On June 6-7, 2011, 2 representatives from WAESOL, Naomi Elliott and Jodi Ritter, joined over 40 other TESOL members representing over 25 U.S. based affiliates in Washington, DC for TESOL Advocacy Day 2011. This year was the sixth consecutive year for TESOL Advocacy Day, and featured new format, along with an opportunity for any TESOL member to participate. The event was expanded to feature a full day of issue briefings and activities around education legislation and advocacy, followed by a full day of visits to Congressional offices on Capitol Hill. The goals of Advocacy Day were not only to lobby on key issues for TESOL, but also to provide an interactive learning experience for affiliate representatives on elements of advocacy. By the end of the event, TESOL members had visited the offices of more than 100 Representatives and Senators.

Responding to recent action in Congress and from the White House, TESOL Advocacy Day 2011 was focused on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), currently revised as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). To maximize the impact of TESOL Advocacy Day, key members of Congress serving on the education and appropriations committees in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives were identified for meetings. This year, Naomi Elliott and Jodi Ritter met with staff from the offices of Senator Murray, Senator Cantwell, Representative Inslee, Representative Reichert, and Representative Dicks, to discuss TESOL’s recommendations for ESEA reauthorization and the impact of the current law upon English language learners in Washington State.

To fully prepare for Advocacy Day, each affiliate representative was required to do several things in advance. For example, participants had to set up their own individual meetings with their Congressional representatives. To assist with this, TESOL provided directions and guidance, as well as the list of specific representatives and senators to contact.

Participants were also sent talking points and background information on ESEA reauthorization so that they could begin to familiarize themselves with the issues in advance. To help make their Congressional meetings more effective, participants were also encouraged to find examples from their own programs to illustrate the talking points. The recommendations for the Reauthorization of ESEA, outlined by OSPI, were especially helpful to highlight during the discussions.

TESOL Advocacy Day commenced with a welcome from TESOL Past President Brock Brady, and a welcome from TESOL Executive Director Rosa Aronson. The event was led by John Segota, Director of Advocacy, Standards, and Professional Relations, and Ellen Fern of Washington Partners, LLC, TESOL’s legislative consultants. The first day featured a briefing
from Congressional staff to present the “view from the Capitol Hill” on ESEA reauthorization and the key issues under debate, as well as a similar briefing with representatives from the National Education Association, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. In addition, Dr. Rosalinda Barrera, Assistant Deputy Secretary and Director of the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) at the US Department of Education, provided an update from OELA and discussed the Obama Administration’s proposal for reauthorizing ESEA.

Following these briefings, a series of activities were held to review aspects of the legislative process as well as how to prepare for meetings with members of Congress. Participants had the opportunity to role play as members of Congress in a mock hearing to discuss a piece of legislation, as well to have a mock debate on the floor of Congress to try and pass legislation. Participants were also provided key information to prepare for their meetings and given the opportunity to plan for their meetings. The purpose of these briefings and activities was to help the participants practice and prepare for their meeting on Capitol Hill that afternoon.

On June 7, participants went to Capitol Hill to have meetings with members of Congress and staff. Naomi and Jodi met with

![Photo of Jodi Ritter & Naomi Elliott, with Sarah Bolton (Legislative Assistant for Senator Patty Murray)](image)

staff members from 2 of the Senator’s offices and 3 of the Representative’s offices. We were overwhelmed by the reception; everyone seemed interested and engaged in our conversations. The staff members really wanted to learn more about ELL and what that looked like in Washington State, district to district, school to school. They also enjoyed hearing about community and parental involvement in the schools. The staffers were inquisitive and very responsive to our concerns and talking points. They seemed especially interested in hearing some of the challenges we face as ELL educators, including issues surrounding graduation of ELL students and teacher preparedness and training in the area of ELL.

At the end of the day, the participants shared their experiences and what they learned over dinner. It was interesting to hear what other people experienced on their visit. It was amazing to hear that many of the advocates heard that they were the first ELL teacher the staffer or member of Congress had ever met. Many of the advocates reported having very engaging conversations and felt as though their voice was heard. Overall, all of the participants agreed this event was a very positive experience for them and for TESOL.
Additional information about TESOL Advocacy Day will be available on the TESOL web site at http://www.tesol.org. If you are interested in learning more about your Congressional representatives, and the legislative issues TESOL is tracking, go to the TESOL U.S. Advocacy Action Center at http://capwiz.com/tesol.

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Pearson Longman Advertisement

Friday, July 1, 2011
* Polysemy and Ambiguity in the English Verb, To Have

Friday, July 1, 2011
The English verb, HAVE, is an enigma to many Japanese people. Look it up in your dictionary and check how many meanings are listed for HAVE. We sometimes wonder how many multilingual writers can effectively use it to express nuances of meaning inherent in the verb. George Otte and Rebecca Williams Mlynarczyk (2010) remind us that attitudes toward error are changing, and we are more concerned with “the potential efficacy that research on error might hold for teaching, and especially for ways teachers might address error” (p. 128). Likewise, Smagorinsky and colleagues (2011) emphasize learners’ needs for context and scaffolding provided in a social setting. In this short article, we will discuss the difficulty of polysemous expressions incorporating various forms of HAVE. Like Nerlicha and Clarkea (2001), we agree that “[c]ontrary to traditional research into polysemy and ambiguity…polysemy is neither just a phenomenon of the dictionary, nor a purely cognitive phenomenon, but that its exploitation in everyday discourse has important communicational and pragmatic functions” (p. 1). It is everyday discourse that is our focus here, and we will provide a variety of sentences that illustrate the many uses of the verb, HAVE, closely examining one of the more difficult forms that does not transfer directly from Japanese to English—the suffering passive—while reviewing other forms and functions needed by Japanese speakers of American English.

First, we recommend that teachers of multilingual writers address issues of context and ask writers to imagine a context in which a particular use of the verb HAVE might appear, as we will demonstrate here. We ask teachers to help writers consider the pragmatic functions as well as the socio-cultural issues that may be transferred from the first language through an appropriate form in the target language (TL)—in this case, American English. For example, when our Japanese writers compose this sentence, “Suzuki’s father was died,” we may think that we have to review the use of the passive voice, pointing to that section of Betty Azar’s grammar book. But ESL teachers who have not studied Japanese may not know that in Japanese, some intransitive verbs may be made passive to show suffering—in the case above, we feel the suffering of Suzuki by casting this sentence in the passive voice. In Japanese, we call this the suffering passive, though in English “die” is an intransitive verb, and it cannot be made passive for any reason. What we will explore here is whether we have anything similar in English, whether in some cases the causative can be used to express the suffering of someone like Suzuki.

Tomoaki Seino and Shin Tanaka (2006) address this form and function in their article, “The ‘passive’ voice in Japanese and German: Argument reduction versus argument extension:”

son-NOM die-PAST

‘The son died.’

b. Sono hahaoya-wa musuko-nishin-are-ta.

the mother-TOP son-by die-PASS-PAST

‘Unfortunately for the mother, the son died.’

These sentences show that the ‘experiencer’ suffers damage through the occurrence of an event. Therefore, they are often called adversative passive sentences. Indirect passive sentences may relate to transitive active counterparts just as well as to intransitive active counterparts. (2006, p. 5).

This adversative or suffering passive in Japanese will be discussed after a brief overview of what most Japanese are taught about the verb, HAVE.

Most people think that HAVE broadly means possess. Therefore, it is not difficult for Japanese to understand these two sentences:

(1). I have two brothers.

(2). Jill has a nice BMW.

HAVE in the above sentences does mean possess, though one does not really possess siblings as one possesses a car. The objects are inalienable and alienable, respectively. “Inalienable nouns typically refer to ‘permanent’ features such as body parts and kinship relations, and are accompanied in many of the world’s languages by a variety of specific morphological and syntactic features which are not used with nouns referring to non-permanent (alienable) phenomena” (Cooper, 2002, web).

(3). We have a staff meeting this afternoon.

This sentence is also understandable from the perspective of possession, even if the object is an event. The following is different, however:

(4). John has a hat on his head. (Ritter and Rosen, 1997, p. 308)

This one is the locational use of HAVE. Consider the following sentences:

(5). We have lived in Washington State for five years.

(6). I had my brother clean my room. (subject + have + complement + verb in simple form + complement)
(7). I had my car stolen.

We know the function of HAVE as an auxiliary verb in this sentence; thus, (5) is understandable. (6) means that the subject asked or ordered his/her brother to clean the subject’s room, and intermediate learners recognize this use of HAVE as the causative. The Japanese language has the causative verb, but it does not require a verb like HAVE to make a causative sentence. Japanese takes an inflectional morpheme to express the causative (食べる taberu “to eat” → tabesaseru “to make to eat, to feed”).

Finally, (7) is tricky for Japanese students because there are two possible meanings. One is that the subject asked someone to cause the event, and that person is the causer. The other is that the subject had an unfortunate event in that his/her car was stolen, and the subject is the experiencer. This distinction is taught in Japan, so some Japanese may know the sentence has two meanings, but using it correctly is another matter. What they may not realize is that this is the closest we have in English to the adversative passive, but we express it, at least colloquially, as a causative.

Here is a possible conversation at the local post office in a small town in the Pacific Northwest: “January was a really hard month for Aunt Janine. First, she had her house broken into on New Year’s Eve. Then, she had her car vandalized. And when the sub-zero weather came, she had her pipes break, and her whole house was flooded. To add insult to injury, she had a tree fall down on her garage during a windstorm. Thank heaven she has good insurance.” Like Nerlich and Clarkea (2010), we argue “that ambiguity should not only be studied in vitro, as in…approaches using de-contextualized samples, but that it should be analysed in vivo” (p. 128). In other words, we are urging teachers to create a scenario such as the one we wrote about Aunt Janine to teach the vernacular English equivalent of the Japanese “suffering passive” one might hear in rural Washington, Montana, or Idaho. As we have already explained briefly, the Japanese suffering passive expresses someone’s misfortune—both semantically and socio-culturally. A rancher might say to his insurance agent or friend, “I had my garage broken into and my car stolen last night.” Clearly, the rancher is the “experiencer,” not the “causer.” Most Americans would not conclude that he committed insurance fraud and actually had someone break into the garage and steal the car.

Now consider the following sentences:

(8) I had my baby kissed by the President. (Brugman, 1988, p. 1)

In this case, the parent is neither “causer” nor “experiencer” in the sense of the “experiencer” in the suffering passive. Rather, having one’s baby kissed by the President is normally regarded as a good thing—hence this is considered the benefactive form of the causative. In Japanese, the benefactive is marked with a verb, ageru, as noted by Eunjeong Oh and Maria Luisa Zubizarreta (2005). The following is a common expression in Japanese conversation:

(9) Haha-ga tomodati-no Yamada-kun-ni susi-o ageta.

Mother-NOM friend-GEN Yamada-DAT sushi-ACC gave
‘My mother gave my friend Yamada sushi.’

(Tsujimura, 1996: 336-337, ex. 93, as cited in Oh & Zubizarreta)

Historically, Ritter and Rosen (1993, 1997) argued that HAVE has no specific meaning, especially in the absence of a context, though others insist that it broadly means to possess something. Here we have given examples in which possession is not the meaning in many contexts, and we recommend that teachers point this out to Japanese students.

Polysemous words like HAVE, MAKE, KEEP, TAKE, BRING and GET are very important because they are commonly used (Lee, 1990) and easily understood by native speakers. In conversation, Americans can ‘disambiguate’ polysemous words with little or no effort because they have a repertory of meanings that depend on the syntactic structure and the context. In some cases, speakers may use purposive ambiguity to connect with interlocutors and reinforce the bond they have. It behooves us to know something of our students’ languages and to teach form and function as well as pragmatics. Errors in the passive voice often occur because Japanese students are trying to express the suffering passive in English by making intransitive verbs passive to show the misfortune of the experiencer because indirect passives can be formed with both transitive and intransitive verbs in Japanese. Students naturally transfer the Japanese form to express the function in English, but the form does not transfer because only transitive verbs can be made passive in English. Once we make this clear to them, they can consider other ways of expressing misfortune and adversity in English.

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* The Impact of Corrective Feedback on ESL Learners: A Reflective Paper

By: Ibtesam Hussein

Introduction

My first experience teaching writing was not as easy as I thought since I had to employ error correction very often. This is due to the fact that my students were beginners and I needed to build up their skills in writing. However, there were two problems I found when I started teaching. Firstly, I initially observed that I spent too much time on explaining the rules of writing to my students without providing them with the opportunity to be corrected. That is to say, I spent most of the time speaking and my students were just listening to my explanation. As a result, I did not have time for correction. Moreover, since my students were low beginners, they wanted to know the meaning of each word they encountered in reading passages in the textbook. Thus, I spent much time clarifying the meaning of vocabulary. Accordingly, my attention was distracted from correcting my students’ mistakes. For instance, in each of my lesson plans, I was planning to correct every mistake students made. Yet, I found myself correcting just two mistakes out of six or seven mistakes. Secondly, even though I was able to correct those two mistakes, I relied on recasting only to do that. I was not satisfied because I felt that employing other types of correction would enhance my teaching methodology and my students’ learning as
well. In other words, having the option to use more than one kind of feedback would certainly reveal which type assisted my students in reducing their mistakes.

These two problems arose because I was just trying to apply what I used to use in my country, Libya. In fact, in Libya like many other countries, a teacher is the one who must speak in the classroom and the students are just listeners. Thus, I spent much time explaining. In regard to my second problem, I knew that there were several types of feedback, but I did not know which one I had to use with my students.

The negative impact of not correcting students’ mistakes is that students will not figure out their mistakes, and will keep repeating them. Thus, the communication might be hindered due to these mistakes. People, for example, might not understand an utterance like “I read a book”, if it is meant to be past, but mispronounced. Does it mean yesterday, tomorrow, now? There is no marker that may identify the tense of the sentence.

Planning and Methodology

I became more aware about when and how to correct my students’ mistakes since I analyzed my first data collection. For example, my first problem was having my students speak in order for me to recognize the type of mistakes they made. Consequently, I worked on finding strategies to enable them to communicate either as a group or in pairs. The technique I tried with my students in the classroom was “asking questions technique” such as: What do you think? What about you? Can you give me an example? and so forth. In this way, I could encourage my students to speak 90% of the time because they were forced to answer these questions and then speak. Making the class student-centered was not my focus area, but utilizing it was very significant, since as a teacher I wanted to listen to my students’ speech to figure out what mistakes students made. The rationale to employ such a technique was that when my partner observed my class, she noticed that I spent much time explaining without pushing my students to communicate. Thus, she recommended that I give my students the chance to express themselves as it is one of the powerful ways to make mistakes and be corrected. Moreover, my second problem was the use of recasting all the time to correct my students’ mistakes. Leowen (2007, P. 3) states that “recasts are so implicit that learners often fail to either notice them or to perceive their corrective intent”. Therefore, I attempted to include other types of feedback such as metalinguistic, repetition, and clarification questions to see whether students could reduce the number of mistakes they made and which type was more helpful for them in terms of reducing their mistakes. Lyster and Ranta (1997 as cited in Dubourdieu, 2010, P. 4) argue that corrective feedback cannot be effective unless it is noticed by students. This is exactly what I was trying to achieve. I wanted to investigate which type of corrective feedback assisted my students make fewer mistakes.

Experiment and Outcomes

In data collection # 3, I noticed that there was a sort of progress in the way I gave feedback. In other words, when I watched myself in data collection #1, I was not satisfied with the much time spent on providing a definition of new vocabulary the students encountered in their textbooks as I mentioned earlier. However, in data collection # 3, I found that I started using more than one type of feedback. For instance, besides utilizing recasting in the class, I started using
metalinguistic, clarification questions and repetition altogether each class. For instance, when I noticed that one of my students repeated the misuse of the present tense marker “s” mistake though he was corrected, I incorporated clarification question and repetition to figure out if that would help him avoiding the misuse of present tense marker. For example, one of my students kept using the present tense without adding “s” in the case of singular such as “he goes to Canada every day”.

Including feedback was as follows:

Student: he go to Canada every day.

Me: What do you mean? (Clarification question)

Student: yes, he go to Canada, I mean… (Here the student was trying to explain what he meant, without noticing that he made mistake)

Me: Go (high intonation) (repetition)

Student: Oh, no. he goes…

It is obvious that the student did not realize his mistake when I used clarification request method. However, when I used repetition method, the student successfully noticed his mistake. In fact, in each class, I was employing two different types of feedback. Finally, I found that it worked with my students, particularly the number of mistakes was reduced to one mistake in each class to no mistakes in another class.

As to the results, I was really satisfied, since it took me a while to realize the significance of employing several types of feedback in the class. Exploring how using various types of error correction made my students’ mistakes less is what I was eager to accomplish throughout the whole semester. Actually, many factors led to that success. One of these factors was selecting my focus area the second week of the semester. That early selection assisted me in having more time to read recent research about error correction. Furthermore, my observers’ recommendations were part of that success. Discussing the topic of error correction in the classroom with my professor and my classmates also enriched my understanding of this area. Needless to say, spending the whole semester focusing on implementing corrective feedback in the classroom with my students and having that experience for the first time was also part of my success; I had to try this and that and read a lot to see which type and strategy worked best for my students.

To sum up, my experience correcting my students’ mistakes was a hard task for me because I had to apply it for the first time. However, it was not impossible to do so. I found that when students were given the opportunity to correct themselves, they did not come back to these mistakes again, which means that it has a greater impact on learning (Leowen, 2007, P.4). To correct my students required me to first understand what error correction meant and then to be able to correct the students’ mistakes.
This is a reflection about a teaching strategy/approach to scaffold struggling readers that is drawn from Carol Lee’s book *Culture, literacy, and learning: Taking bloom in the midst of the whirlwind*. Lee (2007) examined “how competence can be constructed at the nexus of students’ cultural funds of knowledge and the scaffolding a teacher can provide to support both their academic learning and the development of their identities as capable members of an intellectual community” (2007, p. xvii). More specifically, she looked at how teachers can scaffold minority, underachieving students to improve their reading. To do so, in 1993, the researcher developed a 3-year project called the Cultural Modeling at Fairgate High School in Chicago. All of the students at this school were African American from low income backgrounds.

In order to address the needs of struggling readers, Lee introduced an intervention to reorganize the curriculum and the nature of classroom instruction through examining what students know from everyday life. The aim of the Cultural Modeling Project was to scaffold students’ development of strategies for solving complex problems of literary texts via drawing on prior knowledge to solve those new problems. The cultural data sets that Lee used for her Cultural Modeling Project were short stories, poems, novels which are related to the African American community’s issues, as well as rap music, videos, film clips and television programs. She used cultural sets of data from students’ everyday experiences that posed a problem of interpretation similar to what students encounter in schooling curriculum. For instance, some of the units of instruction were designated to teach some tools of literary texts such as symbolism, satire, and irony. She used some complex texts which were not easy to be interpreted by underachieving students. However, in order to scaffold the students during their reading process; reading logs, graphic organizers, and focused questions were used throughout the units. Cultural Modeling research findings from using cultural data sets are: (a) the students model each other how they
reason about the problem in question and the teacher uses metalanguage to solve the problem; (b) the level of reasoning is very high from the beginning of instruction because they already use such reasoning in their everyday lives; and (c) the power relationships between students and the teacher about who can serve as authoritative knowledge sources is restructured from the very beginning of instruction (Lee, 2007, p. 58).

Finally, in order to assess the students’ learning experiences at Fairgate High School. Lee (2007) developed different kinds of assessments such as open-response, historical test, multiple choice test, essay response, and talk aloud protocol. For instance, each quarter students were given a full short story they had not read before, that posed interpretive problems comparable to those with which they had been studying in the instructional unit. Questions moved from the most basic to the most complex. They consisted of one multiple-choice test and one essay response. In addition, each year some students were selected to read short stories that posed interpretive problems similar to those in the instructional unit and engage in talk aloud protocols, i.e. talk aloud about what they understood as they read and what they were doing to make sense of the stories.

Building curriculum and classroom instruction based on cultural strengths students bring from their home and community experiences proved to be effective in engaging students in reading as well as making them able to decode and reason complex readings. Lee (2007) emphasized the fundamental role of the teacher in this process by saying that “the quality of reasoning we see here is the extension of an emergent understanding that is a result of careful scaffolding by the teacher” (p. 66). The researcher shared what she had learned from engaging in this project by saying the following:

There are at least two levels of scaffolding that are needed. First, it requires creating everyday explanations orally and then being able to translate those everyday explanations into a form that people not immediately present can understand. This includes appropriate use of Academic English syntax, vocabulary, and text structure. Second, it requires being able to articulate formal literary explanations and appropriate written versions of them. It has taken me some years to come to this conclusion. (Lee, 2007, p. 150)

I think that this work provides solid information for teachers who are engaged in teaching minority students in particular. However, my only concern about this study or the Cultural Modeling Project is that it cannot be generalized by applying it in heterogeneous classrooms where you have students from different cultures and social backgrounds. It would be very hard for the teacher to incorporate those students’ cultural and everyday experiences in the curriculum or classroom instructions. Nonetheless, redesigning curricular and reorganizing classroom instructions based on student’ cultural practices outside of classrooms proved to be helpful for minority students in scaffolding them during the reading process of challenging literary texts (Lee, 2007).

Reference
I believe that teaching is a lifestyle choice, not a job, and good teaching is a product of experience and ambition. Good teachers are made, not born, and it is firsthand experience, together with the willingness to reflect on and adjust one’s practice in the classroom, that provides teachers with the knowledge and requisite skills to develop the three essential qualities for good language teaching: professionalism, organization, and motivation.

Professionalism, when referring to the profession of teaching, involves much more than having a sound knowledge of the TESOL curriculum and arriving to class on time and prepared to teach the day’s lesson, because we are teaching students, not the curriculum. Students, and especially L2 learners, need teachers who recognize their language and learning needs, who value every student’s ideas, and believe that all students have the potential to learn and progress both academically as well as socially. A professional teacher is therefore committed to creating a safe and inviting, yet challenging, student-centered learning environment that promotes rather than impedes learning. In an effort to define the qualities of a good teacher, Paul Lindsay, author of “Teaching English Worldwide: A New Practical Guide to Teaching English”, compiled a list of student and teacher generated definitions and this list reinforces the idea that both professionalism and organization are essential teacher qualities, according to teachers and students (p. 10-11).

Organization is also a quality of a good teacher because, in order to effectively plan and deliver the scope and sequence (purpose and direction) of the curriculum, teachers must design well-prepared lessons to scaffold learner knowledge and skills $i + 1$ according to identified learner needs and interests. In addition to organized lessons, the learning environment must also be organized to enhance learning. More specifically, although external resources or realia may be introduced periodically and the seating arrangement may change daily or even several times during a lesson in order to create a cooperative or collaborative setting, the classroom itself should be organized so that students and teachers can locate resources or learning tools with ease. Familiarity creates a sense of stability and, thus, safety which is important when creating an environment in which students feel safe enough to take learning risks and make mistakes without the threat of ridicule. Organizing lessons that teach and prepare students for classroom expectations, respect and responsibility, as well as the consequences for disrespectful or irresponsible behaviors are thus requisite to creating an optimal learning environment. Without organization in our high school aged L2 class, learning is not possible since there are 50 or more...
teenage students in the class daily, all second language learners who try to make their own rules if they do not have structure or guidelines to follow. Students have been divided into six groups and given assigned seats, as well as clearly defined expectations so that they are accountable to their group as well as to the classroom rules and procedures.

In addition to professionalism and organization, good teachers are motivated to improve their practice since good teachers motivate and empower their students to strive toward their potential with the goal of creating competent and confident learners. Good teachers therefore routinely reflect on their practice and use student assessments, both formal and informal, to analyze what is working and what is not to ensure that students are interested and motivated to learn and develop the communicative skill and practice needed to increase their English proficiency and appreciation of the English language. Without motivation or a sense of purpose, learners sometimes withdraw or lack the motivation to take risks or make mistakes; mistakes that are necessary since they create opportunities for learning. Since the students in our language institute have been assigned to groups and lesson objectives are known, the quality of learning has improved. In fact, student groups are actually behaving like teams of equals now. They are encouraging all members to get involved and help each other whenever necessary.

Three of the most important qualities that define a good teacher must, in my opinion, include professionalism, organization and motivation. However, it is experience and personal reflection on one’s practice that initially shapes and continually refines good teachers.