



WAESOL World Quarterly Spring 2013 Issue

Editor, Kimberly Russell
Layout Designer, Julie Baumgartner

The *WAESOL World Quarterly* is an electronic publication of the Washington Association for the Education of Speakers of Other Languages. It provides information about the world of TESOL by sharing new teaching practices, addressing current issues, and collaborating with each other. WAESOL encourages all ESL and bilingual professionals and graduate students in Washington state to submit an article.

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A Letter from WAESOL President Ron Belisle



Greetings WAESOL members and friends,

Those who know me are well aware that I have a fascination with technology and how it impacts our profession. Since joining the WAESOL board in 2009, we have worked together to improve the ways in which WAESOL gathers information and handles data. I wish to share with you some of the technology changes that enhance how we are now able to better serve our members.

First, almost all of our data management as a board is now securely and centrally located in the cloud. When I joined the WAESOL Board in 2009, like many small non-profits at the time, member data was often stored in an Excel file on a board member’s computer (or on a USB stick). While WAESOL had never had a loss of data or security breach, it was a risk we could avoid by altering our where the data was stored. Additionally, WAESOL data management was not centralized, nor easily accessible, nor connected directly with our web site. This held the potential for confusion and difficulties in maintenance of data. Prior to 2009, WAESOL was also dealing with memberships, grant applications, conference proposals, registrations, and evaluations via document downloads, e-mail attachments and snail mail. Again this was time-consuming, costly and the potential for errors was a real possibility. Now with keeping our data in the cloud, centralized and having enhanced our security, members can be assured of greater security and management of their personal information.

Additionally, since 2009 we have created increasingly functional online submission forms on our web site (<http://waesol.org>), thus membership applications, conference proposals and registrations and grant applications can now all be submitted online. Not only this but subscribing to WAESOL updates or contacting board members is easier and faster than ever. The data is now more accurate since it has been input by the member himself or herself. With a high quality database, your WAESOL Board can more easily and accurately create materials such as conference name badges, presenter certificates, and room signs directly from the database. Many hours have been saved, much less money has been spent and better and more accurate management of the data has been

achieved through these tools. We hope that members will find these tools make all their interactions with WAESOL more efficient.

Another important tool WAESOL now uses is a customized mailer for sending out emails about WAESOL updates, publication of our WAESOL World Quarterly, conference reminders (Call for Proposals, Registration, Grants and Awards, etc.) and other important information. This customized mailer was programmed by my son, Matt, who is a Python (an advanced coding language for the web) software engineer with a firm in Bozeman, MT. WAESOL is grateful to Matt for his donation of about an hour a month of his programming and database expertise to WAESOL and to the Spokane Regional ESL Conference as part of his profession.

Moreover, the WAESOL Board also has improved working efficiency of their work by using both Google Docs (an office suite in the cloud) and Dropbox (a shared cloud folder) to share important information and collaborate together on projects and tasks. While this is a behind the scenes kind of technology use, we wanted to let you know that we not only strive to improve direct member services, but also to improve our board work as well.

Another cloud tool is the newly formed WAESOL Community, our interactive online forum open to all our membership. This forum is a place where registered users can upload and share resources, such as conference handouts, PowerPoints, links, ideas, post job announcements and ESL related news such as upcoming conferences, volunteer opportunities, conduct polls as well as ask questions, and connect and collaborate on issues related to our profession. There are currently 176 registered users on the forum. Check it out on our website <http://waesol.org>, by clicking on the WAESOL Community tab at the top. It is our hope that the WAESOL Community will become a vital resource for many in our field.

What does the future hold? I believe the future will still involve the tools mentioned above via any web browser; however, increasingly, mobile apps will play an important role in getting you the information you need and helping you to interact and collaborate with your colleagues at conferences and around the state via WAESOL. Imagine a day when a dedicated WAESOL app on your smart phone or tablet helps you to access conference information, customize your conference schedule, subscribe to specific WAESOL services, manage your membership and on and on. As your president, I'm committed to continuing to increase ease of access to information, while improving security and time-saving/cost-saving measures.

On a totally different note, I wanted to let all of you know that the WAESOL Board is busy planning for the fall WAESOL Conference. Our conference is scheduled for Saturday, October 19, 2013 from 8 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Highline Community College. Call for Proposals and Registration are now open. This year the conference will feature a new professional development Pre-Conference Workshops on Friday, October 19. The conference committee invites you to participate in the 2013 conference as a presenter or an attendee. Please visit our web site for more information. <http://waesol.org>

Also, TESOL International Association has launched a survey to collect information about credit policies for ESL/ESOL at postsecondary institutions in the US and Canada. To participate in the survey, click on the following link. <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ESLCreditSurvey> The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Prior to starting to the survey, it is recommended you collect basic information about your program, including: Approximate ESL/ESOL enrollment, Number and type of ESL/ESOL/EAP programs, and Information on credit policies at your institution.

Finally, if you haven't already heard, WAESOL has been chosen as the host affiliate for 2017 TESOL Annual Convention. We are excited about this and hope that you will volunteer to serve when called upon.

Thanks for reading,

Ron Belisle

2013 WAESOL President

<http://waesol.org>

A Message from the WAESOL 2012 Conference Co-Chair

Teresita Tobón, WAESOL 2012 Conference Co-chair, Outreach Liaison for WAFLT and WABE 2013

Last year, WAESOL had its annual conference on Saturday, October 20th at Highline Community College. The theme for the 2012 conference was: Where do we go from here? Pathways in times of change. We were privileged to have three well-known plenary speakers in our midst: Randi Reppen, Rob Jenkins and Staci Johnson. We offered site visits to Arthur Jacobsen Elementary School and Green River Community College on the day before the conference. Additionally, we had over seventy presentations from a wide variety of topics for K-20 teachers, and students for undergraduate and graduate programs.

For the past several years, Highline Community College has been the host to WAESOL's conference. We appreciate how the college welcomes us every October. I would also like to thank our publishers, who are an essential part of this event.

Right now, the board is already working to have another dynamic conference 2013 WAESOL, October 19, 2013 with the theme Embracing & Enhancing Multi-dimensional Learning. Please make sure that you mark your calendar, submit proposals and let your colleagues know about the conference.



TESOL Liaison Report from the 2013 National Conference

Bevin Taylor, President-Elect and Interim TESOL Liaison

Spring is the time for renewal and revitalization. It's also the time for the annual TESOL Convention, which, coincidentally, is a great place to renew and revitalize one's professional practice. As WAESOL's current TESOL Liaison, I had the opportunity to attend the 2013 International TESOL Convention and Expo in Dallas, Texas, in March. This year's theme was Harmonizing Language, Heritage, and Culture.

At TESOL, I attended the 2013 TESOL Affiliate Assembly, which is a gathering of representatives of the state and regional affiliate organizations. Not only did I get the chance to speak with TESOL practitioners from all parts of the US, but I had the pleasure of speaking with representatives from all over the world. I met teachers from Italy, Saudi Arabia, France, and even Sudan! TESOL currently has 109 affiliate organizations, and it's growing every year. Three new affiliates were added this year – Kuwait, Sudan, and Albania. I felt invigorated at meeting my colleagues from around the globe who are doing the very same work that we are doing here on the WAESOL Board – supporting our teachers and trying to provide relevant and local professional development opportunities.

In the Affiliate Assembly, we got an update on TESOL's progress in revising their Strategic Plan. They are midway through the process, and used the assembly as an opportunity to solicit feedback from the affiliates about what our needs are. A common theme was a desire for more communication and support from "big" TESOL to the affiliates. Many representatives also commented that they would like to see more connection and collaboration among affiliates, which WAESOL has already been nurturing with ORTESOL and BCTEAL. Do you have feedback for TESOL? If so, watch for a survey later this year that will be sent to all TESOL members.

In addition to attending the Affiliate Assembly, I also participated in a day-long workshop for affiliate leaders. We learned about ways to improve our affiliate organizations so that we can focus more time on doing the really important work of serving our members. We already have a pretty great annual conference, but what more could WAESOL do for you?

I am very grateful for the opportunity to attend TESOL this year, especially since it was in sunny and warm Texas! I came home from Dallas with a renewed passion for the work that we're doing at WAESOL, and excited about becoming your President next year!

Embracing & Enhancing Multi-dimensional Learning 2013 WAESOL Conference

The WAESOL (Washington Association for the Education of Speakers of Other Languages) conference planning committee invites you to submit a proposal to present at our 2013 WAESOL conference scheduled for Saturday, October 19, 2013 at Highline Community College in Des Moines, WA. This year's conference theme is "Embracing & Enhancing Multi-dimensional Learning."

This year in addition to the regular workshops and presentations, the conference will feature professional development Pre-Conference Workshops. These half-day workshops are designed to provide opportunities to discuss and examine relevant topics and important issues in greater depth. They will take place on Friday, October 18 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Highline Community College. Regular conference sessions will follow on Saturday, October 19.

Presentation proposals related to any aspect of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) are encouraged.

To submit a proposal, please visit our web site and click on the "Call for Proposals" link. <http://waesol.org> We hope to see you at the 2013 WAESOL Conference in October.

What's academic language got to do with it?

Washington Association for Bilingual Education (WABE) 2013 Conference Report

By Teresita Tobón

This year, more than 800 teachers had the opportunity to participate at the WABE's conference. It took place on April 19th and 20th at the Yakima Convention Center having three wonderful keynote speakers: Martha Castellón, Dr.

Gisela Ernst-Slavit, Susana Dutro and more than 80 breakout sessions.



Great things are happening in education at our state, and our ELL population is an important part of this process. WABE is working with the Migrant and Bilingual Education Programs to educate teachers. For example, everyone had the opportunity to learn more about the connection between our ELP (English Language Proficiency) standards, the Common Core Standards in our state, and their alignment to the new English proficiency test currently developing "ELPA21" and its implication to teaching. Also, people had the chance to learn more about the Dual Language Special Interest Group (SIG).

That was created in conjunction with the Washington Association For Language Teaching (WFLT) and OSPI (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction) among others to promote second language acquisition while building first language strengths.

Every year, when I come to WABE, I feel that I am not just going to another conference, but that I am going to a place where I can renew my commitment to help our ELL students to be successful. In a nutshell, this conference was fantastic and it was wonderful to see so many of WAESOL members there. To have access to the handouts from this year's conference go to: <http://wabewa.org/> WABE 2014 will be in Tacoma, WA. April 11th and 12th.



Arabic Rhetoric in Arabic-speaking Student Essays:

Main idea, parallelism, and word repetition

Melissa Van De Wege, M.A., Fulbright Scholar
English Instructor, Qatar University
Doha, Qatar

“For them to know the world and for the world to know them” (Weinzetl, 2012), in 2005 King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia implemented the first scholarship program to send Saudi students to Western countries to earn their degrees. Large influxes of students have traveled to the United States, and many ESL instructors have had an increase of native Arabic-speaking students in their classes. I began to teach these students in the fall of 2011, and since then, I have read many essays written by them, exhibiting features with which I at first was not familiar. The culture of Saudi Arabia is strongly influenced by a poetic oral tradition, and written rhetorical discourse is designed to resemble poetic language. However, English language writing is generally accepted and respected by people all over the world (Abu Rass, 2011), and the people of Saudi Arabia clearly demonstrate a desire to learn Western rhetorical tradition. But in order for that to happen successfully, it is beneficial for Western instructors to learn the Arabic rhetorical tradition as well. In light of this, I began to study the differences between Western and Arabic persuasive writing and made some discoveries about Arabic rhetoric that helped me in understanding the essay writings of my Arabic-speaking students.

After much research and analysis, it became clear that certain rhetorical features needed to be grouped and discussed together so that we may better understand Arabic rhetoric. Soon the writings of many of my Saudi students became clearer to me. I began to understand how the features of Arabic rhetoric that I had read about related to one another and how they were reflected in the overall essay. Thus, my realizations have led me to discuss the following elements of Arabic persuasive essay writing: Main idea, parallelism, and word repetition.

Direct/ Indirect Main Idea

Literature shows that Western and Arabic rhetoric are distinguished in terms of direct and **indirect** communication styles (Zaharna, 1995; Nelson, Al Batal & El Bakary, 2002). In Western writing, a main idea should be conveyed in a direct thesis statement. The thesis is then developed into smaller supporting ideas with examples in the body paragraphs, ending with a concluding paragraph, summarizing the main idea. The paragraph development should relate back to the larger main idea, and each paragraph's idea should lead into the next one's idea (Bennett, 1998; Kaplan, 1966), thus creating a linear structure in which the reader feels a sense of forward movement.

As Western writing is characterized by directness, Arabic writing is characterized by indirectness in which the main

idea is found within the context of the message. In many cultures, conveying a direct main idea, evidenced by a clear thesis statement, is not important. Writing is evaluated for what it does *not* express and for what it leaves up to interpretation by the reader (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999). It is not the responsibility of the writer to explicitly state the main idea (p. 48). Arabic rhetoric, though, tends to place more emphasis on the context of the message than the message itself: "The listener must understand contextual clues in order to grasp the full meaning of the message" (Zaharna, 1995, p. 242).

Ramanathan and Kaplan (1996) point out five Western cultural assumptions that students from many cultures often struggle with in understanding and utilizing. One of the cultural assumptions is that the essay must have an explicit focal point – a clear thesis statement that the reader does not have to attempt to find (p. 25). This concept causes problems for many Saudi students because in many writing classes, a teacher might automatically assume that the "thesis-driven" (p. 25) model is universal (p. 25). However, this is not relevant in Arabic rhetoric, and many Saudi students have trouble understanding and utilizing the explicit thesis-driven strategy. There is a rhetorical structure designed to foster connection with the audience through a poetic message, not tell the audience a direct message, and instructors may not address the differences to the students. Therefore, in an Arabic-speaking student's essay, the main idea may not be conveyed directly in an explicit thesis statement and instead it is found within the body of the message.

Paragraph Transition: Parallelism

A direct main idea lends itself to a certain macro cohesive strategy used in Western writing which "stresses beginnings and ends of events" (Zaharna, 1995, p. 244) and stresses importance on the message conveyed, as opposed to the manner in which it is conveyed. One major point is followed by a second point, a third, and so forth. Ideas are presented sequentially by paragraphs, and they build on one another and all relate back to the main idea (Bennett, 1998; Kaplan, 1966). Paragraphs are often linked together using transition words and phrases, and this is what would be considered a characteristic of a coherent essay by many Western instructors' standards (Hamid Ahmed, 2010). Many agree that this type of cohesion is related to linking whole ideas and paragraphs, whereas on the micro level, it is connecting sentences and phrases (Hamid Ahmed, 2010).

In Western school systems, this model has been established as an indication of clear writing and critical thinking; however, it is actually a rare form of discourse associated primarily with Western culture (Bennett, 1998). As observed by Hamid Ahmed (2010), "A number of research papers from the Arab world have spotlighted students' coherence problems in English writing. For example, Arab students' written texts revealed that repetition, parallelism, sentence length, lack of variation and misuse of certain cohesive devices are major [reasons for] incoherence and textual deviation" (Hamid Ahmed, 2010, p. 212). This occurs with native Arabic-speaking students because they have learned to connect paragraphs together in a different manner. Arabic rhetorical structure is characterized by "repetitive parallels and rhythmic balance" (Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 171). The overall structure of a written message strives for a balanced rhythmic coordination between its parts (Connor & Kaplan, 1987; Flaitz, 2003). This is called **parallelism** (Kaplan, 1966; Connor & Kaplan, 1987).

At the sentence level, parallelism is demonstrated in the linking of parts of sentences by sharing the same grammatical structure between those parts, thus creating a balance. An example of this in English is the parallel structure, *not only/ but also*. What comes after *not only* and *but also* should be phrases of the same grammatical structure to create balance to the message, for example: *I not only like pizza but also enjoy pasta*. What comes after *not only* and *but also* is a present tense verb followed by a noun, creating a balance between the parts of the sentence. At the structural level of an essay written by an Arabic-speaking student, parallelism may be demonstrated in a repeated phrase or clause in the first sentence of each body paragraph. These repeated phrases or clauses may share the same grammatical structure and may also share the exact same words. This is the Arabic rhetorical element of parallelism reflected in an essay, designed to create a poetic balance to the entire message.

Word Repetition

The final element is **repetition of key words** – words relating to the main idea. This brings us full circle back to the main idea. In Arabic rhetoric intentional repetition of words is considered persuasive. The more a word or phrase is repeated, the more important it is. Words relating to the main idea may be heavily repeated in the body of the essay by an Arabic-speaking student, which indicates the principle idea the student wants to convey. However, in Western writing, repeating the same words over and over again is often considered redundant, and instructors stress the importance of *not* repeating words (Johnstone, 1987). Word repetition is used very sparingly in Western rhetoric except in certain specialized forms of discourse like poetry or songs (Johnstone, p. 206; Zaharna, 1995, p. 248). Word repetition in an Arabic-speaking student's essay may be demonstrated throughout the essay, alluding to the main idea.

The culture of Saudi Arabia is ancient and deep and is strongly influenced by a poetic oral tradition. In light of the increase of Saudi students learning English language writing in the United States, it is beneficial for Western ESL and composition instructors to learn the Arabic rhetorical tradition so as to aid them in guiding their Arabic-speaking students in Western rhetorical writing. My hope is that students, scholars, and teachers from Saudi Arabia and the United States alike can benefit from this knowledge so that the students of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia can know the world and the world can know them.

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Exploring Teachers' Use of Comprehension Instruction in EFL Classrooms

Al Tiyyb Al Khaiyali
Washington State University
Pullman, Washington

Reading comprehension occupies an important position in any language and literacy program. It is considered “the essence of reading” (Durkin, 1993). Hence, teaching reading comprehension is considered fundamental to develop reading skill and achieve academic goals, particularly in language learning classrooms. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the place of reading comprehension instruction among English language teachers. The research question for this study was: What is the extent of using reading comprehension instruction in the English language learning classrooms among seventh and eighth grade language teachers?

Literature Review

Traditionally, reading comprehension was seen to be “caught rather than taught” (Pearson, Roehler, Dole, & Duffy, 1992, p.2). Since the 1970s, a considerable amount of research has been done to conceptualize new assumptions towards reading comprehension instruction. These assumptions indicated that reading comprehension should be taught (Flood, Lapp, & Fisher, 2003), reading comprehension instruction was neglected (Durkin, 1978), and reading comprehension instruction was not merely based on vocabulary and readers' schemata (Pressley, 2000); rather it was based on a combination of strategies that are triggered by readers' cognitive, behavioral, and metacognitive knowledge. Therefore, subsequent research called for increasing explicit reading comprehension instruction, investigating what good and skillful readers do, and teaching strategies used by skillful readers to less skillful readers (Durkin, 1993; Flood, Lapp, & Fisher, 2003; Pressley et al, 1998). In spite of these findings, reading comprehension instruction was still not receiving the required attention and more research was still needed to track these findings and suggest further implications to improve explicit comprehension instruction (Durkin, 1993), particularly in English language learning classrooms.

Theoretical Framework

The study's theoretical framework was based on Tindall's (2010) model for reading comprehension instruction in language learning classrooms. The major elements of this model were teachers' explicit comprehension instruction pre-reading, during reading, and after reading. This model provided straightforward guidelines in determining the extent to which teachers use explicit reading comprehension instruction in their classrooms.

Methodology

Two English languages teachers (female/male), ages 27-28 were involved in this study. Jamila (pseudonym) was teaching a seventh grade classroom and Ahmad (pseudonym) was teaching an eighth grade classroom. Both teachers were enrolled in the TESOL graduate program in University of Colorado at Boulder. This study took place at the Libyan School in Colorado, Denver. Only two classrooms (15 students each) were involved in this study. Students in both classes were Libyan students who were taught English as a second language.

Once the teachers agreed to participate in the study they signed the consent form indicating that they would be observed for two weeks in their regular English language classrooms. The teachers were observed for eight English language classes in two weeks, 45 minutes each class. My role in this study was a participant-observer. Therefore, I created a rapport relationship with both teachers before I observed them to provide them with confidence while they teach (Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). Then, I observed the classes and recorded all notes that were relevant to comprehension instruction. This study explored the amounts of reading comprehension instruction in ESL classroom using observation method.

All observation notes were read, rewritten, and reorganized at the beginning of the analysis (Maxwell, 2013). Then, the observation notes were coded manually and classified into categories and then smaller chunks of themes. These themes included reading comprehension instructions practices according to three levels: pre-reading instruction, during reading instruction, and after reading instruction.

Results

General instructional results: Classroom teacher-centered instruction dominated both classrooms. Moreover, both teachers used similar instructional practices. In their instructions, both teachers introduced new words at the beginning of their English language classes. Then, they read aloud the text and ask a student or two to reread it out loud. Students had a chance to discuss the main idea of the text after they finished reading it aloud. Vocabulary instruction received the highest attention amongst both teachers.

Reading comprehension instructional results: Throughout the observation processes, Ahmad provided specific instructions to activate the students' prior knowledge in only one class period. Ahmad asked the class what "Sinbad" in the title of a reading passage reminded them of. Most students remembered Sinbad the cartoon legend who used to have adventures around the world. On the other hand, Jamila triggered her students' prior knowledge on two occasions over the two weeks. Jamila asked general questions about the readings in order to encourage students use their prior knowledge. These included questions such as; "Have you ever played soccer?", "Can you tell me when and where you watched soccer?", and "What do you like about soccer?" to introduce a passage about soccer. The rates of the teachers' explicit reading comprehension instruction in every English language class showed that 3% was devoted to pre-reading comprehension instruction. Only 2% was dedicated to teach comprehension during reading. Finally, 4% of the total English language class was dedicated to after-reading comprehension instruction. The English language instruction broke down into the following percentages: 27% vocabulary, 25% grammar, 18% writing, 11% listening, 10% speaking, and 9% reading comprehension.

Conclusions, Limitations and Implications

The findings showed that reading comprehension instruction was not given much time overall despite of its importance in learners' reading and academic achievements. These findings are generally consistent with results reported in previous observational studies (Durkin, 1978, Pressley et al, 1998, Ness, 2011). Nevertheless, these results are limited as to generalizability because of the small sample size. Therefore, more research might be need with larger sample for longer time. In spite of these limitations, the results of this study could contribute to the body of research on comprehension instruction in English language learning classrooms.

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Interest is the Best Teacher

Knowledge has been gained from applying Rogers' theories in English education

Teresa Kuwamura, PhD
 English Language and Culture, Konan Women's University,
 Kobe, Japan

Basic Requirements in Education

When I first started to teach English in Japan, I taught two senior English classes at Osaka Sangyo University (OSU). I, who was born in China and studied there and in other places, such as Singapore, Austria, and the U.S., had heard that many college students in Japan would relax their efforts once they enrolled colleges after spending years preparing for and passing the harsh college entrance examinations. Most of the students considered studying a foreign language useless and had little motivation to learn if they had no plan to study abroad or find a job that requires a foreign language. In particular, the senior students tended to be more unmotivated and passive since they were already senior and “school would let them graduate anyway.”

However, learning English requires students to take initiative and proactively participate in the whole process. Student initiative and participation are keys to successfully gaining English language proficiency. The primary responsibility of the teacher in English education is to encourage students to actively learn instead of passively being taught. The teacher can help, advise and teach, but only the learner can learn (Johnson & Morrow 1981, p.81). The teacher serves as the facilitator. The effectiveness of English education must be measured by how much the students have learnt.

Thus, applying Rogers' “student-centered education” helps teachers to fulfill their role as facilitator. Rogers' student-centered basic concepts are based on the premise that human nature is positive and learning is one of the inherent pathways for self-realization. According to the concept of “student-centered education,” there are two basic points while teaching English. The first is to respect the students. A teacher should trust that students are fully capable of learning by themselves and realizing their own potential. The absence of interest and motivation in learning English at the beginning is temporary and can be overcome. The second is to regard the students as the main subject in the student-centered learning process and teaching activities.

Since the primary goal is to stimulate students' initiatives and enthusiasm, the teacher's job is to create all the right conditions and opportunities for students to facilitate their change. As Rogers said, the teachers' “basic reliance

would be upon the self-actualizing tendency in his students” (Rogers 1961/1995, p.289). The hypothesis established by Rogers is that “the students who are in real contact with life problems wish to learn, want to grow, seek to find out, hope to master, desire to create” (Ibid, p.289). Rogers called this way of learning “significant learning” (Rogers 1969, p.69). In this manner, students would be self-motivated and self-responsible to learn (Maslow 1954/1987). Therefore, emphasizing student-centered education should stimulate the enthusiasm from the learner. Moreover, student-centered is respectful to the students. It shows understanding of students, and pays attention to students’ emotional well-being, needs, and aspirations. It creates a free, relaxed, harmonious, and happy learning atmosphere. In such an environment, students would be more likely to show their initiative and enthusiasm for learning.

According to research by brain scientists, there is a “pleasure” and “pain” central nerve in hypothalamus and cerebral limbic system of human cerebrum. If the “pleasure” central nerve is stimulated, the person will do things with enjoyment and never feel bored. Albert Einstein said, “Interest is the best teacher.” It has been proven that once the interest of learning foreign language is activated, all mental activities are at their best. The sensory system is more sensitive and focused, perception is clearer and sharper, memory is enhanced by more activity, and thus, language practice would be more proactive. Research regarding learning interest has discovered that when the learners have personal interest in an intellectual area, they tend to invest more time and have more durable attention. Therefore, the information process is more comprehensive (Alexander et al.1994; Krapp et. al. 1992; Schiefele, 1991; Brophy 1998). Regarding the practice of English education, Davies and Pearse stated that the basic requirement in English education is to draw students’ attention and stimulate their interest and active participation with enthusiasm. It is a great start if students have spontaneous focus. If students show obvious interest, eagerly listen and follow their teacher’s instructions, ask and answer questions using English, successful English education is in progress (Davies & Pearse 2000, p.20).

Teaching Material and Attractive Topics & Creating Active Classroom Atmosphere

So how do teachers stimulate students’ interest in learning? According to Rogers’ thoughts, the contents and topics of English teaching materials should correspond to students’ self-realizing tendency and be associated with students’ life goals. Instruction should be closely tied to students’ life experience and real life practice. It should be related to students’ “problems facing in real life” and satisfy students learning aspirations and psychological needs. In this way, students’ learning interest can be stimulated effectively (Rogers 1961/1995, p.286). The content of teaching materials and teaching topics that tie to students’ real life experience are particular important. The more teaching is related to “real problems”, the higher the stimulation of student interest. Good teaching topics I have come up with so far are about: future career, social values, love and affection, study experience, personal hobbies, issues related students’ majors, college life, family life, relationship between students, and daily life experience including cars, computers, and the Internet. Choosing those topics would stimulate students’ English learning interests.

To stimulate students’ learning interest, besides offering interesting teaching materials and topics, the most important thing is to create an active classroom atmosphere. For students in non-English speaking countries, the classroom is the main venue to learn and practice foreign language and exchange ideas. Because of this, the main task in foreign language education is to stimulate students to actively participate with full effort, so that students are able to obtain the greatest possible gain in the limited time available. Furthermore, the stimulated interests from the class can be maintained and students may continue their study after class. Rogers has repetitively emphasized creating an active atmosphere in the classroom when explaining his teaching and learning viewpoints. He mentioned, “I believe it would be quite clear from my description of therapy that an overall implication for education would be that the task of the teacher is to create a facilitating classroom climate in which significant learning can take place” (Rogers 1961/1995, p.287).

Based on Rogers’ teaching practice, proposition, and referring to the other teachers’ and my own experience, in order to create active classroom atmosphere, teacher should apply diversified teaching methods according to the content of

the textbooks and education topics first. Whichever teaching method is used, the most important is to hold one basic principle, to start from stimulating students' active participation, trigger interaction, bilateral and multilateral dialog, and create a lively atmosphere for dialog between teachers and students. This is the "dialog-centered education" as it has often been mentioned. Research and practice in foreign language education has proven one-way and delivery-centered teaching methods should be replaced by bilateral and multilateral dialog-centered education. Professor Sato Manabu at Tokyo University explained that an analogy of learning is the trip from the known world to an unknown world. In this journey, we encounter and talk to a new world, meet new people, and meet our new selves. Therefore, learning practice is a dialog practice. Learning not only leads us from an isolated world to a world full with conversation, but also through dialog practice, learning communities become possible (Zhong 2006, p.81). Education in the classroom, especially English education has strong practicality that needs to focus on dialog practice and cooperation practice to help students fully participate the learning journey and be successful.

Experiencing the Joy of Success & Teacher's Personal Charms

Praise and encouragement is also a very important method to stimulate students' learning interest. When students make progress and achieve certain goals, the teacher should give students praise and encouragement to let the students experience pleasure from the success.

When Rogers expounded his theory of Personality Self-development, he stressed unconditional positive regard such as warmth, enjoyment, respect, sympathy, recognition, caressing, care, and praise. At the same time, even when self-fulfillment is not ideal, unconditional positive regard such as positive care should be used to make the learner feel respected and understood in order to facilitate self-development (Rogers 1959, p.104). In his Peak Experience theory, A. H. Maslow emphasized the impact to self-development by experiencing success during the process of growth. Maslow considers self-realization as a continuous progress in development. Each step of self-realization brings a peak experience. It seems to be a kind of induction that leads people to be more positively pursuing the value of self-realization and beyond the value of selfness and reach self-perfection (Maslow 1964, 1962/1968).

How does the teacher make an effective use of praise and encouragement? An American educator expert, Jeremy Brophy, expressed his ideas in summarizing his teaching experience (Brophy 1998, p.54). According to Brophy's ideas and her personal experience, I have come up with six important guidelines. First is to be sincere and show the teacher cares about the students' progress and achievement from the bottom of the heart. Second, the teacher should be clearly targeted and point out the specific and unique parts of students' achievement. Third, praise students by mentioning his or her previous achievements as well to help the student realize more achievements can be obtained in the future. Fourth, praise and encouragement should be focused on students' effort but not on students' ability; pay attention to if students have tried hard and if their level of effort has increased or not. This makes students realize their teachers appreciate their efforts. Fifth, convey the information that the reason students are praised and encouraged is to stimulate their interest in learning. The achievements through studying hard promote interest in learning itself to the students. Sixth is to understand different psychological personalities and give praise and encouragement accordingly. For example, the older students are not concerned too much with verbal praise and encouragement from the teacher, but are more interested in acceptance and appreciation of the others. Teachers can phrase praise for these students as "... has told me that..."

Additionally, a teacher's personal charm is a direct factor that can stimulate students' learning interest. A teacher should use his or her personal charm as an important means to attract students' attention and inspire students to learn. What kind of personal charms should a teacher possess? Rodgers considers that teachers have to have three characteristics. The first is congruence genuineness that means the relationship between teachers and students should be genuine, treating students with sincerity and effectiveness, and never be insincere and wearing a mask. The second is unconditional positive regard. This means the care from the teacher to his or her students is unconditional and from bottom of the heart. Teachers with this characteristic not only share the joy of students' success, but also

give comfort to the students who are scared by new obstacles and showing hesitation. The third is sympathy, which means understanding the real situation. Teachers should be familiar with each student's quality, living environment, life experience, and character tendencies. When observing students, the teacher should put himself or herself in the same situation as the student to reach a common understanding. This kind of understanding is an emotion which can transport teachers into the student's inner world. Students would have a full trust in his or her teacher and understand his or her own advantages and disadvantages. So students would share their emotions (Rogers 1969, pp.115-119). Teachers must have those three student-centered characteristics.

Conclusion

From the suggestion to be aware of Rogers when teaching English, I carefully examined his "student-centered education" and put it into practice. I conducted an anonymous survey of seniors in OSU in my classes in 2011. I got 72 valid responses. When I asked students in the second class whether they wanted to make a presentation in English, only 5 students of them wanted to do so. However, when I asked it in the last class all but three, 67 students of them wanted to do it.

Rogers gave out various suggestions, utilizing teaching materials that meet students' life experience, stimulating students' interests in learning, creating active classroom atmosphere with "dialog-centered education," rewarding with "positive regard," and using "teacher's charm." These are all just for one purpose, to motivate students to learn. It would be meaningless if they are not used as the whole package. On the other hand, the individuality of different students' needs to be considered in applying Rogers' non-directive education style to teaching.

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Postcards: The context-realia connection

Holly Shelton, English Language Fellow
Miras University
Shymkent, Kazakhstan

“Don’t come to Washington. Washington will come to you!” Such was the popular anecdote after the May 18, 1980 eruption of Mt. St. Helens when the cloud of ash and dust exploded forth with such force that it circled the globe three times. A native of Washington myself, I have not yet circled the globe three times, but I have nevertheless brought Washington with me to my EFL students in contexts from South America to Central Asia.

While currently serving as an English Language Fellow at Miras University in southern Kazakhstan, I have created lessons to help current students learn more about where I come from. This is after providing answers such as “No, it is not near New York or California, and no, I do not usually see the president or White House.” This lesson is well-suited for US-based ESL classes as well. The main materials necessary are just an interesting variety of postcards. Depending on the pictures and information in the postcards available, a relevant BINGO sheet of questions can be devised.

I start by randomly passing out a postcard to each student to complete a timed free-write. I tell the students to write about everything they can see in the picture for two minutes. It not only helps them practice producing language, but it also lets them closely scrutinize a card and build up background knowledge about a certain topic or feature of Washington. For example, it might be a bridge over the Columbia River in the Tri-Cities, the ancient pictographs in Vantage, a scenic view of Mount Adams in the summer, the Balloon Stampede in Walla Walla, or a map of Lewis and Clarke’s journey through the Pacific Northwest. For Washington-based students who are not yet familiar with Washington State, it is a great way to discover how interesting their new home can be and build up their understanding of the environment and culture around them.

After the two minutes are up, I give each student a BINGO sheet. They should look through the questions to find the ones they are able to answer with the information from their own postcard and fill in those squares. At this point, I point out the small section of information describing the picture on the back side of the post card. This step ensures that students have previewed the questions and can focus their requests for information later. It also allows them to complete at least one box as a demonstration to prepare them for participation when the time comes to interact with their classmates.

Once the students have filled in the information that they know, I tell them that their classmates have the information to complete the rest of the boxes. I originally conducted this activity as a race to increase student motivation through competition, but I discovered that most students are actually more naturally drawn to collaborative work in this situation. Students begin asking where the post card for a specific box is from students who have it completed or suggesting that people talk to the correct person in order to find the information they are looking for. Completing the form itself serves as a type of intrinsic motivation, and the communication between students is authentic since they are communicating in a way that accomplishes a purpose.

As for the questions on the BINGO sheet themselves, I use a variety of question types. Some questions request students to find factual information contained in the text of the postcard. It is a good way of practicing reading comprehension as well as the skill of scanning. Some example questions are included below:

In what years did Lewis and Clark travel west?

Where is the balloon stampede?

What is the name of the biggest river in Washington?

Other questions force students to synthesize the information from the text of the card with what they can see in the picture. The following questions are typical of those I ask:

Name two things you can see in the ancient picture writings.

Name three things that Lewis and Clark saw while they traveled.

What can people do on the Columbia River?

Still other questions are subjective and ask students to give their opinion or compare different postcards. This question is by far the least frequent, but it ties the content into students' own experiences. As an alternative, such questions could be used as a follow-up to the activity or closing of the lesson.

Which picture do you like best?

Which information is most surprising?

A four-by-four grid (B-I-N-GO!) is usually better for this activity than the traditional five-by-five, but all things are adaptable to the number of students and postcards at the teacher's disposal. One variation for large class sizes or few postcards would include taping postcards to the wall around the room and allowing students a set amount of time at each station with a partner to gather the information they need and calling out, "Switch!" when the allotted time has passed. Student pairs would then rotate clockwise to the next station to gather information.

My own classroom experience with this activity has been extremely positive. For students actually studying in Washington, it is an excellent way for them to situate themselves geographically and culturally and grow into the identity of a Washington resident and local expert. One of my colleagues at the University of Washington used to send out students on community scavenger hunts to find a list of interesting landmarks within walking distance by asking locals for directions. Alternatively, this postcard activity is a way of sending students on a tour of Washington from within the classroom, or rather expanding the walls of the classroom to encompass the whole of Washington State.

The language input of postcards for students as a form of realia necessarily springs from the Washington context as a source, but they are also able to help students build up their contextual constructs about the place where they live, which in turn serves as a frame for further language development within their everyday experience. This feeds into language development as a process that fits together bit by bit or, as the Washington state motto says, *bye and bye*.

Whodunit?! Teaching Past Modals of Possibility with the Mystery Movie Spoof, "Clue"

Stephanie Solomon, IESL Instructor
IESL Instructor, Seattle Central Community College
Seattle, Washington

How many of us played the Clue game when we were kids? You know, the deduction game where "Colonel Mustard must have killed him in the Library with the Candlestick"? Or, perhaps you have seen the supremely funny movie "Clue" from 1985 starring such very funny comedians of the day, such as Tim Curry, Madeline Kahn, Christopher Lloyd, and Susan Sarandon. In this activity, students will be able to produce the targeted grammar in a free listening and writing assignment using the movie, "Clue", available on Netflix streaming or DVD. The student level is high-intermediate.

Why use the “Clue” movie? For one-thing, it is fast-paced with six people being murdered in a variety of ways. This is important for the activity, although you could probably use any mystery with more than one person dying. For another thing, not only is it a murder mystery, it is also a spoof of the murder mystery genre, which means the stereotypes of the characters are over the top. This can lead to a great pre-discussion of the existence of stereotypes in all cultures, and stereotypes between cultures, as well.

Basically, the outline of the lesson plan is this: I start off with an anticipation exercise, reviewing the form and usage of modals of possibility. Then we go over how we use grammar to discuss degree of certainty that something took place in the past; e.g. Using simple past if we are 100% certain, must + have + past participle if we are about 95%, may/might/could +have + past participle if we are about 50% certain. We also review the negative forms and their usage.

Then, I introduce students to each of the movie characters and the general plot. This is where you can have a great discussion about stereotypes. I have split up the movie into four episodes, picked out vocabulary and idioms to present and created comprehension questions for each episode. There are also a few interesting historical American cultural references as well, such as J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI, and fears of communism at the time, which you may wish to touch upon or comment about in your discussions with the class.

Next, I separate the class into “teams” of at least two people each. Usually, I have teams consisting of three to four students because of my class size. Each team is a color; for example, the “Red Team, the “Green Team”, and so on. The class then watches the episodes in order and takes notes. Then they discuss the comprehension questions in teams. It is very important when you separate the movie into episodes that at least one or more people are mysteriously murdered in each of the first three episodes as this gives students the opportunity to use modals during their discussions. After the teams take notes and discuss the comprehension questions, as a team students make predictions using the targeted grammar about who might have done, must have done, could not have done the murder. These predictions are written down along with that team’s reasoning for the prediction and submitted to the instructor. I use colored cards for each team and they submit each team’s card to a “Clue Box”, which is actually a decorated shoebox repurposed with a slit for the cards in the top.

For each episode’s deductions, the instructor can create a blog and post each team’s predictions, such as, Green Team: “Yvette could have murdered Mr. Boddy because she was all alone in the Billiards room at the time of the murder. She must have gone through the secret passageway behind Mr. Boddy and hit him over the head with the candlestick.” You can do this for each of the episodes except the final one where Mr. Wadsworth, the butler played by a hilarious Tim Curry, exposes what really happened. The team which has the most correct predictions at the end can win some sort of “prize”. What is nice about this movie is that it was made with three different endings, so you can randomly choose which ending you would prefer.

As an extension activity, I have each team go to the blog and rebut the other teams’ deductions, again using the targeted grammar. It can be done as an assignment or possible extra credit. Another extension activity which may also be used as an evaluation of the students’ ability to produce the targeted grammar is that the students may research and present on a mysterious historical factual murder or other crime which has more than one possible suspect. The subject may be either chosen by the student or the instructor. Possible subjects I have used in the past include Lizzie Borden, the Black Dalia, or a famous art theft. I find that students usually have some sort of mystery from their own culture that they would like to report on using the targeted grammar, as well. Feedback has shown that the students love the movie and activities and can produce the targeted grammar at the end of the unit. They are not likely to forget it either!

In memory of my father, Fred Wm Solomon



Helping ESL Beginners to Love Writing

Elena Smith
Washington State University,
Pullman, Washington

The famous saying “Practice makes it perfect” has proven right again in my Reading/Composition Level 1 class this past Spring 1, 2013 session at the Intensive American Language Center, Washington State University. I had nine English learners-beginners, eight from Saudi Arabia and Oman and one from Colombia. All my students had to learn the ABCs of beginners’ Academic writing, but the first week was a complete disaster when I was trying to follow the textbook we were using in this class. I was “preaching in the dessert”—not a word I said or my students saw written in the textbook left any comprehension imprint in their minds.

So I applied a teaching technique I had never used before—systematic, everyday modeling of paragraph writing filled with specific learning outcomes that met the curriculum. Every class I would begin with writing on the board a complete, well-thought-through and prepared-beforehand paragraph, and my students copied it into their notebooks. While writing on the board, we discussed every element that happened to catch our attention: capital letters, commas, periods, sentence structure, paragraph structure, transition words, new vocabulary and spelling. That was an everyday activity for three weeks. To recycle what we covered in class, my students had to type that paragraph on their computers at home, and soon had no problems in formatting their paragraphs correctly.

Of course, at the beginning, there was a lot of student resistance to the repetitive nature of this activity. But I consistently used the activity daily. Many of my paragraphs matched the themes in the textbook, which I gradually incorporated in class activities. I also incorporated interesting information about life and culture in the U.S. and some of my personal stories, which are of high interest to my students. They learned a lot about the world geography when we wrote about my vacation trips to different places, and they learned about customs, holidays and food in different countries and the U.S. We recycled the vocabulary we had learned and added several new words each day.

In this class, we also had to practice reading skills, and we used our paragraphs for that, too. After a paragraph was finished and edited, we read it out loud together, working on stress patterns, pauses, thought groups, pronunciation and intonation. Every student was 100% involved and worked hard for two hours each class without complaining or being bored.

By week four, my class enthusiastically anticipated writing a new paragraph every day. They guided me in every rule before I even began to write a new sentence saying, “Teacher, put a period here as it’s the end of a sentence....or Teacher, let’s write “for example” here...” Soon, my students became teachers of paragraph writing from their seats. When I finally reached the point where I wanted to begin class with a different activity, the students were disappointed as they really wanted to write first. They actually loved writing! I was please to find that this method had so many benefits for low level writers. While this technique may be familiar, if you have not tried it before, I would encourage you to do so.





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