living in America and learning English. As the Director of Language Programs at Academia Language School, he strives to continue developing courses that meet the varied interests and needs of the school's diverse body of students.

From Office-Talk to Classroom: Exploring American Culture and Expanding Viewpoints

By Yuki Hasegawa and Akiyuki Sakai

Introduction

When we, the writers of this article, started to share an office at Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS), Japan, we learned that we have both spent some years living in the United States when we were high school and college students. Although we lived in different places in the states, California and Missouri, we shared similar memories and we very much enjoyed talking about them. The topics of our talk ranged from TV programs, holidays, food and drinks, social issues, school/college life, cars, to supermarkets, to name a few. As we enjoyed talking about those little things that were part of our everyday lives in the U.S., we came to realize that the very point of our talk is not common in Japan. We thought that these might be the things Japanese people do not notice about the U.S. unless they have lived there and American people do not notice unless they experience another culture. We thought it would be fun to create a course sharing those topics about the U.S. from the perspective of Japanese people who have lived there. This article is about how the course was developed from our office talk to an academic course taught in a Japanese university.

Course Development

At KUIS, there are content-based English courses that are offered to junior and senior students of English majors. These semester-long (15-week) courses are taught in English with a variety of topics and students take courses of interest as their electives. The course must cover all four language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. However, teachers have the freedom to develop the course with any topic of their choice.

We named our course, "Exploring American Culture and Expanding Viewpoints" for what it was going to be and decided on the topics to cover and organized them into four categories (see figure1 for the categories and examples of topics).

Assignments given in this course included reading Internet articles of choice and writing a short summary, writing an essay about their impressions of American culture before and after taking the course, interviewing an American person on one of the topics covered in class, and giving a group presentation with a topic of choice about America.

From looking at the syllabus, the course may seem like any other course that focuses on introducing American culture. However, the underlying aim of the course was to help students develop their abilities to think critically and to become aware of different values and viewpoints including their own. As being lecturers as well as learning advisors promoting learner autonomy at the university, we believed the ability to think critically can help develop learner autonomy. In other words, we believed that if they were able to think critically, students would be able to make effective choices when they study independently.
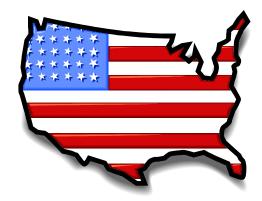
Classroom activities

The course was team-taught, so the two of us took turns taking the lead to prepare for the class and teach, but both were always present in the classroom to share our views and opinions. The class would usually start with a casual discussion topic that would lead into the topic of the day. After being introduced to the topic, students were always given time to discuss in small groups with some guiding questions. We repeatedly told the students that there are no right or wrong opinions; however, they should always be able to explain their position or the reasons for their opinion. As the course went on, students became better at explaining their position or having an opinion with a legitimate reason.

At the end of each class, students were asked to write a short reflective paper looking back on what they learned new or about any questions or thoughts that they had. When we started the course, we thought students might try to get it done as quickly as possible and would only write a few words, but to our surprise, many students wrote a lot more than we expected. As the course went on, we noticed some development in students' critical thinking skills through this reflective activity. We call this paper, "Today's Thoughts".

Findings and Implications

Although we are still in the process of making connections between critical thinking and learner autonomy, what we can probably say is that our students were able to develop critical thinking skills to some extent as the result of this course. In the questionnaire which we conducted at the end of the course, we received comments such as, "Now I think more deeply when I form my opinions" or "I look at things from different viewpoints and try to understand different perspectives." Most of our students claimed that they enjoyed learning in this course and that was very rewarding for us.

As Japanese teachers who have experienced living in the U.S., we chose to teach American culture. Any teacher can

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(Continued from page 10.)

apply this to any culture that they are familiar with. For example, an American teacher who has spent some time in China can teach using topics about Chinese life. Topics can be chosen and adapted according to the educational setting, age group, and the level of English of the students. Students will learn about the culture, can learn your perspective, and will possibly learn to think critically. Most importantly, you will enjoy teaching the course very much if you choose the topics that you want to share or talk about.

Category	Examples of topics
Media	Commercials, Court TV, News headline, Violent video games
Social issues	Gun control, LGBT rights, Native Americans, Restaurants
Education	Community college, ESL programs, University
Miscellaneous	English essays, How to approach a man/woman, Patriotism

Figure 1 (Categories and examples of topics)

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Utility of Digital Flash-cards for Vocabulary Learning

By David Lees

As mobile, digital devices become increasingly incorporated into our daily lives, a growing number of researchers have consider the use of this technology for language learning (Fujimoto, 2012; Tai, 2011). Most young L2 learners were found to have positive perceptions of digital devices in general, and also as tools for L2 learning. Of central importance to the language learning process is vocabulary; indeed, as stated by Wilkins, "without grammar little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (1972, p. 111). Mobile devices such as smart-phones allow access to websites, the Internet, and along with this a broad range of apps. One such website-and-app combination, called Quizlet, grants users access to a world-wide database of pre-constructed, customizable vocabulary flash-card "sets", and also the means to create flash-cards them-selves, essentially transforming the smart-phone into a digital flash-card viewer. This article briefly examines digitized vocabulary learning in general, and focuses on how Quizlet may be used to aid L2 learners' language acquisition.

Vocabulary Learning with Flash-cards

Learning vocabulary is a difficult task. Lengthy lists of lexical items are not considered ideal by teachers and researchers in general. Though while it is true that word-lists and flash-cards should not form the sole vocabulary-learning system, focused study can prove effective if several guidelines are followed. Chief among these are the need for "L1-L2 translations"; "retrieval" (actively try to remember an L2 word by looking at its L1 meaning); and "pronunciation" (pronouncing the words creates dual-coded pegs to make the words easier to remember) (Nation, 2010, p. 31). Word-cards continue to see use as they provide a large number of vocabulary items, in a short

Utility of Digital Flash-cards . . . (continued)

space of time (Nation, 2010, p. 32).

L1-L2 word-cards can also support both "productive learning" and "receptive learning." Productive learning takes the L1 meaning and tests for L2 word knowledge, such as pronunciation, spelling and type, while "receptive learning" seeks the L1 meaning from the presented L2 word. Studies have found that paired-word learning, such as the sort done with word-cards, effectively results in both strings of knowledge (Nation, 2001: 33). Regular, repeated use of a set of words is required. Research has also shown that previously learned words are more quickly re-acquired than words being learned for the first time (Schmitt, 2010: 23). Schmidt also noted that along with focused attention, learners need to engage with the word many times in order to acquire it. Engagement might cover viewing the word, looking up its meaning, writing it, and choosing it from among multiple options as in a test; as wide as possible a range of engagement activities should be sought (2010: 27).

In sum, word-cards need to a) contain L1-L2 translations, b) promote "retrieval" activities, c) support pronunciation if possible, and d) be engaged with in a variety of ways, in order to effectively facilitate L2 learning. In my opinion, Quizlet manages to cover all of these bases.

Quizlet's Learner and Teacher Features

Quizlet (2007) is a computer-based online learning website, with attendant iOS and Android apps. Learners and teachers alike have access to many useful features:

Learner Features	Teacher Features
Learning modules (Flash-Cards, Learn, Speller), with "pronunciation" support	By creating "Classes", each group of learners have their own list of Sets
Competitive "retrieval" modules (Scatter, Space-Race), which encourage interaction	Each Class and Set has tracking options, showing when, what and how they studied
Standardized vocabulary-test generator module (Test)	Each Set can be linked to certain Classes, who can Create and Edit Sets if allowed
Discussion options to post and chat about each Set of flash-cards	Edit, Share, Import/Export from Excel, Print options allow for quick replication

If nothing else, Quizlet boasts a high degree of engagement with the vocabulary contained in its word-lists. All of the modules have pronunciation support, and each set can be imported, modified and exported to and from a variety of sources including spreadsheets and documents. These software modules, when effectively used, fare comparably to paper-based cards, while providing further benefits of portability, familiarity and convenience via its smartphone platform, to the effect that young L2 learners generally report positive first-time encounters (Lees, 2013).

In addition to its general positive uptake by learners, Quizlet offers language teachers a highly customizable, trackable and manageable vocabulary-list database. While time is initially required to create a word-card set, once created teachers are able to assign students to Classes, Track their study progress through each Set, as well as Edit, Share, and Print each word-list as required.

Making Use of Quizlet

In my (albeit limited) experience, these features allow Quizlet to be used in several ways. Perhaps the most straightforward is as a "Prescribed Vocabulary-List Dispenser", when teaching for standardized language tests. "Lesson-By-Lesson" approaches, with the teacher preparing useful vocabulary for a discussion topic and assigning preparatory homework through Quizlet Sets also has proved an effective method. A "Group Projects" approach, where learners are split into smaller groups and create a collaborative list of vocabulary needed for their own project (which can later be shared with the whole class), has worked well, as simply keeping a "Course Record" of the vocabulary taught and covered as the course progresses. In addition, each student can be encouraged to keep their own "Study Diary", into which they input words which are important or interesting to them.

Teachers can of course provide vocabulary oversight for difficult lists. Set-phrases can be recorded and employed (while they may prove difficult to reliably type on the Speller, Learn and Space-Race modules), and cooperative L2-L2 lists can be used to encourage learners to move from simple retrieval to more complex language-production. Finally, at the end of a course, the teacher also has a cumulative list of

Utility of Digital Flash-cards . . . (continued)

vocabulary taught, which can easily be exported offline and used for exam creation if necessary.

Conclusion

Having used the discussed approaches with Quizlet, this author holds that it is a well-integrated, scalable, manageable, trackable, convenient and engaging vocabulary-learning tool, well suited for the increasingly digitized classroom. While, as with most technological aides, pedagogical utility and effect will no doubt differ from teacher to teacher, and context to context, Quizlet's website-application combination makes it a very useful teaching tool for the current age.

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A Modern Tool for a Modern Grammar Teacher

By Alex Kasula

In light of the growing use of technology in the English language learning (ELL) classroom, there is a need to help acquaint teachers with knowledge about this new resource. One resource that should be of particular interest to teachers looking to integrate more technology into the classroom is *corpora*, which can be defined as an electronic collection of real word language texts, oral and/or written, that are typically accessed through free online databases produced by research-oriented universities. Corpora are one of the most useful classroom tools, as they

combine advances in technology with pedagogy, providing teachers with a wider range of material to draw upon.

As the growing technological world around us continues to expand, there appears not only to be more room in the classroom for such technologies but also a demand for it. Although meeting the demand of new technologic resources may seem difficult, the accessibility, flexibility and practicality of corpora makes them an ideal tool for the language learning classroom.

This article will provide teachers with valuable information on the use of corpora, specifically in the grammar classroom, and will help teachers to incorporate this new pedagogical tool into their language learning curriculum more effectively. The article will address three main questions:
1. What are corpora and how can they be accessed?
2. How and why should corpora be used to teach grammar?
3. What kind of corpus activities can be used to teach grammar?

What are corpora and how can they be accessed?

Table 1 describes three useful corpora for teachers, the Corpus of Web-Based English (GloWbe), the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), and the Michigan Corpus of Academic English, all of which are freely accessible online. GloWbe is the largest English language corpora, while COCA focuses more on contemporary American English, drawing from magazines like *Time*, and newspapers like the *Chicago Tribune*. MICASE, a spoken academic corpus and also one of the most user-friendly, draws on a variety of academic uses of English, from dissertation defenses to lectures covering a variety of speaker attributes such as first language, gender, and so on (see table 1).

How and why should corpora be used to teach grammar?

One of corpora's unique capabilities is to address the issue in the frequency of grammatical structures. Often, grammar textbooks do not empha-

A Modern Tool . . . (continued)

size certain high-frequency grammatical structures that can be useful for students (for example, see Römer, 2004, for the use of *modals* in textbooks). This is not the fault of the teacher or textbook, but simply a sign that the resources creating textbooks and exercises for the students are not sufficient. Corpora are able to specifically address this problem by using both a "frequency" and "compare" function (like one can find in COCA), where the user can look at how often two specific words or grammar structures are used in real-world texts and compare their uses. This enables the teacher to go beyond the confines of a book or native speaker knowledge to inform the students on how frequent certain structures are, and in what way they are typically used, helping the teachers to decide which structures to teach.

Currently, many grammar concepts are simply taught with the use intuition or based upon lessons and exercises provided in a textbook, which often also are based on intuition of the author(s) (Biber & Reppen, 2002). However, as many teachers know, using authentic texts when they can help learners to link classroom knowledge and a student's ability to partake in real-world events (Guariento & Morley, 2001). Teachers are on the constant lookout for authentic materials that provide the learner with "real world" knowledge on how the language is used. Corpora are authentic texts from various sources, and using these materials supplemented by teacher instruction has been shown to lead to positive gains in students' development (Biber & Reppen, 2002). For example, there have been numerous studies examining how corpora have been incorporated into reading, writing, listening and speaking (see Sinclair, 2004), with results demonstrating improvement in the acquisition of target forms. The combination of grammar teaching along with these four prominent skills is often used by teachers, and therefore including corpora as a tool in the grammar classroom is not all that difficult.

What kind of corpora activities can be used?

One of the advantages of using corpora in the classroom are that they can be adapted and used for any grammatical structure, as there is such a large body of text to derive examples from. For example, phrasal verbs (e.g., set up, hand in, rule out) may be quite challenging for learners because the meaning of the phrase cannot be discerned by only one of the words. Since there is a large number of phrasal verbs in English, the teacher could first identify which verbs are most frequent within a corpus. Then, the teacher can use the "KWIC" (key word in context) function in the corpus to take excerpts of the frequent phrasal verbs and create a short written dialogue. Within the dialogue the teacher could remove the phrasal verbs and put them in a word bank at the bottom of the page. After giving the page to the students, they have the opportunity to input the correct phrasal verb in its original position.

Another activity, possibly for more advanced learners, could be to look at the use and frequency of linking adverbials (*though, however)* vs. subordinate clauses (*although, whereas*) in authentic texts, as these are concepts that are often taught in academic English language classrooms. The teacher could ask the students to use a corpus to compare these structures, and describe how they are used and in which register they most commonly occur. This would give learners insight into how commonly these grammatical features are used in specific registers (e.g., academic vs. fiction) and how their meaning changes due to their positioning within a sentence, giving students the ability to use these forms more satisfactorily in their own language use.

Although these are only two potential activities, the possibilities for teachers to adapt previous materials or even generate their own to integrate corpora, thereby bringing a stronger emphasis on frequency and authenticity to their lesson, are nearly limitless. Grammar can be difficult to teach, and having the knowledge and ability to use new technological tools will help make the class more authentic and engaging but also provide the learners with more opportunities to develop.

Corpus	Affiliation	Type	Size	Content	Handbook	Free
GloWbe	Brigham Young University	Written	1.9 Billion words	1.8 billion web pages from 20 English speaking countries	No	Yes, with limited access
COCA	Brigham Young University	Written	450 million words from 1990-2012	Popular magazines, articles, fiction, academic writing.	No	Yes
MICASE	University of Michigan	Spoken academic	1.85 million words	152 transcripts searchable by gender, age, academic position or division, first language, etc.	Yes	Yes

Table 1: Corpora available on the Internet

A Modern Tool . . . (continued)

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If you are interested in becoming an executive committee member, please go to the HITESOL website to see what opportunities are available. The committee is always happy to hear form interested people and welcome new members aboard. There should be a number of position open in the fall.

Calendar of Events:

2014 **September:** Annual Social and Activities Exchange

November: Professional Development Workshop

December: Call for proposals for Annual Spring Conference
Applications for Travel Grants

2015 **February:** Annual Spring Conference

May: Language Experience

Dates and locations to be announced.

Keep up to date with Hawai'i TESOL events online at www.hawaiitesol.wildapricot.org

Weaving Language and Culture: Spring Conference 2014

By Jennifer Hickman

This February we had our spring conference entitled Weaving Language and Culture. This year we had our first ever two-day conference with a number of new features including an electronic village and round table discussions. Friday we had a guest lecturer from Anaheim University, Dr. Ken Beatty. He shared with us how to use literature more effectively in our education. The speech was followed by a workshop with Dr. Bruce Barnes in which we explored more about managing intercultural conflict in the classroom. We learned strategies to develop rapport among the students and how to prevent issues from arising. The next sessions were a series of round table discussions on issues of immigrant rights, psychology, and international student matriculation to the US. The final session of the evening was an Electronic Village which introduced us to a variety of technology tools. Presenters taught us how to use Quizlet, Google Art Project, and the BYU Corpus amongst other things.

The second day we began with a plenary from Hokulea. We learned about its international voyage and its mission to preserve Hawaiian culture through education. We had a number of sessions throughout the day on topics as diverse as working with reading therapy dogs, grant writing, and figurative language learning. This year, we had individuals from a number of countries including Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Japan, China, Korea, Taiwan, and Macau as well as many fabulous local presenters. Dr. Richard Day's lunch session on readers' theater drew record numbers of participants.

Through this conference we also collaborated with HPU and Southern Utah State University to offer professional development credit. Southern Utah State offered graduate credit to individuals who attended a specific number of sessions and wrote a synthesis paper. A number of teachers from off island received credit which they could apply to their professional development requirements. We hope to offer more workshops and trainings to meet these needs for our K -12 teachers and all of our Hawaii TESOL members.

Thanks to all the people who helped make the conference possible. Presenters, you did a fantastic job sharing your knowledge and experience with us. Attendees, you brought positive energy and inquisitive minds. Board members and volunteers, your hard work and dedication made the entire event possible. We look forward to seeing you all at next year's conference.

Lesson Plan on Speaking Strategies (continued) (Continued from page 5.)

Introduction phase: Video Berlitz Ad – The Key
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_wIaVoni7N4

Speaking Strategies:

- Imitate native speakers
- Say new expressions to yourself
- Plan what you are going to say
- Ask others to correct you
- Ask others for help
- Ask clarification questions
- Ask others to speak more slowly
- Don't be scared to talk
- Try to describe a word that you do not know (paraphrase)
- Use words from your first language (code switch)
- Move your hands or body (gestures)

Submission to The Word