Teaching Pronunciation with Facebook and Photobooth

Robert A. Eckhart, Ohio State University - Main Campus

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# Ohio TESOL Board

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The Ohio TESOL Journal -- Volume 2, Number 1
Your Ohio TESOL Board along with conference co-chairs, Jill Kramer and Elana Hohl, and the Ohio Department of Education’s Lau Resource Center are hard at work planning and continuing the conference tradition of excellence.

The 2009 conference will again be held at the Hilton Easton on Friday and Saturday, October 30-31, 2009. Many people asked why we held the conference on Halloween weekend. Several years ago we found we had outgrown our venue and made a necessary decision to move to the Hilton, the only hotel in the area that could accommodate our growing numbers.

We must book the Hilton at least two years in advance. When we had to change dates at the request of our constituents, we had to take the only dates that were available, make the best of the situation, and hope to position ourselves for a more suitable date in future years. Our annual conference is beyond a doubt the most visible endeavor of the many tasks Ohio TESOL undertakes. The conference affords us the opportunity not only to glean new ideas from our fellow practitioners, but also to learn what’s happening in other parts of the state, discuss the latest theories in the field, and perhaps most importantly to network with our colleagues at all levels of education.

As always, the Conference’s success is based solely on the hard work and contributions of its members. The organization is comprised 100% of volunteers, who for many reasons contribute countless hours to record keeping, writing, editing, organizing, leading and communicating. There must be a job for you somewhere among those activities. Consider volunteering behind the scenes. Contact Jill Kramer (kramerjill@sbcglobal.net) or Elana Hohl (elanahohl@mindspring.com) to find out what you can do to help. Most importantly, plan to attend the 2009 Ohio TESOL Conference.
Ohio TESOL 2009 Conference
in conjunction with the Lau Resource Center

Language:
A Global Link

October 30 and 31, 2009
The Hilton at Easton Town Center
Columbus, Ohio

Visit the Ohio TESOL website for details:
http://www.ohiotesol.org
Keynote Speaker:
Dr. Shelley Wong
George Mason University

Dr. Shelley Wong is an Associate Professor at George Mason University in Multicultural/ESL/Bilingual Education. Before coming to George Mason, Shelley was an assistant professor at the University of Maryland College Park, and an associate professor in the Foreign/Second Language Education with a Specialization in Language, Literacy and Culture at the Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio.

She received her BA in Sociology at the University of California at Santa Cruz (U.C.S.C.), her California teaching credentials, TESL certificate and MA in Teaching English as a Second Language from UCLA, and her Ed.D. in Applied Linguistics from Columbia Teachers College.

Dr. Wong began her teaching career in teaching English at a girl’s middle school in Hong Kong where she went as a Chinese American to study Cantonese and learn about her cultural roots over thirty years ago. Over the years she has taught English as a Second language in adult school, high school, community college, university intensive English programs, and teacher education programs in California, Ohio, New York, and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. She has also taught ESL/Bilingual classes for community organizations, churches and trade unions.

Dr. Wong was elected President of TESOL (2008-2009) and serves on the Executive Committee of TESOL from 2007-2010. She served on the Board of TESOL from 1996-1999, was Chair of the Teacher Education Interest Section and on the Sociopolitical Concerns Committee of TESOL 2002-2005. She was the 2003 recipient of the TESOL Heinle and Heinle Excellence in Teaching Award, presented at the TESOL Annual Convention, Baltimore, Md. She has been involved in collaborative literacy research projects with Reading Recovery, elementary and ESOL teachers in elementary schools in Arlington, Prince George County and Fairfax, Virginia. She is the author of Dialogic Approaches to TESOL: Where the Ginkgo Tree grows published by Taylor & Francis (formerly Lawrence Erlbaum).
The cultures of our students

By Dana Weber

On January 22, 2009, the Stark County Educational Service Center (SCESC) presented “The Cultures of Our Students.” This workshop featured four cultures represented in the SCESC Title III Consortium school districts. Teachers from three counties gathered at Malone University to learn about China, Iran, Romania, and Guatemala.

The objectives of the workshop were to support teachers in understanding the backgrounds and cultures of the students in our schools; to provide an understanding of the values and belief systems within the different cultures; to provide practical ideas and strategies for integrating that knowledge into the classroom; and to provide culturally responsive practices in communicating with parents from different cultures. Representatives from China, Iran and Romania shared information about their countries and cultures. Additionally, a documentary about Guatemalan immigrants in Tuscarawas County was featured. During lunch, members of the traditional Romanian Dance Ensemble, Doina, performed. Embedded throughout the day were concrete practices and strategies the teachers could immediately implement in their classrooms.

The goal was for teachers to return to school the next day with specific action steps to implement in order to ensure culturally responsive teaching.

Three Timken High School students, Xiaoxiong Zhang, Yuetao Qu, and Yanshan Zhou, began the morning with a PowerPoint presentation depicting a brief description of Chinese history, culture and language. They followed their presentation with an in-depth discussion of the similarities and differences between Chinese schools and U.S. schools. They then shared specific strategies that teachers at Timken used to help them learn the content.

Professor Debra Johanyak from the University of Akron holds dual Iranian and U.S. citizenship. She shared her experiences as an American woman learning Iranian culture while married to an Iranian and teaching at Iran’s Shiraz University. She was there when the American Embassy in Tehran was taken over by militants in 1979. Her book, Behind the Veil, depicts the conflicts she experienced during the crisis. Through sharing her personal experiences, Dr. Johanyak was able to give the teachers insight into the similarities and differences between the cultures.

Two Romanian students, Manuela Haiduc and Vlad Muresan, began the afternoon with a PowerPoint presentation describing the heritage and history of Romania. Manuela is a sophomore at Glenoak High School. Vlad is a graduate of Glenoak and currently a sophomore at Kent State University. They ended their session with their personal stories — the fears and challenges they faced and the successes they have found in the U.S.

The documentary film, 2000 Miles North by Charles Thornton and Keith Potoczak, examines the influx of illegal immigrants from Guatemala into Tuscarawas County. This film was chosen because of the large population of Guatemalans in the SCESC Consortium schools. The film was able to answer questions such as: Why do they come here? Where do they work? How does their
choice to come to the U.S. affect them and their families? Sherrel Rieger, an immigrant activist who was featured in the film, attended the workshop and was able to discuss and field questions related to the film.

The day concluded with teachers completing a "Take Action" form. The goal was for teachers to return to school the next day with specific action steps to implement in order to ensure culturally responsive teaching. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and the enthusiasm to “take action” was inspiring.

Dana Weber is a Title III Consortium Coordinator/Consultant at the Stark County Educational Service Center.

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Ohio TESOL 2008.
The Krashen Theory of Second Language Acquisition

By Karen A. Power

Did you know that Steve Krashen speaks four languages? He’s a voracious reader? He’s a proud grandpa? He loves Starbucks coffee and tells Henny Youngman jokes?

What most of us do know about Dr. Stephen Krashen is that he revolutionized foreign language teaching. His theory of second language acquisition was the first theory to take into account the mental processes of learning a second language and factors like age, intelligence, learner motivation, and personality.

He is probably best known for developing the Comprehension Hypothesis—that is, that language is acquired receptively. We acquire language by listening to and reading at levels we understand. As our confidence grows via comprehensible input, so does our language ability. It’s the basis of sheltered subject matter teaching, a curricular concept birthed by Krashen, and also content based instruction (CBI).

In 1973, Steve Krashen was a recently graduated applied linguist. Applied linguistics was a new field, and not warmly embraced by those in the field of linguistics who discounted the efforts of applied linguists to study real-world language problems. Krashen, however, would soon revolutionize second language teaching in the name of applied linguistics.

Krashen was well-versed in the theory of Noam Chomsky. Chomsky, who dared to challenge the behaviorist theories of B.F. Skinner, proposed that children were genetically programmed for language via a Language Acquisition Device (LAD).

Chomsky had little interest in extending his theories to foreign language education. Krashen, however, was interested, and hypothesized that the LAD was available to adults. His breakthrough came in 1975.

They found that adult second language learners acquire the structures of language in the same order as children. This suggested that the ability to acquire language was possible in adult second language learners.

But that’s only half of the story. In the 1970s, grammar teaching as a way to learn a second language was the standard of the day, a method that emphasized verb conjugation and rule memorization.

Krashen worked with graduate student Pauline Pon. Together, they noticed that a very advanced ESL speaker (Pon herself) could state and self-correct many of her grammatical errors, which showed that conscious knowledge of a rule did not mean that the rule was acquired, even after knowing the rule and even teaching it for many years.
The “eureka” moment came in the middle of teaching a seminar at the graduate center at CUNY in New York City in April of 1975. Krashen combined the results of his earlier work by hypothesizing that adults had two systems, acquisition and learning. The LAD doesn’t shut down at puberty, as many people had assumed. Acquisition is still possible in adults and is, in fact, the central means of developing second language ability. The consciously learned system of grammatical knowledge serves to monitor language production, but in a very limited way.

Over the past 30 years, other theories of second language acquisition have arrived on the scene—Sociocultural Theory, and more recently, Connectionism. Krashen’s theory, however, has stood the test of time. Why? Because the Comprehension Hypothesis can tell us why some methods work better than others, why children go through a silent period (adults would also, if we let them), and why some language learners learn to speak the native tongue of their parents despite being forbidden to speak anything but English at home.

In short, the Comprehension Hypothesis is still the most comprehensive theory out there.

What advice does Krashen have for ESL teachers? He suggests that we set aside time in our classrooms every day for reading. Fun reading: adolescent romance novels, Goosebumps, comic books, whatever students enjoy and can read with ease. Free voluntary reading makes a powerful contribution to our second language ability.

Krashen also warns against overdoing grammar teaching. It’s impossible to teach students all of the grammar rules they need to know, and even if they could learn all the rules, it is difficult to use them. Our brains are wired to find patterns in language, and the monitor system can make only a small contribution as a self-corrector.

Krashen is now a University of Southern California professor emeritus. It’s the best job in the world, he jokes, because he can never get fired. Retirement just means, though, that he has more time to spend with his passions—his grandkids, continuing his research, and working with classroom teachers who need practical, common sense advice for working with students. His website, http://www.sdkrashen.com/, provides a wealth of information and valuable resources for classroom teachers and scholars.

Karen Power is an Associate Professor of English and the TESOL director at Cedarville University, Cedarville, Ohio.
Teaching pronunciation with Facebook and Photobooth

By Bob Eckhart

Pronunciation teachers used to keep a hand-mirror in the desk drawer to give to students who just couldn’t understand how the jaw needed to open progressively wider for *beet-bit-bet-bat-bought*. Students would recite these front vowels while at the same time trying to watch their mouth. Now, through some simple technology, pronunciation teachers can use cool new tools not only to help students see their own lip, tongue, and jaw movements, but also to send videos of these movements electronically. Students can watch teachers and see with their own eyes what they need to be doing to improve their pronunciation.

**Facebook Video**

It is very easy to add audio and video to Facebook messages using your webcam. You need to be Facebook friends with your students, which shouldn’t scare you, as long as you aren’t posting photos of yourself dancing on tables on your own Facebook. Your students can use these videos to see what you look like when you are pronouncing certain sounds, words, and passages.

**Mac Photobooth**

It is also easy to record videos using Mac Photobooth. Videos are saved in .mov format. These files can be emailed, posted online, or podcasted. If you have access to several Macbooks, each student can also record videos of him or herself.

Bob Eckhart teaches ESL at The Ohio State University. He would like to thank Megan Troyer for taking pictures and the Digital Union at OSU for providing the classroom space, laptops, and software that fostered these innovative practices.
Using Facebook Video

It is very easy to add audio and video to Facebook messages, as long as you have a webcam.

First, create an account at Facebook.com. You need to be Facebook friends with your students to send a video.

Next, open a message and click on the Add Video option.

Facebook’s Java application will find your external or built-in webcam.

Finally, record the video and then send it in the message.

Using Mac Photobooth

Photo booth is software that records video via a webcam. It is included with the Mac OS X operating system, but similar applications are available for computers running Windows.

First, open Photobooth from the Applications folder.

Second, select the video icon at the bottom left of the Photo Booth window.

Click the red camera icon to begin recording. Click it again to stop recording.

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Students create their own recordings. To view a streamed video of Bob’s classroom visit: http://tinyurl.com/otesolj21classroom

An example of a video made with Mac Photobooth. To watch the video, visit: http://tinyurl.com/otesolj21video

An example of a video message in Facebook.

Teachers can help students see their own lip, tongue, and jaw movements and send videos for students to watch.

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Incorporating the social components of language learning

By Brenda Refaei

Any language teacher knows that students need to be able to use language appropriately in the social settings where they live and work. Firth and Wagner (1997) challenged researchers in second language acquisition to recognize the centrality of the social aspect of language and language learning. They called for “a significantly enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use” (Firth and Wagner, 2007, p. 801). This call for researchers to focus on these aspects of language learning also applies to what happens in the language classroom.

“Concentrating on context and interactional dimensions of language use” can help students learn the intricacies of how language and culture intersect. Teachers can help students through this process by making some of these connections apparent in classroom instruction.

One element of the interactional dimensions of language use is acculturation or the process of adapting to a new culture. Acculturation is closely linked to motivation. Learners can be motivated into acquiring the target language by their desire to become part of the target culture. They can also be motivated by a desire to not become integrated into the target culture. In such cases the individual may be satisfied with his or her level of target language production such Alberto in Schumann’s 1976 study. Schumann hypothesized that Alberto’s English language development “fossilized” because Alberto had a low desire to integrate into the English speaking culture. This study illustrates the importance for educators to understand their students’ motives for learning English. Rubenfield, Sinclair, and Clement (2007) found that when students’ motives were aligned with their goals the students more easily adapted to the target culture. Teachers need to help students analyze their motives for learning the language and use their positive feelings toward the target culture as they learn English.

However, teachers also need to recognize that not all students are willing or ready to integrate into a new cultural setting. Language is an essential part of students’ identity (Weeden, 1987; Peirce 1995) and some students—especially older students—may experience cognitive dissonance as they try to reconcile cultural differences between their native and new culture with its new linguistic requirements. Teachers need to be sensitive to students experiencing culture shock and having negative experiences which may affect their language learning efforts.

Related to adapting to a new culture, students have varying degrees of cultural or social distance. If students are moving between two closely related cultures, they are less likely to experience cognitive dissonance. However, if the two cultures clash or have different values, then students will have a harder time adapting to the new culture. In the classroom teachers need to find ways to incorporate and honor students’ native languages and cultures. Teachers can have images of the
students’ native countries and examples of their languages in their room. An entire school could incorporate these elements throughout the building so that all students come to respect cultural and linguistic differences.

Teachers of young students can recognize their students’ native cultures by inviting the parents to the classroom for a family reading night (Meoli, 2001). Meoli asked parents to work with their children to share their life stories. The parents told these stories in their native languages while the children translated them for the class. She found that once the parents have attended the family night, the parent-teacher relationship continues to develop with more parents attending conferences.

Teachers have a crucial role in motivating students. Teachers’ behavior has been found to directly influence student motivation. Rubenfield et al (2007) asserts that “positive, informative” teachers increase intrinsic motivation while “controlling” teachers decrease intrinsic motivation. Thus teachers who are able to develop students’ intrinsic motivations to learn are more effective than more controlling teachers who control the learning environment.

Teachers may employ language socialization techniques they use with native speaking children without being aware that they are doing it. Poole (1992) showed that teachers use middle-class socialization techniques when they work with non-native students. These tech-
niques expose students to cultural norms and expectations for language that are not always explicitly taught such as how to respond to a question used as a command. If teachers develop sensitivity to when they are employing such strategies with their students, they can help explain how what they are doing is an important component of using the target language.

In the classroom, teachers can give explicit instruction in language socialization (Kasper & Rose 2002) because these opportunities rarely occur outside the classroom. For instance, students need to understand and to be able to use emotion words and language. The classroom provides a safe place for students to learn emotionally laden words (DeWaele, 2005). Students can also engage in repeated communication practices (Kasper and Rose, 2002). The classroom allows students to practice in a non-threatening environment the linguistic forms they will use with native speakers.

Brenda Refaei is an assistant professor in the Department of English at Raymond Walters College/University of Cincinnati. Her interests include TESL, and developmental reading and writing.

References


From sufficiency to efficiency: The role of theories in guiding teaching English language learners in classrooms

By Hye K. Pae

In response to the influx of immigrant children to classrooms and demands for sensitivity to cultural and linguistic diversity and effective teaching methods for English language learners (ELLs), theories of second language acquisition (SLA) have mushroomed in the recent three decades. In order for ELLs to succeed in the academics, teachers of ELLs should have a good command of the materials and knowledge of the problems or issues that their students have in learning English. With the growing body of literature on SLA theories, there have been persistent debates in the applicability of the theories to classroom teachers. This article briefly discusses some of the issues related to theories and the practicality of SLA for classroom teaching.

Proliferation of SLA Theories

The systematic stockpile of SLA information serves as a framework that shapes the way of classroom teaching and provides knowledge of SLA processes as a requisite for effective teaching and students’ improved learning (Long, 2007). From behaviorism to socioconstructivism, abundant theories and their impact on instruction have been discussed (Cummins, 1991; Krashen, 1985; Long, 2007). A multitude of SLA theories inform us that the understanding and knowledge of SLA processes can lead to teachers’ awareness and further to classroom practices such as communicative language teaching, SLA in context, task-based language teaching, processing instruction, enhancing input, and output practices (Cowan, 2008).

There have been concerns with regard to theory proliferation; some have applauded a multitude of theories, while others do not endorse the proliferation of the various theories. Lantolf (1996, 2002) defends theory proliferation, suggesting that theory proliferation is an indication of the fruitfulness of the field and protection against the domination of one paradigm. In contrast, Gregg (1993, 2000) and Long (1993) view the theory abundance as theoretical disunity.

Pedagogical Considerations

In spite of the wealth of SLA theories, theoretical and practical knowledge of pedagogical value, its comprehensibility to teachers has been unclear. Long (2007) has indicated that a hiatus between SLA theories and pedagogical procedures is too wide. He even lamented that “… most SLA theories and SLA theorists are not primarily interested in language teaching, and in some cases they are not all interested.” (p.19). Although methodological principles for language teaching have been debated in various theoretical avenues, challenges...
in implementing theories into the classroom stem from several discontinuities between SLA theory and practice.

First, as McLaughlin (1987) points out, linguists and theorists who significantly contributed to the formation of SLA theories have posed theories without empirical evidence. Specifically, McLaughlin (1987) has critiqued on Krashen’s hypotheses, which have been at the center of SLA theories, pointing out internal weaknesses and inconsistencies in Krashen’s theories as well as violations of the falsification principle.

Secondly, many theories do not differentiate learners’ distinct characteristics, such as age and ability, to acquire content knowledge. A learner’s age is a critical variable in L2 learning, given children’s near uniform success with both first and second language acquisition as opposed to adults’ near uniform partial failure with either (Long, 2007). For links from theories to classroom applicability, the order of teaching approaches, such as direct method, total physical response, natural approach, content-based instruction, notion-al-functional sequencing, and the like, should be based on the theoretical and empirical bases concerning the learner’s distinct characteristics (Cowan, 2008). Evaluating textbooks and activities employed in classrooms for teaching in K-12 programs should also be made in consideration of such factors as levels of students’ language proficiency, affective characteristics, abilities, and individual differences.

Thirdly, teachers’ familiarity with different approaches to effective instruction and language learning can allow them to apply to their particular situations in which the teacher can encounter. Familiarity with a variety of views and approaches can also lead to recognition that many approaches share common features and appreciation of an assorted view of teaching ELLs for desirable outcomes. This is important because no single theory or hypothesis will provide a magic formula for all learners in all contexts.

Lastly, although multiple perspectives on teaching approach are useful, a blind eclectic approach of different curricular and methodological frame-work may not work, in part, because SLA theories do not converge on what fosters learning in what way. Although “enlightened eclecticism” in language teaching over one exclusive method may drive to a useful way of teaching ESL (Brown, 1994), teachers should be cognizant in choosing approaches from diverse sources because blind eclecticism can cloud teachers’ sensitivity to students’ cultural and linguistic diversity. What is important is to choose the most appropriate method in a different situation and to be aware as to how SLA theories translate into individualized instruction.

To summarize, through raised awareness and sensitivity, the teacher can oversee the student’s input, intake, noticing, conscious-raising, and output (Long, 2007). An effective method can take many forms and be carried out with various pedagogical goals of overall proficiency and students’ language skills through current advancement and proliferation of SLA theories. However, the decision should be made on the basis of the teacher’s discretion in evidence-based materials and outcomes. ☺

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Hye K. Pae, Ph.D. is an associate professor and coordinator of the TESOL Endorsement Program at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio. Her research interests center on reading disabilities, biliteracy development, dual-language processing, and measurement challenges across cultures.

References
See page 21.
I began compiling this annotated bibliography with a focus on linguistic research that could serve as a reference for me in the classroom. I am a tutor for middle school ESOL students of all ability levels and a wide variety of nationalities. I sought out research that would deepen my understanding of the main L1s of my students (Somali, Chinese, and Spanish), as well as of my native English. Although my limited background in linguistics hinders my understanding of the more technical texts, the texts I include here have provided valuable insight for me. The three papers on English give me a classroom reference for regional variations in pronunciation, short-cuts made in colloquial speech, and the ins-and-outs of particle verbs. The five articles on the L1s serve as detailed references about the more notable differences between these languages and English.

After compiling linguistic research papers, I decided to further expand my annotated bibliography to include more classroom-friendly print sources. Included here are three books that I have been using in the classroom to help me teach English phonology, morphology, and semantics. These sources organize a wealth of information clearly and concisely to facilitate student learning.


Based on the doctoral thesis of Nichole Dehé for the University of Leipzig, this book gives great insight to English syntax, with a focus on particle verbs. Dehé thoroughly analyzes acceptable word order and where the accent should fall in the sentence. In her explanations, Dehé often compares English with other languages, mostly Germanic and Romance. These comparisons show me how to draw upon parallels in some of my students’ native languages to help them better understand particle verbs in English. In addition, the diagrams and explanations give me a greater awareness of the syntactic rules that I instinctively follow, preparing me to teach this information explicitly to ELLs. Particle verbs can be a particularly confusing concept for ELLs and native English speakers alike, but the detailed information here paves the way for greater mastery of English by more advanced speakers.


Glowacka analyzed original samples of casual speech to identify the linguistic contexts in which native speakers of American English delete vowels and subsequently create consonant clusters, some of which never occur under any other circumstance. Although these deletions occur spontaneously and unconsciously, Glowacka’s analysis of her test subjects’ speech reveals definite patterns: first of all, that many more deletions take
place in spontaneous speech as opposed to read speech, and second, that a complex system of rules dictates where deletions are most likely to occur. Some of the considerations include the stress of a vowel, at what position it occurs within a word, and the qualities of the surrounding consonants.

While I need not burden my students with all of these rules, I can still use this knowledge to prepare them for the challenge of understanding rapid, natural speech. Many immigrants, if they had exposure to English in their home countries, experienced clearer diction from newscasters and in other media. The everyday language surrounding them may be more confusing, and explicit instruction on how to make sense of it may help. In addition, this article helps me become more aware of my own speech, so that I can be more intentional about using clear diction for the beginners and using more natural speech to challenge advanced speakers.


This book chapter zooms in on the pronunciation difficulties of ESOL students from the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Data was taken from teachers at the Centre for English Language Communication (CELC) of the National University of Singapore (NUS), about their students. The vowel and consonant sounds that the PRC ESOL students have found most challenging are given. Attention is paid to how the sounds’ positions within a word affects difficulty. Since PRC students come from a variety of linguistic backgrounds (Mandarin, Cantonese, and others), the chapter also mentions pronunciation errors specific to particular regions within China. At the end, suggestions are given for culturally appropriate pronunciation instruction.

I have found this chapter useful in instructing a beginning level ESOL student from China. The pronunciation data is true to my experience, and I intend to use some of the minimal pair exercises suggested here. I would want to keep this book as a reference for help with focusing in on pronunciation difficulties particular to the region of China the students are from.


Johnson, of the Depart of Folklore & Ethnomusicology & African Studies Program at Indiana University, describes and defends the characteristics of the oral Somali culture. He attempts to prove that, contrary to the theory of technological determinism and the oral-formulaic thesis, literacy does not affect human cognition. The theory of technological determinism builds states that people progress from orality to literacy, and that this is “a certain progress in human mental ability.” The oral-formulaic thesis asserts that the mentality necessary for a society to perpetuate oral poetry is fundamentally different from that which is found in a literate society. Johnson, however, cites the coexistence of modern printed novels with a rich tradition of oral poetry in the largely illiterate Somalia to reproof these claims. The literate people who read and write literature also compose and appreciate various types of oral poetry. He also provides insights into some of the particularities of Somali orthography.

Somali students are often not literate when they first arrive in the U.S., but they still have a knowledge of poetry and stories. Becoming literate will not take this oral tradition away from them, it will just give them more options for obtaining knowledge and expressing ideas. This insight into how poetic narratives can be created and passed on without the use of writing helps me understand potential linguistic strengths of my Somali students so that I can help them build on these in English instruction.

The Atlas of North American English is an extensive reference of regional variation in North American English. The methods for data collection and analysis are provided in detail at the beginning, and large color-coded geographic maps, with detailed explanations, display the results. While the focus is on variations in pronunciation, lexical differences are also explored (i.e. “Coke,” verses “soda,” verses “pop.”) The regions are The North, Canada, New England, New York City, and The Mid-Atlantic States, the South, The Midland, and The West. There’s also a small section on speech patterns in the African-American community.

While the maps and the descriptions in this resource tool are too specialized for me to use in instruction, the concept of outlining on a map of the U.S. the general regions of linguistic variation could help the students see the relationship between geographic location and the variety of English spoken. More well-traveled students may already have noticed some of these variations, and it would be both fun and instructional for us to make sense of such experiences. It would profit me personally as a teacher of English to become more familiar with the specific linguistic characteristics of the regions in the U.S. through studying the lexical and grammatical maps.


Intended for help with teaching phonics to native speakers of English, this book it breaks down phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic information in a way that is very useful for ESOL instruction. Each section (i.e.: Sound-Symbol Association, Plurals and Possessives, etc.) gives the main points for the students to learn and the page numbers of all the related activities in the students editions. I especially appreciate the section outlining all the phones represented by each alphabet letter or combination of alphabet letters, with special focus on the more confusing ones, such as “hard and soft c and g” and “the special sounds of o.” I have already begun to use this as a concise guide to help me cover these main points with my students, modifying the activity suggestions for the varying levels and specific needs of the ESOL students.


Rozas compares and contrasts the Spanish verb gustar with the English like, showing how the verb gustar makes the experiencer the indirect object (as opposed to the subject) and the stimulus the subject (as opposed to the direct object). Rozas calls all Spanish verbs with the IO construction “gustar-type verbs” (GTVs), and he asserts that this class of verbs is not only syntactically, but also semantically, different from Spanish equivalents of like; with the DO construction. However, not all verbs fall neatly into one category or the other, some fluctuate between the IO and DO constructions. This difficulty is cleared away through the use of the Transitivity Hypothesis: the individual speaker may choose a DO construction with a GTV because the particular sentence is similar to a prototypical DO construction, not because the GTV carries in itself rules for the DO construction.

This analysis drives home the point to me that although the word gustar is translated as like, these two words differ both syntactically and semantically. It may help in English language learning to draw parallels between the students’ home languages and English, but it is important to keep in mind that translations are approximates. This article also gives me specific insight into Spanish, especially the connections between meaning and grammar, how the choice of IO verses DO is tied with semantics. This in-depth grammar study also makes me more aware of the structure of my English sentences!


This is a picture dictionary especially well suited

http://ohiotesol.org
for entry level ESOLs. It is broken up into seventeen main categories, such as school, food, and transportation. Each of these categories has from two to twelve subcategories; for example, the category of food has one page on “at the supermarket,” one on “vegetables,” one on “cooking,” and so on. The pictures on each page are numbered and have corresponding word lists. This allows students to begin building an English lexicon. Each page also includes example dialogues and discussion questions on each topic. At the very end, this volume contains a word list, showing all of the words in alphabetical order, and beside them their phonetic transcriptions. A key for the phonetic transcription symbols is included. Lastly, there are exercises that help students group words together that are associated by topic.

I have found that activities using this picture dictionary are useful for expanding the vocabulary of some of my entry-level students. Pictures are far more effective than trying to describe these items with words. I have not used the phonetic transcriptions in the word list, but this tool would be very useful for students’ independent study.


Mauro Tosco, of the Universita di Napoli, begins with the fact that, in Somali, there is no third object pronoun. The theory behind why this works, and how there can often be no object noun phrase, even when transitive verbs are used, occupies the article. Tosco argues that the valence left does not always indicate an anaphoric object, it can also require a generic reading. The course of his argument also familiarizes the reader with other syntactical characteristics of Somali, such as focus marking and detopicalizing. Tosco’s analysis is very technical and involves much theory, but his examples of Somali speech are very educational. In addition, he provides a section towards the end of the article titled: “A look beyond Somali,” in which he provides very understandable comparisons between Somali and other languages, including English.

Reading this article has give me a greater understanding of and appreciation for the structure of Somali, which shows me the root cause of my students’ trouble with third person pronouns. This knowledge has already useful to me when helping a Somali ELL with writing skills because I could include in my teaching references to her native Somali. This would be a good article to keep on hand to look up many unique characteristics of this language.


Tsai, of the linguistics institute of the National Tsing Hua University in Taiwan, addresses here the various methods used to anchor tense in Chinese. Since the verbs themselves do not inflect for tense, tense can be indicated through event coordination, event subordination, event modification, event quantification, or verb raising to v/T (a way of layering sentences to limit the application of an aspect to the particular phrase it modifies.) Tense anchoring refers to the way phrases within a sentence, which would seem incomplete on their own, can carry an inflection that indicates the temporal reference. Tsai here outlines the correct uses of many specialized modifiers that indicate tense.

While I do not expect to become an expert in Chinese tense anchoring, I appreciate the way this article showed me that even though Chinese verbs do not inflect for tense, there is nevertheless a complex mopho-syntactic system in place for expressing tense. Indicating tense in this way is a foreign concept to me, and so it makes sense that inflecting verbs for tense as one does in English is a challenge for native speakers of Chinese. I work with several Chinese students, and teaching appropriate use of tense has been one of my focuses with them. Having this detailed information about Chinese tense formation is beneficial for me, so that I better understand the linguistic background of these students.

Wittels, H. & Greisman, J. (1993). The clear and
This simple thesaurus dictionary is easier for ESOL students to use than the more standard thesauruses. The presentation is different: The larger print, clear font, and greater spacing make this thesaurus easy to read. There are fewer words included, which allows the ESOL students to find the words that they need with more ease. The organization is also straightforward, with each entry word in a bold typeface, followed by non-bold synonyms, and a final antonym in a lighter typeface. For some entries, other words that come from the root rood follow in all caps. If a synonym or antonym included is from the slang, it is clearly labeled as such. Although this organization seems intuitive, a detailed guide for using this thesaurus is included at the beginning.

I am glad to have this user friendly guide to English synonyms and antonyms in the room where I tutor. It has come in handy when students have specific homework that require a thesaurus, but beyond that I have used it to create games that help my ESOL students’ language grow in sophistication. Learning how to distinguish between different shades of meaning is an essential quality in more advanced level English.

I am very satisfied with my annotated bibliography. I had some concern at first about the usefulness of the more academic texts, but I have already benefitted from them in the classroom. For example, the book about Chinese pronunciation problems has guided me in teaching English pronunciation to a new, entry level student from China; and the article about transitivity and noun incorporation in Somali has helped me identify the source of a Somali student’s trouble with English pronouns, and communicate with her about the differences between English and Somali on this point. The more classroom-friendly texts have all been very useful.

I’m thankful for each source on this list, whether it helps me understand language points that often confuse ESOL students, gives me a better understanding my students’ languages, or guides me in organizing and passing on linguistic information to my students. All of these are important components of effective instruction.

Rachel Fouts is a graduate student in the MATESOL program at Ohio Dominican University. She tutors ELL students in Gahanna Jefferson Public Schools.

References for “From Sufficiency to Efficiency” on page 15.


Acorn caps and ice cubes: Essential tools for focused reading

By Denise Mundy

Repeated reading is a research-based strategy for improving reading fluency and comprehension that can be extended to create focus and engagement for even the most reluctant readers through the use of authentic hands-on activities. Reading faster than an ice cube melts and discovering how to make an acorn cap whistle are repeated reading activities that will leave students clamoring for more opportunities to read. Each of these experiential activities employs the repeated reading strategies of:
- **Echo reading:** the group echoes the leader sentence by sentence
- **Partner reading:** students take turns reading the selection orally with a partner
- **Choral reading:** the group reads the selection together
- **Silent reading:** each student reads the selection independently and silently
- **Six-inch voice reading:** the selection is read in a voice heard only 6 inches away

**Actively engaging children in repeated reading sparks not only their interest in reading, but also their curiosity about the world in which they live.**

Acorn cap whistles

Learning to blow an acorn cap whistle is a perfect hands-on repeated reading activity that never fails to thrill children as they learn about sound. Begin by reading the passage below to the children. Then echo read the passage, pass out the acorn caps, and allow thirty seconds for blowing the acorn cap. Follow this up with a choral read, thirty more seconds of practice, a six-inch voice reading and thirty more seconds of practice. As time allows, the children can reread for additional cues and continue practicing. Acorn caps work best with this activity. Children should be encouraged to take the caps and reading passage home to share with their families.

Acorn caps from oak trees make great whistles. Begin by putting your thumbs across the hollow side of the cap. Leave a small open space like a V or triangle at the top. Put the bottom of your lower lip against the bottom of your fingernail. Now blow into the V. If you are lucky you will hear a whistle. Keep trying and you will learn to make the cap whistle. Try changing your lips or fingers a little bit to be successful. It is fun to try out different kinds of acorn caps. Do you think they will sound the same? If you can’t find an acorn cap, you can always use a plastic bottle cap. (Adapted from Duensing, 1997)
Can You Read Faster than an Ice Cube Melts?

This may be the coolest demo you’ll ever use for repeated reading and teaching a science concept. Select a 60-90 second passage introducing thermal energy. Put an ice cube on a black block made of plastic prior to echo, choral, partner, and six-inch voice reading the passage. Afterwards, enthusiastically challenge the students to read the passage faster than an ice cube can melt. Put a new ice cube on an identical black block made of aluminum. Everyone will be amazed when the ice cube has melted well before they have finished reading the passage. A chorus of voices will demand to know how you made the ice cube melt so fast. Invite the students to return the following day for a repeated reading of the principles behind the amazing ice melting block. The blocks can be purchased at www.teachersource.com or other science stores. Use small cubes instead of regular size cubes for a dramatic effect.

Actively engaging children in repeated reading sparks not only their interest in reading, but also their curiosity about the world in which they live. Take a chance. Arouse a curiosity. Share a wonder. Your students will thank you for it.

Denise Mundy presented these activities and others at Ohio TESOL 2008 to popular acclaim that she was asked to write an about them for Ohio TESOL Journal.

Reference

One of the most famous people in the United States inspires Japanese people to learn English. The U.S. president Barack Obama’s speeches are enthusiastically used in the English textbooks in Japan. *Obama daito-ryo syu-nin enzetsu* (*The inaugural address of Barack Obama*) has sold well because his leadership and characteristics appeal to many Japanese.

This portable book has three sections: First, the manual for using this book, including the background of Obama’s inaugural address and the chronology of his life; Second, the texts of three speeches with a glossary – the Gettysburg address of Abraham Lincoln, the inaugural address of John F. Kennedy, and the inaugural address of Barack Obama; Third, a vocabulary check sheet of the speeches and audio CD of all three speeches.

One of the strongest aspects is that this book is being current. Ten days after Obama’s inauguration ceremony, the book was published in Japan. This reveals the public interest in this book. The book enhances the motivation of learning English, especially sophisticated English speech, among Japanese people because President Obama is a charismatic figure. Although the contents of his speech are difficult, Japanese people can learn about current situations in the U.S. by studying it. This would also introduce the Japanese to the new era of American politics under the first African-American president in its history.

This book is only available in Japan. ESL/EFL teachers can both use it in the classroom and encourage Japanese students to use it independently. The popularity of the book has boosted its sales in Japan. In fact, not only Japanese students, but also some other international students will find the book an inspiring and rewarding tool because they can appreciate Obama’s sophisticated speech. ESL teachers in the U.S. can utilize Obama’s speech for their ESL students to take benefits of English learning.

This book is a useful supplementary material for teaching English. Targeted at advanced learners, the book will encourage English learning and expose students to American culture through reading about three exceptional U.S. presidents.

Takatoshi Egami is a Master’s student in Education at Ohio University. He enjoys jazz music and plays his favorite trumpet in his free time.
Remembering Elliot

By Linn Forhan

Last year, amidst all of the busyness of the winter holiday season, Ohio TESOL lost a very special friend. On December 10, 2008, Dr. Elliot Judd passed away at his home in Chicago, Illinois after a 2 ½ year battle with cancer. Although Elliot had not lived in Ohio since 1979, he has had a powerful connection to each and every one of us, for it was Elliot Judd, then an assistant professor of Linguistics at Ohio University, who – along with a small group of dedicated colleagues – spearheaded the founding of Ohio TESOL in 1978.

This small group had a vision of something much larger than themselves. They envisioned an organization where ESOL professionals (and professionals-to-be) would share insights and expertise related to teaching practices and professional development, an organization that would reach in all directions across the state of Ohio, bringing together professionals from all contexts where English is taught to speakers of other languages: K-12, adult education, higher education, and refugee concerns as well as those professionals involved in teacher education. Elliot Judd and his colleagues did not merely have a vision; they acted upon that vision, completing all of the groundwork needed both to satisfy the “new affiliate” requirements of TESOL and to stimulate interest and involvement from ESOL professionals throughout Ohio. In October, 1978, Dr. Elliot Judd delivered the Keynote address, “The State of the Art in TESOL”, at the First Ohio TESOL Conference in Cleveland, Ohio.

It was at this same time (1977-1979), while the important work of founding Ohio TESOL was being accomplished, that I first came to know Elliot. I was immersed in my MA-TEFL graduate studies at Ohio University, grappling with phonology, semantics, socio-linguistics, and an array of TESOL-related courses, many of which Elliot taught. Our graduate class was very close, a small group that easily became fast friends. Our program was rigorous, and we worked hard, studying together, quizzing one another, and always anticipating what awaited us in our next class with Elliot, for his classes were exceptional.

At that time, Elliot taught TEFL methodology, testing, and a series of socio-linguistics classes that focused not just on the linguistic features of varieties of English, but that also examined the social and political forces impacting speakers of those non-standard forms. From the very beginning, whether we were examining appropriate practices for the English language classroom or the societal experience faced by speakers of non-standard varieties of English, Elliot pushed us, demanding that we think harder and that we read more deeply. He refused to allow any of us to become mediocre, to just get by, and while we all groaned whenever he distributed a new “Elliot take-home” exam, there wasn’t one among us who did not hold him in the highest esteem; we knew that he cared very much about each of us and that he would never ask more of us than he demanded of himself. It was commonplace on any given day of the week to find Elliot late at night in the university library.
reading, researching, or working through the very papers we’d submitted earlier in the day.

While Elliot expected excellence from us, he was anything but stern or uncaring. His classroom was an arena for vibrant discussion, passionate debate, serious reflection, and a great deal of laughter. He wanted to know what we thought and welcomed us to challenge him. When that happened, he’d really listen – thoughtfully, intently, without interruption- and sometimes, with a twinkle in his eye, he’d challenge us right back. The door to Elliot’s office, where a large black-and-white poster of Ferlinghetti’s “Coney Island of the Mind” kept watch over stacks of books and waiting papers, was rarely closed. If Elliot was in, he was available.

Along with all of our hard work, we - his graduate students - did indeed manage to find time for a bit of mischief. One incident that comes to mind illustrates the great affection that we had for Elliot and he for us. It was mid-term time and Elliot had distributed one of his dreaded take-home exams for us to complete over the weekend. (“If you want to call yourselves graduate students, you have to be able to apply what you know and articulate it.”) Whenever he gave a “take-home”, Elliot required us to put our names on a separate page, folded in half and stapled at the end so that he would not know whose paper he was reading until after it had been graded. This particular take-home was a methodology test that provided a series of classroom situations; we were to design appropriate activities and then, explain both the approach and the rationale that informed those activities. After completing the take-home exam individually, a couple of us got together and wrote up an extra “exam” for Elliot to read and grade. We spoofed his questions, proposing strange class activities and ridiculous explanations for each, e.g. a pronunciation warm-up became the Name-Game. “Lincoln lincoln bo bincoln banana fana...” You know the rest. The page at the end was discreetly signed, Tabula Rasa, folded and stapled as required. On the following Monday morning, Elliot entered the classroom, took a hard look at all of us, and then frizzed (as in frisbee) the renegade exam across the classroom. “Good one!,” he grinned. “I’m gonna have fun getting you back!”

As the summer of 1979 marked the completion of our MA-TEFL program, it also opened new doors for Elliot, who left Ohio to accept a position at the University of Illinois at Chicago. That was nearly 30 years ago; yet, those same principles – envisioning possibilities greater than himself and then acting upon those dreams, inspiring, nurturing, and deeply caring about his students, expecting excellence of them while demanding no less of himself – endured throughout Elliot’s professional life. In addition to his work teaching in the Department of English/Linguistics at the University of Illinois at Chicago and directing the M.A. TESOL program there, Elliot has written and published extensively, especially in the areas of language policy and teaching methodology. He has taught courses, facilitated workshops, presented papers, and consulted across the United States and throughout the world. From 1991 – 1996 he served as editor of the TESOL Journal, and during 2005 – 2006, Elliot Judd served all of us once again as President of TESOL.

It was during the 2006 TESOL conference in Tampa, Florida, as Elliot was completing his service as
TESOL President that I saw him for the last time. Over dinner, he spoke openly about the surprise of his then-recently diagnosed illness. He indicated that he had certainly shed tears upon learning his prognosis; yet, he continued, he still felt himself to be very lucky, explaining, “I’ve had such good friends. I’ve spent my whole life doing work that I love. And I could not love Kathy and the kids more. ... My only regret is that I don’t get to have as much time as I’d like.” Elliot was happy that evening, proudly showing me the most recent pictures of his beloved children, Issac, Alexander and Yael. He understood that his remaining time would be short and wanted to keep it filled with what he loved most: his family, his teaching, and his friends. When I received the news of Elliot’s passing, I was told that during his last few days he was a bit concerned because he wanted to be sure he would get all of his students’ papers read. That’s just the kind of guy Elliot was.

Elliot Judd’s spirit and work have touched all of us, even those of us who never met him. We honor him by being the best teachers that we can be, by giving our students at least as much as we ask of them, and by encouraging them to strive for excellence. We honor Elliot Judd by continuing to work together to make Ohio TESOL a professional organization that we are proud to be a part of.

_Linn Forhan is a lecturer at Ohio University._