Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever been in a language class, as teacher or student, in which a story was used to present a grammar point? Did it work? Why or why not?
2. What are some good sources that ESL teachers can consult for stories that lend themselves to teaching a particular structure?
3. What grammar points other than those presented in this chapter could be effectively presented in stories? (Mention at least three.)

Suggested Activities

1. Develop a story completion or modified cloze exercise that should elicit a particular structure. Ask native speakers of English (if available) to do the exercise and see if they actually use the predicted structure. If you did not get the results you expected, can you explain why?
2. Find a story, joke, or anecdote that lends itself to practice of a particular structure. Share this teaching idea with your colleagues.
3. Make up a story that illustrates a particular structure using four of your students as characters (or four of your friends if you don't currently teach). Tell this story to a colleague and watch her face for reactions as you tell the story. Did the story seem to hold her interest? After you have made your own assessment, ask your colleague what she thinks of this lesson.
4. Think of a favorite short story and retell it to your colleagues in language you think your class would understand, or write the story down and try it out on an actual ESL class. How was the story received? Can you explain why it was or was not well received? If the story was not successful, what changes should be made?

DRAMATIC ACTIVITIES AND ROLEPLAY

In this chapter we will discuss a variety of dramatic techiques, including roleplay. These techniques facilitate a match between structure and social functions and can be used for both communicative and focused grammar practice. Methodologists most frequently propose arguments for using dramatic activities to teach second-language communication skills and phonology; however, we feel that these activities are an effective tool for teaching grammar as well.

Based on her experience with ESL students and her research into the use of drama in language education, psychotherapy, and speech therapy, Stern (1980) hypothesizes that dramatic activities in the classroom can be helpful in several ways. They appear to provide or increase motivation, heighten self-esteem, encourage empathy, and lower sensitivity to rejection. It is interesting to note that these same affective factors are also posited by Schumann (1975) as being critical in second-language acquisition. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that drama is an excellent tool for second-language teaching.

Stern maintains that dramatic activities "are a curative for the frustration and lagging interest which often occur during second-language learning," because they provide a compelling reason to learn.[1] In effect, drama gives a "strong instrumental motivation" for learning the second language. In addition, Stern reports that Heyde (1979) has correlated self-esteem or self-confidence with oral proficiency in a second language. Stern thus concludes that drama "raises self-esteem by demonstrating to second-language learners that they

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[1] See also Hsu (1975); Via (1976); and Moulding (1978).

are indeed capable of expressing themselves in realistic communicative situations" (p. 80). In other words, dramatic activities can increase oral proficiency by increasing self-esteem.

Most second-language learners can recall at least one experience when they were reluctant to use the new language because their command of it was considerably less than native-like. According to Stern, adults are especially inhibited by embarrassment or fear of rejection. However, she points out that "several educators have found that drama creates a non-threatening situation which can reduce and even eliminate sensitivity to rejection" (p. 80).[2]

Stern also addresses the issue of empathy. Following work done by Guiora (1972), Stern thinks of empathy as a relaxation or suspension of psychological mechanisms which separate us from each other. Guiora's research suggests that empathy, or "ego flexibility," is essential to acquiring target-like pronunciation in a second language. Schumann takes this one step further by suggesting that "the natural factors which induce ego flexibility and lower inhibitions are those conditions which make the learner less anxious, make him feel accepted, and make him form positive identification with speakers of the target language" (p. 227). Stern feels that dramatic activities provide the second-language learner with just such "natural factors."

Perhaps the most exciting thing about dramatic activities is a phenomenon consistently observed by UCLA oral communication teachers and ESL students, as well as by others who have viewed videotapes from these classes. We have also observed this phenomenon during student-generated skits such as those described later in this chapter. Stern calls this the "spontaneity state." She reports that it is fairly common in psychodrama and quotes an observation made by John Mann describing it:

> In varying degrees the person in such a state acts as though inspired. He draws on resources which neither he nor his friends may have thought he had at his disposal. (Mann 1970: 7–8)

Stern speculates that perhaps this is what an ESL student observed

[2] See also Hines (1973); Via (1976); Early (1977); Crookall (1978).

when he said of a classmate, "The transformation in his manner was unbelievable. He really 'hammed it up' during the phone conversation and everyone in the audience noticed" (Hinofotis and Bailey 1978: 15).

The experience is really quite remarkable for students and teachers alike, and the fluency and accuracy exhibited are often amazing. Stern hypothesizes that this occurs during the spontaneity state because at that point

> . . . the usual gap between thought and expression which ceases to exist in the native language might cease to exist in the second language as well. Equally relevant to second-language learning is the "free-flowing" creativity and the ability of the person to draw upon heretofore untapped resources. (p. 85)

As Stern says, the communicative strategies students acquire during such a dramatic activity help them to "adjust to becoming a speaker of the second language and tends to become a part of their linguistic repertoire" (p. 86).

SKITS FOR ADVANCED GRAMMAR REVIEW

One of the difficulties with teaching advanced-level students is that although knowledge of certain grammatical structures is assumed, not all of the students truly command them. Moreover, it is often exceedingly difficult for the teacher to determine which structures have been internalized. A dramatic activity is an excellent tool for such an assessment. It can pinpoint which structures need to be reviewed and practiced.

Divide students into small groups of five to ten. Explain to them that they are to write a skit that they will perform for the others. If you are teaching at a small institution, the whole school can be your audience. If you are teaching at a university or adult school, probably only one or two other classes have enough in common with your students to appreciate their production. In any case, providing an audience is the task of the teacher and should be dealt with before beginning the activity. Of course, classmates constitute a sufficient audience if there

are enough of them and there is adequate space to rehearse in without distracting anyone; the students themselves are enough if the production can be videotaped. An audience of some sort is essential since it stimulates motivation and provides a "payoff" for many class sessions of hard work. It is vital to tell students who the audience will consist of before they begin to work on their skit, as the audience will, to some extent, determine the content of the play. A skit prepared for classmates or schoolmates might not be appreciated by family and friends.

The first few sessions should be devoted to brainstorming, in which groups work out their ideas for skits. The teacher should act strictly as a facilitator. Allow students to create something of their own, and intervene only when it becomes apparent that no progress will be made without your assistance. If this happens and a group appears completely blocked, the teacher can suggest possibilities, such as acting out a joke or anecdote; or doing a parody on American life or institutions, such as a beauty contest, popular music, or school life; or being a foreigner in the United States. One of our groups did a mock ballet, all wearing enormous work boots; another did a spoof of the six o'clock news, complete with commercials. At this stage, students will do best if left to their own devices. The best-received skits always seem to be the ones the teacher has influenced least. Let students' imaginations go and avoid censoring. If the content of the skit is such that school administrators or some other group might be embarrassed or offended by it, speak to the potentially offended group to avoid surprises, but defend your students. We know of one class that did a good-natured spoof of one of the school's administrators that was always humorous, but sometimes unflattering. Long before the students had invested a great deal of time in their project, the teacher went to the administrator and explained what the students were planning. Fortunately, the administrator had an exceptional sense of humor and supported dramatic activities in the ESL classroom, as well as the students' creative self-expression. Performed before the entire school, the play was an unqualified hit. Years later, students still remember their lines, and actors and audience alike have characterized the performance as one of the richest and most positive experiences of their time in the United States. If your circumstances do not permit this much freedom, another activity might be more appropriate since freedom of expres-

sion is essential to the success of a student-generated skit.

After one or two planning sessions, it is time for the groups to work on an actual script. Make sure they write down the dialog for their skit and plan the necessary costumes, makeup, and props. It is best to limit these to things that can be brought in from home. Elaborate sets are not necessary, but creative costumes, makeup, and simple props make all the difference in the world. Give students about three sessions to work on this step. During the first two steps, English is being used for communicative purposes, and the teacher should not correct errors or interrupt any creative work. She should make unobtrusive notes on grammatical errors or lexical difficulties and organize minigrammar lessons (see page 145) around those points.

The next step is for the teacher to edit students' work so that the language is idiomatic and grammatically correct. This is an assessment step and is essential, as it provides a clear picture of which structures need review. Recurrent structural errors and poor word choice can provide the basis for grammar lessons during the remainder of the semester, and you will also have a ready-made context (the dramatic activity) for each lesson. Thus, such activities become contexts for grammar lessons that your students will usually remember.

One aspect of editing involves meeting with groups in order to determine what they are trying to say. They might also need a little help with ending a scene, planning a prop, or dressing a character. During all of this interaction, both written and spoken, the teacher should be alert to grammatical errors and take careful notes for future lessons.

Once the script has been completed, type it up and make enough copies for all of the actors and yourself. Students now need to rehearse. One hour of rehearsal daily for three or four weeks is not too much. Concurrently, grammar lessons should be conducted on what the teacher has determined needs review.

When students are rehearsing, the teacher can act as a director by suggesting movements, delivery of lines, etc. He can move around from group to group and spend about ten or fifteen minutes with each one. After a week of rehearsal, the teacher should begin to correct pronunciation. Students should be encouraged to put their lines on tape, and deliver them in front of mirrors, roommates, parents, pets, or

anyone who will listen. They should be allowed to correct each other and be reminded to speak clearly so that they can be understood by their audience.

Have each group rehearse its production numerous times. Every rehearsal reinforces grammar points and helps offset stage fright. As the performance approaches, students suddenly realize they are nervous. Stage fright can be assuaged to a great degree by preparation. If creative control is left to the students, they will not become bored or lose interest.

The next step is a full dress rehearsal in front of a small audience. Perhaps you can recruit a colleague or two who have a free period, a counselor, or a secretary. Guests at dress rehearsals are usually very effusive. Praise and encouragement put students in a positive frame of mind for the final performance.

On the day of the performance, give your students plenty of time to get into costume and prepare. Make sure you have a flash camera and at least one roll of film, and invite the school's officials. Introduce each skit (but let your students take their bows alone) and prepare to experience one of the most rewarding moments in your teaching career. It may seem elaborate, but a dramatic activity is a remarkably effective way to diagnose and remedy problems with grammar that advanced students are supposed to have mastered, but haven't.

TRANSCRIBED CONVERSATIONS

Another ambitious but considerably less involved activity is the use of transcribed conversations that illustrate the grammar point(s) you are teaching, but in the context of natural speech. This is not an activity for diagnosis and remedy such as the one above, but one which leads to communicative practice of a grammar point.

There are a number of sources for transcribed speech, such as *Informal Speech* (Carterette and Jones 1974) or *The White House Transcripts* (1974). You can also enlist the assistance of friends and family and record and transcribe conversations from parties, luncheons, and casual get-togethers. Once you explain that you are interested in natural, everyday speech and that the speakers should *not* try to avoid grammatical lapses or slang, most people will be enthusiastic about giving you a hand. At first, despite your advice to the contrary, they

will probably monitor their speech. After a few minutes, however, most people forget all about the tape recorder, speak naturally, and provide you with the kind of sample you need. What you are interested in obtaining is natural, unmonitored native speech, with whatever errors, false starts, and idiosyncracies that naturally occur. Many ESL professionals believe that such authentic materials are more helpful than the usual contrived ESL texts or dialogs. After you have collected an hour or two of conversation, small exchanges that illustrate the particular grammar structure being taught can be extracted, typed up and duplicated, written on the board or an overhead projector, or given as a dictation. Students then have an authentic dialog to work with.

When working with authentic speech, it is important to make your students aware of register and discrepancies between prescriptive grammar and actual spoken English. The register in a segment from *The White House Transcripts* might be appropriate for addressing the president, but inappropriate for students addressing each other. Likewise, native speakers are likely to say, "There's some papers on the table," but write, *There are some papers on the table*. Authentic language materials are excellent for illustrating this hard-to-grasp point.

The following dialog taken from *The White House Transcripts* can be used to practice hypothetical conditional sentences. The hint of intrigue makes it all the more interesting, though few of us have the opportunity to discuss national security leaks, real or imagined.

P: What would you say if they said, "Did you ever do any wiretapping?" That is a question they will ask. Were you aware of any wiretapping?

E: Yes.

P: You would say, "Yes." Then, "Why did you do it?" You would say it was ordered on a national security basis.

E: National security. We had a series of very serious national security leaks. (p. 236)

When using a dialog from authentic speech, make sure you give students some idea of the context of the dialog. In our example above, one could explain that two public figures are discussing how to justify their illegal wiretapping, which they fear will shortly be uncovered.

The demise of the audio-lingual method is responsible, at least in part, for the decline in the use of the memorized dialog. However,

even though memorizing stilted and contrived lines bores students and is unlikely to lead to the spontaneous generation of language, there is no evidence that repetition with sustained interest and the opportunity for elaboration is harmful; in fact, it has been our experience that this is a very natural part of language learning. Authentic dialogs can be particularly useful in the focused practice phase of a grammar lesson, especially if they are accompanied by the original tapes. (If the originals are unavailable, have native-speaking friends help you make a realistic recording.) Let students work in pairs, and have them try their best to approximate native-speaker pronunciation and intonation. Then let them record their own version of the dialog and compare it to the original. The teacher should walk around the room and listen carefully to each pair's observations. Discuss the differences students have noticed and give individual help as needed. After about twenty minutes, have students change partners, rehearse, and record again. Repeat the procedure. As a final step, have volunteer pairs perform the dialog in front of the class. Then play the original and let the class discuss differences between their classmates' performances and the conversation of the native speakers. This allows students to observe as well as produce the grammatical structures being practiced. Notice that this grammar lesson incorporates writing (if you dictate the dialog), reading, listening, and pronuciation, as well as numerous opportunities for repetition.

The final step is improvisation. This is the communicative practice phase of your lesson. For example, the teacher can tell students to set up a parallel but novel situation. Instead of saying, "What would you do if asked, 'Did you ever do any wiretapping?'" they could fill in their own variations (e.g., "What would you do if . . .?"). These might be humorous, such as "What would you do if Brooke Shields walked in right now?" or serious, such as "What would you do if your girl/boyfriend asked you to marry her/him?" The possibilities are limitless. Let students construct their own responses as well and present their improvisations in front of the class.

ROLEPLAYING

Another dramatic activity with which we are all familiar is roleplay-

ing. According to Rosensweig (1974), "Roleplaying is the dramatization of a real-life situation in which the students assume roles. It . . . presents the students with a problem, but instead of reaching a group concensus in solving it, the students act out their solution" (p. 41). Rosensweig argues that correctly chosen roleplaying scenes expose students to the types of situations they are most likely to encounter inside and outside of the classroom. Feedback from the teacher provides them with the linguistic and cultural awareness needed to function in such situations, thus improving their self-confidence and ability to communicate effectively. It is an excellent technique for communicative practice of structures sensitive to social factors.

The general procedure he suggests is first to hand out the problem to the students and answer questions. Next, introduce and explain the vocabulary and structures necessary for the task. In the following session, divide students into groups, in which they discuss and practice how they are going to do the roleplay. Rosensweig suggests that during this step the teacher allow students to communicate freely and not interrupt for correction. However, the teacher should take notes on grammatical, cultural, and phonological errors for subsequent treatment. Next, the roleplay is performed before the class. After each enactment, the teacher comments on selected minor language errors. Major errors are saved for formal grammar lessons later. After each group has performed, the entire class discusses the questions raised by the situation, such as different interpretations of the scene and culturally or linguistically appropriate responses. The last step is to assign a writing exercise based on the roleplay or a related question. Subsequent grammar lessons based on the errors observed during the exercise should be presented.

Rosensweig suggests that the entire exercise be spread out over three days: introducing the roleplay situation and the initial group work on the first day; more group work, performances, class evaluations, and written work on the second day; and the grammar follow-up on the third. He points out that a classroom activity such as this usually includes work on vocabulary, a culture lesson, written work, and a grammar lesson, as well as work on pronunciation and communicative strategies.

To illustrate the procedure, let us consider the following roleplay

from Rosensweig. The grammar focus is the social use of modals, such as *May I see your driver's license, please?*, *Would you mind stepping over here, please?*, and the logical use of modals, as in *I must have left my insurance verification at home* or *The light might have been yellow.*

Being Stopped by a Police Officer
(*Student Handout*)

I. *Scene*

You are driving down a freeway in California and you are stopped by a police officer. He is completely unsympathetic to the fact that you are a foreign student and your nervousness makes it difficult for you to express yourself. You are not sure why he has stopped you, but you know that he is extremely angry. Your are to work out a short skit with three characters: the driver, a passenger, and the police officer (a fourth character could be another police officer). The presentation should be approximately five minutes.

II. *Vocabulary*

driver's license	ticket
vehicle registration	citation
insurance	to break the law
license plate	to step out of the car
valid until _____	rearview mirror
(date)	

III. *Questions for planning your roleplaying*
- Why has the police officer stopped you?
- How should you react to his anger?
- Is it possible that he had a good reason to stop you?
- What is the best way to deal with the matter?
- What kind of language do you use when you talk to a police officer?
- What are the possible problems you might have (expired license, forgetting an important document, something wrong with the car)?

IV. *Discussion Questions*
- Is bribery a good way to deal with a police officer in the United States? Why or why not?
- What is the role of a police officer in the United States? In your country?

- What is the best way to treat a police officer in the United States?
- If you are stopped by a police officer, how should you act?
- Would you act the same way if you were stopped by a police officer in your country? What would you do differently?

V. *Suggested Topics for Writing*
1. Recount a personal experience that you have had with a police officer in the United States. (This is particularly suited for practicing the past tense and the narrative mode.)
2. Compare and contrast the role of a police officer in the United States with the role of a police officer in your country. (This would elicit the present tense, expository mode.)

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have discussed dramatization, a technique that is particularly appropriate for teaching grammatical structures that are sensitive to social factors. We have also proposed this technique for pin-pointing grammatical structures which should have been mastered by high-intermediate and advanced students, but were not. Our resources have included roleplays, dialogs, transcribed conversations, and skits. In addition to facilitating a match between structure and social factors and diagnosing gaps in grammatical knowledge, these activities provide meaningful contexts for integrating writing, reading, pronunciation, listening, and grammar. They also enable students to operate spontaneously with the language, as well as experience increased empathy, heightened self-esteem and motivation, and lowered sensitivity to rejection, thus facilitating second-language acquisition. Finally, dramatic activities, if properly conducted, provide teachers with delightful lessons and provide students with some of the richest and most memorable experiences they have in their struggle with the second language.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever participated in a class, as a teacher or student, in which dramatic activities were used? What was done? Was it effective? Why or why not?

2. What were the four personality traits that Schumann suggested might make second-language learning easier? Do you agree? Explain how you think the presence or absence of these personality traits might affect learning grammar.

3. What kinds of teachers or learners might be uncomfortable with dramatic activities in the ESL/EFL classroom? In this type of situation, should dramatic activities be omitted altogether? Why or why not?

Suggested Activities

1. Select one of the dramatic activities suggested in this chapter, or devise one of your own. Try it out on your colleagues and then evaluate the results.

2. Select several short scenes from various plays and look through them to see what kinds of grammatical structures could be taught by exploiting three different scenes.

3. Persuade some of your friends to allow you to tape their free conversation. Then play it back and see what kind of grammar lesson you could organize around a segment of the conversation.

·CHAPTER SIX·
Resources

PICTURES

Pictures are versatile and useful resources for teaching aspects of grammar that require a structure-meaning match, and in this chapter we will suggest several areas of grammar for which pictures constitute particularly effective resources. They can be used in all phases of a grammar lesson (i.e., in presentation, focused practice, communicative practice, and for feedback and correction). Interesting or entertaining pictures motivate students to respond in ways that more routine teaching aids, such as a textbook or a sentence on the board, cannot. Although they can be used to advantage at all levels of proficiency, they are especially useful with beginning and low-intermediate learners, who sometimes have trouble understanding long or complicated verbal cues.

Pictures can also be used in various configurations to enhance learning and practice. They introduce a great deal of variety into the classroom. A picture may focus on one specific object, such as a house, or on an event, such as a boy jumping a fence; alternatively, a picture may evoke an entire story (e.g., a Norman Rockwell print). Between these two extremes, there are pictures of a few people or a few objects.

Pictures can be presented in pairs: the same object or person on two different occasions (e.g., Mr. Jones before and after his diet) or two different objects or people (e.g., a comb and a brush, a brother and a sister, etc.). Pictures can be grouped into semantically related sets that contain from ten to twenty items, representing animals, vehicles, flowers, fruits, etc. Finally, a picture can become part of a sequence of pictures that tells a story, much as comic strips or photo novels do. Using pictures of this type allows the teacher to focus on temporal forms and sequences in the target language.

In addition to eliciting verbal responses, pictures can form the basis for pair and group activities. When students move into pairs or groups, or come to the front of the class for an activity, there is appropriate physical movement (as opposed to such inappropriate activities as private conversation, passing of notes, shooting of rubber bands, staring at walls, or looking out windows). Even the most mature, highly motivated, and disciplined students have to move about a little during class. Activities that encourage appropriate movement—involving students directly or as observers—will promote and enhance active learning. We feel that pictures can play an important role in this process.

GROUP WORK AS A TECHNIQUE

Before continuing, perhaps we should say a word about group work as a technique, since in many of the activities we suggest for focused practice and communicative practice we have students working in groups or pairs. Pair or group activities demand that the teacher prepare all materials in advance and plan pair or group assignments well, so students can perform their tasks efficiently. If group work is not well planned, students become confused and demand a great deal of attention simply because they are trying to understand the task. The classroom becomes quite chaotic when ten or more groups are demanding clarification or additional directions for a task. Under such circumstances, it becomes virtually impossible for the class to work or for the teacher to move around the room and check each group's progress.

When students first begin doing group and pair work, the teacher should not expect them to form optimal groupings without assistance. Thus, in addition to carefully planning and explaining the task, the teacher must also think about group dynamics (e.g., how best to form the groups for learning). Initially, the teacher might plan the groupings in advance and project them on a transparency that, like a map, indicates the membership and location of each group. If the class is mixed ethnically, the teacher may decide to separate people with the same native language. Some teachers have found it useful to put inhibited students together so they are forced to speak.

While students are working in pairs or groups, the teacher should circulate to verify that the activity is being done as planned and to assist students who are having problems. (Students should be instructed in advance to raise their hands if they have a question or wish assistance.) The teacher should not remain seated or uninvolved during such activities but oversee as many of the pairs or groups as possible and respond or intervene as needed. From our experiences, students are less resistant to group work when the teacher is an active observer and facilitator.

As the teacher circulates, she should take notes on the errors students are making—especially the systematic errors. Such information can be used in brief follow-up exercises in which students are shown their most frequent and salient errors and invited to correct them and practice the problematic forms.

We will now present several exercises and activities in which pictures play a central role in the teaching of grammar.

USING PICTURES TO TEACH SPECIFIC STRUCTURES

Yes/No Questions

Pictures can be effective for presentation and structured practice of *yes/no* questions. One of our favorite contexts is a pet shop. For this you will need large pictures that everyone can see of 10 or 12 animals that are possible pets (e.g., a dog, a cat, a pony, a goldfish, a turtle, a canary, a parrot, a hamster, a monkey, a snake). After everyone is familiar with the vocabulary for all the animals, the teacher has one student come to the front of the room and secretly "buy" one of the pets. (If your class is small enough, have the student sit in the center of a circle formed by his classmates.) Then the classmates must guess which pet the student has purchased by asking *yes/no* questions until someone guesses the correct pet. (Note that this format is simple, in that students directly guess the names of the pets; different question forms are possible):

Classmate 1: Did you buy the monkey? Is it the monkey?
Student: No.
Classmate 2: Did you buy the dog? Do you have the dog?

Student: No.
Classmate 3: Is it the pony? Do you have the pony?
Student: Yes.

The classmate who guesses the right pet then goes to the front and makes the next secret purchase. This can continue for as long as such practice is useful. The activity can be made more demanding by allowing students to ask background questions about the pets (e.g., "Is it a large animal?" "Can it fly?") or by requiring the class to guess the price of the pet. For adult classes, instead of animals the teacher could propose trips or meals as the context. ("Did you go to Brazil?" "Did you have pizza?")

A similar though more complex and more communicative question-asking activity can be done with pictures of famous characters or personalities—real or fictional, living or dead. The important thing is that everyone in the class must immediately recognize each famous personality. In larger or low-level classes, one student comes up and selects from the pictures the "person" he will pretend to be (e.g., Napoleon). The class then asks *yes/no* questions until someone correctly guesses the identity of the student:

Classmate 1: Are you alive?
Student: No.
Classmate 2: Are you a man?
Student: Yes.
Classmate 3: Did you really exist?
Student: Yes.
Classmate 4: Were you an American?
Student: No.

In smaller and more advanced classes, the teacher can pin small pictures of personalities on each student's back. The students then have to ask their classmates *yes/no* questions in an attempt to figure out who they are (i.e., who the pictures represent). This can be done with one student asking questions of the whole class or a small group, or it can be done as a freer activity in which everyone circulates around the room and talks to everyone else.

Yes/No and *Wh*-questions

In an activity that provides communicative practice of both *yes/no* and

wh-questions with reference to location, pairs of students are given two mismatched pictures of a bedroom. Students must be told in advance not to look at each other's pictures. The two pictures contain, among other things, some identical objects in different positions. The task of the students is to discover through oral communication and then to write down (a) which objects are in both bedrooms and which are not; and (b) which appear in the same location and which do not. The questions students would have to ask each other many times in the course of this activity include:

S1: Is there a _____ in your bedroom?
S2: No, do you have a _____ in yours?
S1: Yes, I have a _____.
S2: Where is the _____ (in your bedroom)?

After the oral and written work is completed, students should compare their lists against the actual pictures to see whether they have communicated effectively.

Tense and Time

To elicit structured practice of the simple present tense (habitual action), the teacher gives each group of four students a grid with eight rectangles. A specific time of day is indicated at the top of each rectangle:

Bob's Schedule

6:45 a.m.	7 a.m.	7:45 a.m.	9 a.m.
12:15 p.m.	12:30 p.m.	2:30 p.m.	4:30 p.m.

The groups are also given 10 picture cards showing Bob engaged in various activities. For example:

- get up
- get dressed
- go to school
- talk to his girlfriend
- attend class
- fix breakfast
- eat lunch
- work out at the gym
- study in the library
- read the newspaper

To ensure that there is some variety in group accounts and some negotiation among students, each group is told to use only eight of the ten pictures to match Bob's activities with times of the day on the grid. The task is to negotiate what Bob does every day at each time specified on the grid, and this elicits the simple present tense.

Student 1: What does Bob do at 6:45?
Student 2: He fixes breakfast.
Student 3: No, first he gets up. Then he fixes breakfast.
Student 4: OK. He gets up at 6:45 and fixes breakfast at 7:00. What does he do at 7:45?

Because the groups choose slightly different sets of eight pictures and order the pictures somewhat differently, there are variations in Bob's schedule among the groups. It can be amusing (and also a good review) to have one person from each group relate their version of Bob's daily activities. By changing the task, other tenses can be practiced using the same materials:
- Describe what Bob did yesterday. (simple past)
- Describe what Bob is going to do tomorrow. (*going to* future)

Another activity uses old photographs as a context for communicative practice of past states or habits, contrasted with current ones. The teacher should ask each of the students, well in advance of this activity, to bring in a photograph of family members or friends. The photo should be at least five years old. Not all students will have or want to share such photos, but if several students oblige these photos can form the basis for contrasting past habits and states with present ones. First, students share the photos with the class. (An opaque projector would help; otherwise, pass them around quickly. The teacher should bring plastic pockets or plastic wrap to protect the photos from finger prints and smudges.)

Next, students provide data about the photos: the names of everyone pictured, what each was doing then, and what each is doing now. These data provide the stimulus for structured practice of the habitual past tense in contrast with the simple present or the present progressive. For example:

"Seven years ago, Ricardo used to be short, but he isn't anymore. He's tall now."

"Seven years ago, Ricardo's sister Catarina used to be a student, but now she's a dentist."

"Seven years ago, Ricardo's cousin Juan used to go to high school. Now he works in a bank."
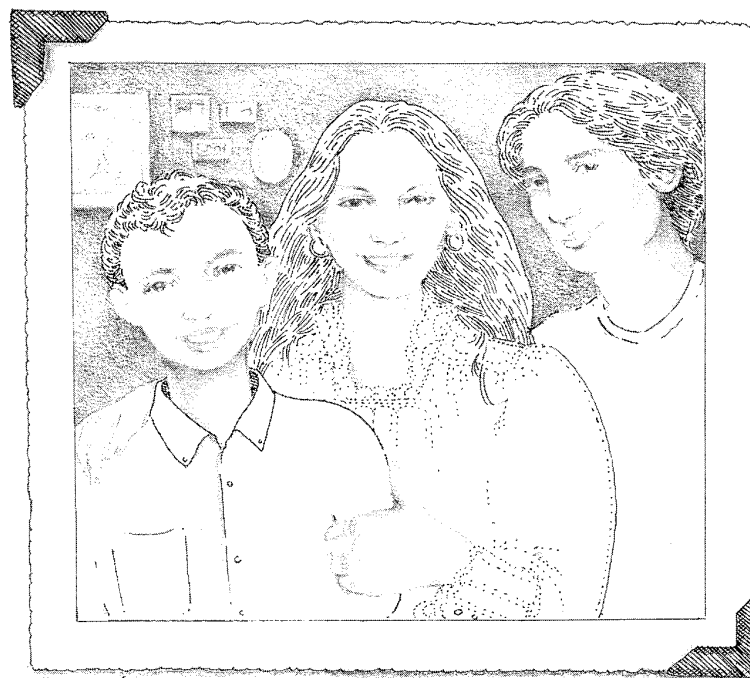
Ricardo   Catarina   Juan

This can begin as a teacher-directed activity with the whole class participating and then can change to a group-work activity, in which a student in each group describes his picture.

To elicit a discussion of travel plans using the *will* future and *because* of reason, the teacher asks students to bring in a picture postcard of some scenic place in their homeland or any place in the world of interest to them. (The teacher should have some extra postcards available.) Each student presents a card and gives a short narrative about travel plans or suggestions using the *will* future and *because* to signal a reason. The teacher should give the class a few examples so they know what to do. For example, students with cards from their homeland can say something like this:

"When *(1) the name of another student* comes to visit me in my country, I will take *(2) him/her* to see _____ *(3)* _____ because _____ *(4)* _____. We will also visit _____ *(5)* _____ and _____ *(6)* _____ because _____ *(7)* _____."

Students with a card from another country can say:

"When I travel to _____ *(1)* _____, I will visit _____ *(2)* _____ because _____ *(3)* _____. I will also visit _____ *(4)* _____ and _____ *(5)* _____ because _____ *(6)* _____."

If students are at a low level, story frames such as those above can be written on the board or projected for focused practice. With more advanced students, it should suffice for the teacher to model the patterns once or twice, in which case the practice becomes more communicative.

Sequential Logical Connectors

In addition to their usefulness in teaching tense and time, a series of pictures that tells a story can be used for communicative practice of conjunctions and subordinators that overtly mark the sequence of events in a narrative.

In our first example activity, which focuses on the use of *before* and *after*, each pair of students is given two pictures representing the same person or object at two different points in time; for example, Sam weighing 300 lbs. and Sam weighing 130 lbs. or Sally's shiny car and Sally's car after an accident. The pair of students have to negotiate an understanding of which of the two events depicted occurred first and what happened between the first and second events. (Actually, in all cases either order is possible.) The pair then shows its two pictures to the class and tells the story. Students should be instructed to

use either *before* or *after* at least once in their stories. For example, one student might say:

"Sam decided he was too fat. He went on a diet. After he lost a lot of weight, he looked much better."

Another pair might describe the story this way:

"Sam was a handsome young man. Then his girlfriend cancelled their engagement and left town. After that, he was so depressed he ate and ate and became very fat."

In an activity that allows practice of expressions of temporal sequence, such as *first*, *then*, and *next*, each group is given an identical set of four to six pictures in random order that tell a story. The groups must first reorder the pictures so they tell the story and then write up a group account using temporal transitional expressions to reinforce the sequence of events. Some of the cards used to practice tenses in the earlier exercise describing Bob's daily activities can be used here. For example:

"Bob got up early this morning. First he got dressed; then he fixed breakfast; then he . . ."

One member from each group then shows the pictures and reads the story developed by his group. Alternatively, the groups can write their stories on transparencies and each story can be put on an overhead projector. The groups will then see if they have all reconstructed the same sequence. Often, at least one of the groups has decided on a different order, which in turn can stimulate further discussion of whether one sequence seems more logical (or perhaps more humorous) than another. For example, in the example above, it's possible to say that Bob had breakfast before he got up. It would be less logical (but perhaps more humorous) to have Bob follow this sequence.

Comparison

Pictures of two different people (stick figures or magazine cutouts will do) can create a context for structured or communicative practice of comparisons. The teacher should give each pair of students two such pictures, along with data for each picture specifying the person's name, age, height, weight and other pertinent information. Without access to each other's pictures or written data, both students should share their information orally and generate a series of sentences comparing the two people in their pictures. For example:

"Bill is taller than George." "George is older than Bill."

For the presentation phase, the teacher should show the pictures and model the sentences. For structured practice, the frames would be provided and students would produce the sentences:

"Bill is _____ George."

"George is _____ Bill."

For communicative practice, students sit back to back so they cannot see each other's pictures. The two students thus have to ask each other many questions and share a lot of information:

S1: I have a picture of George. And you?

S2: I have a picture of Bill.

S1: George is thirty years old.

S2: Bill is twenty-five, so George is older.

A communicative activity using pictures that will help students practice the superlative degree requires groups of three. Each group receives a set of three pictures of objects such as houses or other buildings— one picture for each student—and students are told not to look at each other's pictures. Each group is also given an exercise sheet with a list of cues for questions that must be asked and answered during the activity. For example:

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1. Most rooms?

   Q:

   A:

2. Fewest rooms?

   Q:

   A:

3. Oldest?

   Q:

   A:

4. Newest?

   Q:

   A:

5. Biggest garage?

   Q:

   A:

6. Smallest garage?

   Q:

   A:

The first group to correctly complete their exercise sheet wins. A token prize for each of the three winners, such as a piece of candy, is a nice touch.

Relative Clauses

For communicative practice of the identification function of restrictive relative clauses, the teacher gives each pair of students two identical pictures depicting four or five men, women, cars, or buildings. On one picture proper names or noun descriptions appear below each person or object; the other picture has blanks. Having been instructed not to look at his partner's picture, the student whose picture has blanks must elicit the names by asking questions with relative clauses or reduced relative clauses. For example:

"What's the name of the lady wearing the dark blue coat?"

"What the name of the lady who's laughing?"

To practice the same type of relative clause in an imperative rather than a *wh*-question, the teacher gives each group of four students four or five pictures representing semantically related nouns (e.g., different boys, houses, cars). One student in each group holds the picture cards, while another gives commands with relative clauses indicating the disposition of the pictures. For example:

"Give the picture of the boy who is playing baseball to Max."

"Put the picture of the boy who is swimming on my desk."

It might be a good idea for the teacher to do this group activity once with the whole class before the group work starts. Also, once each group has finished practicing with its own set of pictures, the groups in the classsroom can exchange picture sets. Then the other two students in each group will have a chance to hold the pictures and give the commands.

Reviewing Several Different Structures

Pictures can also be used to effectively review a week's worth of lessons. Randall Burger draws a big policewoman apprehending a small criminal on an artist's pad in front of the class as his students watch. This immediately captures their attention and interest. After he finishes, he asks questions which will elicit responses with a specific grammatical form. For example, he might ask the following questions (form elicited

is in parentheses):
- What is she? (copula)
- What is she wearing? (present progressive)
- What does he do? (present tense)
- (pointing to gun) What does she have here? (present tense with stative verbs)
- Have you ever seen one? (present perfect)
- Do you have one? (present with stative verbs)
- How long has she been a policewoman? (present perfect)
- Does she make a lot of money? (negative)
- Would you like to marry her? (modal-like forms)
- What was he doing when she caught him? (past progressive)
- Do you have policewomen in your country? (*yes* or *no*)
- What would you do if you met one? (present unreal conditional)

The list of questions is, of course, limitless. The questions can be varied to focus on whatever grammatical forms the teacher would like to review. It is important that the picture be interesting and/or amusing, though a picture appropriate for one group may not be appropriate for another. Also, be sure to end the exercise before students become bored or tired of looking at the picture.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have shown that pictures are a very effective resource for getting students to match form with meaning. A case was made for using pictures to present or practice a wide variety of structures.

Because pictures make the learning of grammar, not to mention vocabulary, pronunciation, and other teaching points stimulating, even pleasurable, all ESL teachers should have their own picture file, especially if a good collection of such materials is not readily available for classroom use.

In addition, teachers should also draw pictures on the board and on overhead transparencies (or have students do such drawings) to encourage more practice and participation. But the teacher should always understand that when pictures are used to stimulate communicative use of a particular form, the teacher must attend to the forms students produce and, as needed, employ feedback and correction techniques such as those suggested on pages 28 and 36.

·ACTIVITIES·

Discussion Questions

1. Why do the authors feel that pictures are useful for teaching grammar? Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

2. What would be some good ways to file and store pictures for teaching ESL?

3. What sources of pictures other than magazines could ESL teachers consult to find pictures for use in their classes?

Suggested Activities

1. Find an interesting picture in a magazine or some other source. Identify the structure(s) you could teach using the picture.

2. If you could identify students in your current or prospective classes who could draw well or who were good photographers, list and describe two ways in which you would use the skills and interests of these students to teach grammar using their pictures or photographs.

3. Think of at least two structures other than the ones presented in this chapter that you could teach by using pictures. Describe the kinds of pictures and the activities you would use.

REALIA AND THE CLASSROOM

As a result of her research into memory and second-language learning, Barbara Schumann (1981) makes the following suggestions (among others) to ESL teachers:

1. In curriculum planning, allow for organization of subject matter which leads students from the familiar to a closely related but unfamiliar concept.
2. Aid students in organizing input via imagery and rehearsal situations in which the student must elaborate on what is presented.
3. Organize input in such a way that it is meaningful for the student and can be integrated with already existing knowledge and experience; experience is central to learning.
4. Provide practice situations which involve use of conscious processes and allow students to think about and generate associations and relationships between original input and novel situations by providing spaced practice. (pp. 62–63)

All of these objectives can be met quite straightforwardly by what Heaton (1979) characterizes as "an associative bridge between the classroom and the world," namely realia, an old and versatile resource of language teachers (p. 45). Before we proceed any further, a discussion of terms is in order.

Kelly (1976) states that there is some disagreement in the literature as to exactly what constitutes realia. It can refer either to objects in the learner's own environment used to illustrate vocabulary in the L-2 or to objects specific to the culture of the L-2 used for the same purpose. In the spirit of the former definition, we shall use the term to refer to objects of any origin used to illustrate vocabulary and structure in the L-2.

According to Kelly, the use of realia in language teaching has a long history. As he points out:

> The first clear information of the use of objects of general relevance comes from Tudor England. Sir Thomas Elyot, for instance, remarks, "there can be nothyng more convenient than by little and little to trayne and exercise them in speaking of Latin; infourmyng them to know first the names in Latin of all thynges that cometh in syght, and to name all the parts of their bodies" (364: 33). In the famous scene from *Henry V* in which Princess Katharine's maid tries to teach her some English, we see a little of the practical application of Elyot's advice in the Tudor classroom. (p. 13)

Realia has many uses in the classroom, not the least of which are promoting cultural insight and teaching a life-skills lexicon. Realia can also be used effectively in teaching grammar, especially for a form-meaning match. For this kind of match, realia can be used in combination with techniques such as storytelling and roleplay in both the presentation phase and the practice phase of the lesson.

USING REALIA

Hollywood Stars

Let's begin by looking at some ways realia can be used in the presentation phase. For example, if one is teaching a lesson on the copula with predicate nominals, usually a lesson for beginning students, realia can help focus students' attention as well as illustrate the point.

For this lesson, the teacher should bring in several items from a thrift store, garage sale, or child's toy box, such as a blond Halloween wig, a train engineer's hat, a stethoscope from a toy doctor's kit, and perhaps a doll. Call five students to the front of the class, put the wig on one, and say, "She's a movie star." Put the hat on another student and say, "He's an engineer." Put the stethoscope around another's neck and say, "She's a doctor." Give the doll to the last student and explain, "He's the father." Very quickly students in front will get into the spirit of the lesson and enjoy demonstrating their acting skills.

One teacher who uses this technique with his beginning students

says that at this point in the lesson, the class is usually very attentive but high-spirited. He advises student teachers not to be disturbed by students' laughter, but enjoy their antics and laugh along with them. This sets up a context, an experience for the grammar point: the more students enjoy the lesson, the easier it will be for them to recall it later. During his presentation, the teacher waits until the class settles down a bit and then goes back to the student with the blond wig and asks the class, "What is she?" After a student answers that she is a movie star, he repeats the same routine with the other "actors" in front of the room, keeping the activity light and fast-paced. Although students may be more interested in the roles their classmates are playing, they are also practicing the copula.

Once students seem confident, the props can be changed to illustrate the plural (*doctors*, *fathers*, etc.) and the teacher can illustrate *You are students* by indicating the class as a whole. Such realia, combined with the physical movement of trading props and directing the class's attention to different actors, holds students' interest. Humor also makes the input meaningful and enables students to integrate it with knowledge and experience already acquired. The sight of a classmate in a wig is easy to visualize and provides an image that students can associate with the grammatical concept. When dolls or stethoscopes are given to two people instead of one, and the form becomes *fathers* or *doctors*, students have the opportunity to think about and generate associations and relationships between the original input and a novel situation.

You can also vary the copula lesson with the use of Halloween masks (e.g., *This is Frankenstein*, *She is Snow White*, etc.). Alternatively, you can use masks to practice predicate adjectives that convey emotion in sentences, such as *He is sad* or *They are happy*. Any realia that students associate with a predicate adjective (e.g., *old, young, fat, thin, intelligent, beautiful, strong*) or with any persona (e.g., *a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher*) can be used to practice the copula. Teachers can even draw masks in class rather than buy the usual commercial Halloween variety.

These same props can be used for negation. Recall that there are two distinct possibilities in English for sentential negation—either post-copula or post-auxiliary negation, as illustrated below:

1. post-copula: Judy *isn't* here.

2. post-auxiliary: Mary *doesn't* have a car.
However, English has lexical negation as well:

3. lexical: Martha is an *unhappy* person.
It makes sense to teach only one pattern at a time. For example, using the props from the exercise above, the teacher can ask (while pointing at the doctor), "Is she a movie star?" The class should respond, "No, she isn't." The teacher can then ask (while pointing at the doctor), "Is she a doctor?" thereby triggering the more frequently occurring affirmative short response, "Yes, she is."

To present sentential negation with *do* support, a situation will have to be created in which the negation of some main verb other than the copula is elicited. Students can again be called to the front of the room and each one given a familiar item. For example, one can be given a book, another a pencil, another a pen, another a notebook, another a purse, etc. The teacher can then point to the student who has the notebook and ask, "Does he have the purse?" In American English, the answer requires sentential negation (*No, he doesn't*).

Sentential negation can also be elicited by bringing two students to the front of the room and listing items of clothing they are wearing behind them on the board: red shirt, brown sweater, black shoes, etc. One can then ask about the student with the brown sweater, "Does he have a red shirt?" Another list can be made of things that obviously neither student has. It could include some humorous items, such as pink socks or a Rolls Royce. Questions about this list will elicit sentential negation in the plural (*They don't have pink socks*).

Puppets

Puppets can be used to teach the copula with predicate adjectives. Call a student to the front of the class and put a puppet on his hand. Say to the puppet, "You are sad." Act out *sad* until the student gets the idea and makes his puppet act accordingly. Call another student and get her to do the same thing. Now you can demonstrate and say, "They are sad," as well as "He is sad." You can ask the student what's wrong, eliciting the response, "I am sad."

Puppets can also be used to illustrate the meaning of adverbs of manner. For example, the teacher can say, "Judy dances gracefully" and "Punch dances clumsily"; the students manipulating the puppets

will then take them through the proper movements to show that they understand the adverbs. Hand puppets also have the advantage of encouraging capable but inhibited students. Frequently, shy students will practice language more willingly when hiding behind a puppet than they will without a guise.

Identical Boxes

The presentation phase of teaching demonstratives can also make effective use of realia. The teacher needs two identical and interesting objects, such as two brightly colored boxes. She then places one box close to her and one far away. Again, the teacher's movement, as well as curiosity about the boxes, will hold students' interest. The teacher can stand next to one box, point, and say, "This box is blue" and "That box is blue." This sets up a minimal pair: the only distinction between the two objects is their proximity to the teacher. As soon as students seem to catch on, the teacher can move to the other box and say, "This box is blue," thus showing that the demonstrative changes according to the referent's distance from the speaker. Two sets of boxes can be used for *these boxes* and *those boxes*. Each point can be underscored by writing it on the board, by inviting different students to take the place of the teacher, and finally by allowing students to practice in pairs, placing objects close to and far from themselves. If students already know the names of colors and various objects, it is not necessary to limit realia too strictly, but don't overload students cognitively. They should focus on form rather than wrestle with lexicon.

Name the Objects

Realia can also be used in the communicative practice phase of a grammar lesson. The following exercise for practicing attributive adjectives and their order is based on a suggestion from Tim Butterworth and Darlene Schultz, who exploit an old baby shower game.[1] Place a number of small objects, each of which can be described by more than one adjective, on a table. This exercise is particularly challenging if you include items that differ in only one attribute, such as a small gold cuff link and a small silver cuff link. Allow students to study the objects

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[1] Reported in Celce-Murcia and Larsen Freeman (1983: 399).

for a few minutes, and clarify the names of any objects if necessary. Then cover the items with a cloth and have students divide into groups to recall as many items as possible. Instruct the groups to use attributive adjectives in describing them. A point is given for listing the item. A point is also given for each correct adjective in the correct position. Therefore, only one point would be given to a student who answers, "a cuff link" or "one pen red." In the first case, only the noun is provided; in the second, the adjective is provided, but in the wrong position. Therefore, only one point is given in each case. However, three points would be given for "a small, gold cuff link"—two for the adjectives in the correct position and one for the noun. Have each group write its list on an overhead transparency and let the class score each list to reinforce the exercise. The group with the most points wins.

Indirect Objects

Another effective use of realia is to present and practice indirect objects and indirect object movement. In this case there is a match between structure and discourse, and the technique used is storytelling. Have several items on hand, including a set of keys and a ball. Begin by throwing the ball up in the air. Elicit from the class what you have done (e.g., "You threw the ball in the air and caught it"). Write the sentence on the board. Then throw the ball to a student and elicit from the class, "You threw the ball to José." Write this sentence on the board as well. Then change the focus to *ball* by displaying several different things you could throw. Select an object, show it to the class, and then throw it to José. Ask the class, "What did I throw to José?" You want to elicit indirect movement (e.g., *You threw him the eraser*). It is important to remember that the two sentences, with and without indirect object movement, are not synonymous. Indirect object movement is pragmatically motivated, and teaching *I gave the book to Mary* and *I gave her the book* as synonymous could mislead students.

It is unnecessary to go into the details of discourse pragmatics with students unless they are quite advanced. Simply provide an appropriate situation for each sentence and practice it in that context. When the sentence with indirect object movement is on the board as well, let students examine the two forms and tell you what the difference is. Then go to four or five students and ask them to take an object out

of their purse or pocket. Make sure each student takes out a different object. Try to get a set of keys or something else that requires a plural pronoun among the objects. Collect the objects and bring them to the front of the room. Hold up one and ask the class, "Whose compact is this?" The class will answer, "It's Maria's." Then ask the class, "Should I give Maria a pencil?" Point to the compact and shake your head so students will say, "No! Give her the compact!" This will produce a natural situation in which we have indirect object movement. Go through the same routine with a couple of other objects and then invite a student to take over your role.

As each sentence is elicited, write it on the board. Draw students' attention to the fact that the name of the person you are giving something to can come before the name of the object being given. You want them also to discover that when this occurs, the preposition is deleted. Once the class has uncovered the pattern and seems to understand it, divide the class into groups. Have each member of the group take out an object and put it in a pile in the middle of the group. Then one student in each group picks up an object (not his own) while his group gives directions as to its disposition. Walk around and listen to each group. Answer questions or intervene as necessary.

USING THE CLASSROOM

Not all teachers have the budget, time, or inclination to prepare props for the types of exercises described above. However, the classroom itself provides a wealth of realia to use in teaching grammar. Ordinary items found in most classrooms, such as books, tables, chairs, a flag, a light switch, windows, walls, and the ceiling, can all be used. Let us consider several structures and how they might be presented or practiced using the classroom.

Phrasal Verbs

The classroom provides a natural context for teaching phrasal verbs such as *turn on* and *turn off*. The teacher can turn on a light and turn it off, and then invite a student to come to the light switch and do the same, using the TPR technique discussed in Chapter Three.

The students are also part of the classroom environment and

can be given the commands *sit down* and *stand up* or *take off* and *put on* some article of clothing they all have, such as a jacket or coat. Students should be invited to give the commands as soon as possible. It has been our experience that it is easy to underestimate how long it takes to learn these types of verbs. A great deal of time may be required to internalize the difference between turning a radio up, down, on, or off. We also suggest that teachers do only a few commands at a time, two or three times a week for about fifteen minutes during class, and repeat and review at regular intervals.

One final bit of advice regarding phrasal verbs. Whenever the phrasal verb is separable, make sure that some of your directions illustrate this by using the commands in both ways: *Take off the coat* as well as *Take it off.*

Prepositions

The people and the ordinary objects found in most classrooms can be of great assistance in presenting and practicing prepositions. For example, to present locative prepositions, one can use a table, a pencil, a book, a box, and a pen for structured practice of the difference between *in* and *on*. First the teacher puts the pen on the table and asks, "Where's the pen?" to which the class responds, "on the table." Then the teacher puts the pencil in the box and asks, "Where's the pencil?" to which the class responds, "in the box." This practice continues as the teacher manipulates the objects to elicit *on the box*, *in the box*, *on the table*, etc. When the class is responding quickly and accurately to all the combinations possible, one of the students should come up, manipulate the objects, and ask fellow students, "Where's the pen (book/box/pencil/etc.)?"

A more advanced version of the TPR method mentioned in Chapter Three takes advantage of the classroom and students for the presentation phase or structured practice portion of a lesson on reduced relative clauses: using a classroom set of texts (all of which look alike), the teacher places one book under the chair, one book on the chair, one book beside the chair, and so on around the room. Then she asks a student to come to the front of the room, where he is given the following commands:

"Touch the book under the table. Pick up the book beside the

chair and put it on the chair. Pick up the book on the chair and put it on top of the book in the drawer."

You can even combine TPR with storytelling and roleplay for structured practice of locative prepositions, as in:

"José has five dollars that he wants to hide from Maria. Somebody tell him where to put the money so Maria won't find it."

Allow the class to give José suggestions, such as "Put it in the drawer" or "Put it under the book." As students learn prepositions of location, you can expand the list to encourage other uses of prepositions. For example, to encourage more advanced students to use the proxy *for*, you can say:

"Tom, Mary wants to open the door, but she is carrying too many books. Show us your books, Mary. You poor thing! Tom, help Mary. Open the door *for* her."

Like practice with phrasal verbs, these types of exercises can be carried out for a few minutes at the beginning of each class period after they have been introduced. Use commands to which all students can respond at the same time, such as:

"Pick up your pen. Put it on your notebook. Put it under your chair. Put it on your neighbor's desk. Put your book next to your pen. Now, put everything back on your desk. Look up. Look at me. Let's get started with today's lesson."

This activity is a good way to begin each class. It can be used to review the previous day's lesson while not requiring a special group of students in front of the class or any special supplies.

Relative Clauses

One of the most difficult aspects of teaching relative clauses is providing sufficient context to justify their use. We have found an effective way to do this in the presentation phase of the lesson by using students and the classroom. Call two students to the front of the room who are of the same sex. Have one sit down and the other stand a few yards away. Then announce to the class that you are going to give the eraser to the woman who is standing up. Then ask students to identify which of their colleagues you are going to give the eraser to. The class will respond, "Maria!" or "Kiko!" When they have responded cor-

rectly, give the eraser to the woman who is standing. Then pick up a book and go through the entire routine again. Call two different students to the front of the class and continue the routine. When the class as a whole is responding correctly, call up a student and ask him to give the orders. You can then move from those very concrete relative clauses to more abstract ones. Ask the two students in front of the room, "Where are you from?" "What is your favorite food?" "Are you married?" "Do you want to get married?" Then ask a student to give the book to "the man who is from Cambodia" or "the girl who likes ice cream."

To present center-embedded relative clauses (i.e., relative clauses that modify the subject), you can use a variation of the old "Button, Button" game. Use pennies instead of buttons, if you want, since pennies are readily available in the classroom. Invite several students of the same sex to the front of the room. Ask the class to question them so they will have enough information to form relative clauses. As the class elicits information, write several phrases about each student behind them on the board. For example, behind one student you might write the following in response to your questions:

- has never seen a movie star
- likes ice cream
- is looking for a job

After you have written several phrases behind each student, hold a penny up for the whole class to see, and then put it between your hands. Have the students in front of the room hold out their hands, palms together at a 45-degree angle. Put your hands between each student's hands and have them close them immediately after you remove yours. Secretly deposit the penny in the hands of one of the students. Then ask the class, "Which person has the penny?" Students have to provide the answer using an embedded relative clause (e.g., "The woman who has never seen a movie star has the penny."). Whenever a correct form is elicited, write it on the board, even if it doesn't fit the student who has the penny. Continue until students discover who has the penny. Perhaps they will guess correctly, or perhaps you will have to respond, "No, it's the woman who's looking for a job!" Then review all sentences you've written on the board and let the class make relative clauses with the phrases that were not used. If you keep things moving fast, students

will be interested. They will see that relative clauses can distinguish between individual members of a set, and they will be able to practice the form as well.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have suggested that realia and objects in the classroom are vital teaching aids, particularly for grammar points which have a structure-meaning match. We have suggested that realia be used in conjunction with storytelling and roleplay techniques to contextualize the grammar lesson, as well as facilitate memory and learning. A set of realia can be gathered from children's toy boxes, garage sales, and thrift stores, but virtually all classrooms come equipped with resources that we tend to overlook, not the least of which is the students themselves. We have also suggested that realia, under a broad definition, can facilitate the learning of grammar, in addition to the more familiar role it plays in the learning of vocabulary.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you agree that in teaching a second language, the use of realia (under our broad definition) correlates with Barbara Schumann's pedagogical suggestions? Why or why not?

2. Do you feel that realia could be an effective resource for teaching grammar? Why or why not?

3. Look around you right now as you read this question. Identify at least five objects or people you could use as realia to teach a grammar lesson. What would the grammar objectives be?

4. What are the drawbacks to using realia? Do they outweigh the advantages as you see them?

Suggested Activities

1. Make a list of items around the house which could be useful in your ESL classes. Then collect those items and bring them in to show your colleagues, specifying the grammar points you would teach using them.

2. Plan a grammar lesson using some of the props you have collected and try it out on your colleagues. Ask them to do the same so you have a chance to both give and get a lesson using realia. Review the lesson from both the perspective of the teacher and the students, and amend the lesson accordingly.

3. Consider a fairly complex piece of realia, such as a small child's tricycle. List grammatical structure(s) that could be taught effectively using this piece of realia in the classroom [e.g., comparatives (*bigger than, smaller than*), plurals (*one wheel, three wheels*), or logical connectors (*and then, after that*)]. The possibilities are virtually limitless, once you begin. Give yourself some time and you will find this exercise very helpful.

GRAPHICS

This chapter shows how to use charts, tables, schedules, graphs, and other graphic aids as resources to facilitate both focused and communicative practice of grammar. In general, intermediate and advanced students are the intended audience for such exercises; however, some of the graphics can be simplified for use with sophisticated beginners. Graphics are not only useful in developing communicative activities, but are also natural resources for practicing a variety of structures. These teaching aids, which primarily encourage the learner to make a form-meaning match, may also involve texts as part of the activity and in such cases will help the learner make a form-discourse match, too.

The use of graphics as a resource to teach ESL students was a proposal specifically advanced by Shaw and Taylor (1978), who referred to such aids as "non-pictorial visuals." As a general trend, virtually all reference books dealing with the communicative approach to language teaching (e.g., Littlewood 1981, Johnson and Morrow 1981, among others) and all teaching materials based on the communicative approach make use of graphic aids because stimuli such as charts, tables, graphs, and schedules lend themselves well to the development of communicative tasks.

CHARTS AND TABLES

Charts and tables are helpful teaching tools, usable at even the lowest level if the teacher focuses on students themselves rather than on technical information that involves a lot of numbers or statistics.

If students are in college and come from many different coun-

tries, a class chart like the one below can be used in completed form to encourage more advanced students to practice constructing extended texts using logical connectors of comparison and contrast. (Of course, the students would already have been introduced to the use of *and*, *but*, *while/whereas*, and relative clauses):

Student Name	Native Country	Native Language	Major Field of Study	Interest(s)	Students' Choice
Hamid Ali	Egypt	Arabic	Engineering	Photography	
Mario Campos	Mexico	Spanish	Business	Archaeology	
Peter Hwang	Korea	Korean	Chemistry	Volleyball	
Kenji Kawamoto	Japan	Japanese	Engineering	Jazz	
Carlos Muñoz	Mexico	Spanish	Physical Education	Soccer	

Texts like the following have been generated during the classwork:
> "Hamid Ali and Kenji Kawamoto both study engineering, but Hamid likes photography while Kenji enjoys jazz (or, but Hamid comes from Egypt, whereas Kenji is from Japan)."

If, on the other hand, the class contains secondary-level, college-level, or private-language school students, and if all come from the same country or town, the class chart can be modified to include categories such as these:
- occupation
- interests/hobbies
- reason(s) for studying English
- marital status
- personality type (outgoing, shy, logical, etc.)
- favorite vacation spot
- favorite food
- favorite color

The teacher should know or find out what categories will work best for her class. Students should also be allowed to add one category of their own to a class chart. Our students have chosen categories as diverse as marital status, age, number and sex of siblings, and first impressions of the United States.
> For focused practice of relative clauses of identification with

existential *there*, the teacher can prepare two versions of the chart, one that contains all the information and the names in alphabetical order, the other without names and with the other information for each student intact but in random order. Students work in pairs—each with a different list—but do not see each other's charts. The teacher then indicates that the student who has no names should begin by saying something like this:
> S1: There's a student in our class who comes from Mexico and who studies physical education . . .

From the description provided by Student 1, Student 2 should be able to find the name on his list:
> S2: Oh, I see! It's Carlos Muñoz.
> S1: Who?
> S2: Carlos Muñoz. (Spell out the name if necessary.)
> C-A-R-L-O-S M-U-Ñ-O-Z.

This procedure continues until Student 1 has filled in all the names in the empty name column on his chart. The activity becomes amusing when the name turns out to be that of one of the students in the pair.
> Many ESL students are avid sports fans, and sports information can provide a good basis for charts. Statistics that appear in the sports sections of newspapers, for example, can be incorporated in a chart and thus be used for communicative grammar practice of a form-meaning match. The following baseball chart, taken from *The Christian Science Monitor*, lends itself to communicative practice of *wh*-questions with *which*, superlatives, and logical connectors of reason:

U.S. Major League Baseball
Standings and Statistics
through games of Sept. 25

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Eastern Division	W	L	Pct.	GB	Western Division	W	L	Pct.	GB
St. Louis	96	56	.632	—	Los Angeles	89	63	.586	—
New York	92	60	.605	4	Cincinnati	82	68	.547	6
Montreal	79	73	.520	17	Houston	78	74	.513	11
Philadelphia	71	79	.473	24	San Diego	77	75	.507	12
Chicago	71	80	.470	24½	Atlanta	62	89	.411	26½
Pittsburgh	52	98	.347	43	San Francisco	59	93	.388	30

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Eastern Division	W	L	Pct.	GB	Western Division	W	L	Pct.	GB
Toronto	95	56	.629	—	California	86	66	.566	—
New York	89	62	.589	6	Kansas City	85	66	.563	½
Baltimore	79	71	.527	15½	Chicago	78	73	.517	7½
Detroit	79	73	.520	16½	Oakland	74	78	.487	12
Boston	76	76	.500	19½	Seattle	71	81	.467	15
Milwaukee	67	84	.444	28	Minnesota	70	82	.461	16
Cleveland	55	99	.357	41½	Texas	57	94	.377	28½

In this activity students work in pairs but do not see each other's handout. (The teacher should try to pair someone who knows little or nothing about the sport with someone who is very knowledgeable.) One student has the above chart and the other has a sheet that looks like this:

Highs and Lows of Major League Baseball through Sept. 25

Team	Answer	Reason
1. best percentage		
2. worst percentage		
3. most games behind		
4. most games ahead		
Division		
1. the closest race		
2. the least interesting race		

The object is for the student with the answer/reason chart to interview the one with the standings and statistics chart to get the necessary information. It is a good idea to give students a model like the following dialog, so they know what's expected:

S1: Which team has the best percentage?

S2: St. Louis.

S1: How do you know?

S2: Because St. Louis has a percentage of .632 and Toronto, the next closest team, has a percentage of .629.

Another chart-type exercise allows the teacher to exploit Fahrenheit and Centigrade temperature-scale differences by preparing two news

clippings containing the temperatures for major cities of the world on a given day of the year. One clipping has the temperature in Fahrenheit degrees from the *New York Times*, the second in Centigrade degrees from *Le Monde*, a Paris newspaper. Both clippings are from December 24, and the teacher explains that both have some temperature readings that are illegible or blank because of problems in the printing process. A third piece of information available to each pair or group are the formulas for converting Fahrenheit into Centigrade or vice versa.

Conversion formulas

Centigrade degrees ÷ 5, × 9, + 32 = Fahrenheit degrees

Fahrenheit degrees − 32, ÷ 9, × 5 = Centigrade degrees

The task of each pair or small group (there should be at least one student with good basic math skills in each group) is to reconstruct the missing information in each clipping.

Clipping 1 New York Times (Fahrenheit degrees)		Clipping 2 Le Monde (Centigrade degrees)	
Buenos Aires	☐	Buenos Aires	30
Cairo	68	Le Caire	☐
London	42	Londres	☐
Madrid	☐	Madrid	09
Moscow	−04	Moscou	−20
New York	32	New York	☐
Paris	50	Paris	10
Tokyo	☐	Tokyo	08

The structures given communicative practice here are the singular subject-verb agreement used in mathematical addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division:

2 plus 2 equals 4.

4 minus 2 equals 2.

2 times 2 equals 4.

4 divided by 2 equals 2.

The exercise also allows for focus on the passive voice for multiplication (optional) and division (obligatory):

2 times 2 equals 4 or 2 *multiplied by* 2 equals 4.

4 *divided by* 2 equals 2.

To help the students complete this exercise the teacher should do several things: first, warn students that the names of cities are sometimes spelled differently in English and French, but that they are usually similar enough to match; second, walk the class through the formulas using two cities not cited on the exercise clippings; third, pause after every occurrence of equals and encourage the class to complete the formula at that time. The class should repeat the wording of each step as the conversion evolves. The exercise, then, would proceed something like this:

> T: On December 24, it was 72 degrees Fahrenheit in New Delhi. To figure out the Centigrade equivalent, we apply the formula this way:
> - Step 1: 72 minus 32 equals . . . 40.
> - Step 2: 40 divided by 9 equals . . . 4.44.
> - Step 3: 4.44 multiplied by 5 equals . . . 22.2.
> Conclusion: Therefore we know it was 22 degrees Centigrade in New Delhi on December 24.

> On December 24, it was 13.5 Centigrade in Athens. To figure out the Fahrenheit equivalent, we apply the formula this way:
> - Step 1: 13.5 divided by 5 equals . . . 2.7.
> - Step 2: 2.7 multiplied by 9 equals . . . 24.3.
> - Step 3: 24.3 plus 32 equals . . . 56.3.
> Conclusion: Therefore we know it was 56 degrees Fahrenheit in Athens on December 24.

Students should be encouraged to verbalize the steps of each conversion as they do their work in pairs or groups. Use of calculators is encouraged, especially if there is a disagreement about the correct answer.

Once everyone has completed the six conversions, one pair or group should put its answers on the board so the other groups will have a chance to agree or disagree with the results. The correct answers are:

> *New York Times*: Buenos Aires 86, Madrid 48, Tokyo 46
> *Le Monde*: Le Caire 20, Londres 12, New York 0

If appropriate, the completed charts can be used to quickly review comparative and superlative constructions. For example:

> On December 24, the (*coldest/warmest*) city was _____.
> City X was (*colder/warmer*) than city Y on December 24.

Teachers should adapt the clippings used in such an exercise so cities of special interest to students in their classes can be included.

SCHEDULES

Printed schedules for planes, trains, buses, and boats are rich sources of data for focused grammar exercises based on graphic resources. We will give one illustration of such an exercise using information from a timetable for the Route #3 bus line in Santa Monica, California, as our source of data. The #3 line runs between the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and UCLA. There are several points of interest along the route: Marina del Rey (Fiji Way), Venice, Ocean Park, Santa Monica Mall, and the West Los Angeles Veterans Hospital. A partial bus schedule for the early morning hours provides the following information about travel time between LAX and UCLA and the various points of interest in between:

	LAX	Mar. del Rey	Venice	Ocean Park	S.M. Mall	WLA VA Hosp.	UCLA
A.M.	6:50	7:05	7:12	7:20	7:29	7:48	7:59
	7:30	7:45	7:52	8:00	8:09	8:28	8:39
	8:05	8:20	8:27	8:35	8:44	9:03	9:14
	8:45	9:00	9:07	9:15	9:24	9:43	9:54
	9:25	9:40	9:47	9:55	10:04	10:23	10:34
	10:05	10:20	10:27	10:35	10:44	11:03	11:14

This information provides a context for either focused or communicative practice of prepositions of location and orientation:

from . . . to
"On bus #3 you can travel from (point X) to (point Y)."
between
"On bus #3 you can travel between (point X) and (point Y).

The use of *at* referring to a specific geographical point or to a point in time can also be practiced:

"The 6:50 LAX bus arrives *at* (point X) at (time Y)."

Another obvious construction for practice is the use of *wh*-questions of duration (i.e., *how long*):

"How long does it take to travel from (point X) to (point Y)?"

Travel schedules also lend themselves to focused practice of the adjectival use of the present participle in a fill-in-the-blanks exercise:

"The bus _____ from LAX at (time X) will arrive at UCLA at (time Y)."

A variety of participle forms such as *leaving*, *departing*, and *starting* are all acceptable in such an exercise. Lexical variety should, in fact, be encouraged. This resource can also be used for focused practice in expressing the future with the present tense:

"The bus arriving at UCLA at 10:34 tomorrow morning _____ LAX at _____."

In addition, the schedule above might also be used to practice future conditional questions to elicit different kinds of temporal information:

Duration: "If you want to go from (point X) to (point Y), how long will it take?"

Arrival time: "If you leave (point X) at (time Y), when will you arrive at (point Z)?
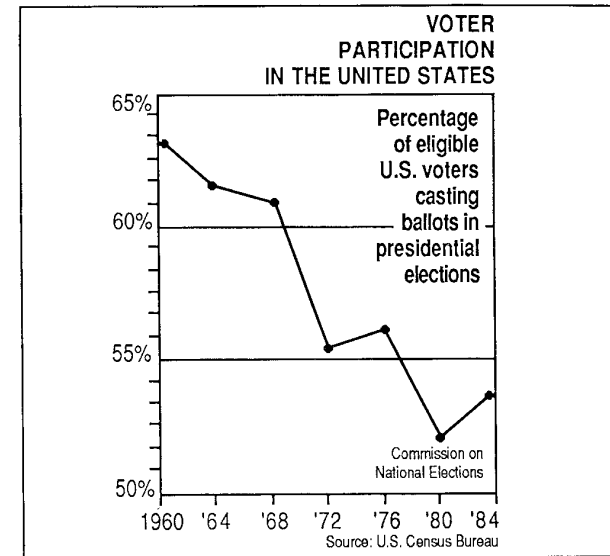
GRAPHS

One of the most common uses of line graphs is to show trends, or ups and downs, over a period of time. The lines in these graphs approximate numerical values or percentages in contrast to tables or charts, where numbers give very precise information. Before students are presented with a line graph, such as the one below, the teacher should present a general review of the topic by asking the following questions:

- How often do presidential elections take place in the United States?
- When was the last election year?
- When will the next presidential election take place?
- Who was elected in each presidential election since 1960?

At this point, the teacher can present the graph to the class, along with a few questions that will encourage interpretation:

- What do the numbers, which appear going from left to right along the bottom of the graph, represent?
- What does the left vertical bar represent?
- What does it mean when the black line goes up/down?

VOTER PARTICIPATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Percentage of eligible U.S. voters casting ballots in presidential elections

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Once there is a general understanding of the graph, students can be given the following structured exercise: a modified cloze passage based on the graph and designed to practice sequence of tenses. In this particular passage students have to use the present perfect, the simple past, the simple present (optionally), and the simple future. Leaving the lexical choice up to students (as we have done) makes the exercise more demanding. For less advanced students, you may wish to list possible verbs on the chalkboard or at the bottom of the cloze passage. Also, you may well have to clarify some of the other vocabulary in the passage. Students can do this exercise individually and then compare their answers working in pairs or small groups:

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Com-
mission on National Elections, voter participation in presidential elec-
tions ___(1)___ since 1960. The two steepest declines ___(2)___
between 1968 and 1972 and between 1976 and 1980. Even though
Richard Nixon ___(3)___ the election in 1972, voters ___(4)___
strong disillusionment with an incumbent president before both the
1972 and 1980 elections. This downward trend ___(5)___ itself
between 1980 and 1984, when in 1984 a greater proportion of voters
___(6)___ than in 1980. In 1984 American voters ___(7)___
Ronald Reagan, an incumbent president in whom the average voter
___(8)___ great confidence. It remains to be seen if this upward
trend ___(9)___ in 1988 and 1992. If the winning candidate inspires
great confidence in the voters, chances are it ___10___ .

Bar graphs, like line graphs, are an effective resource to help
the reader visualize change or contrast over time. The following bar
graph gives the reader information on the Mexican economy in the
area of balance of payments (i.e., the ratio of exports to imports).

MEXICO REVERSES TRADE IMBALANCE

Source: Bank of Mexico
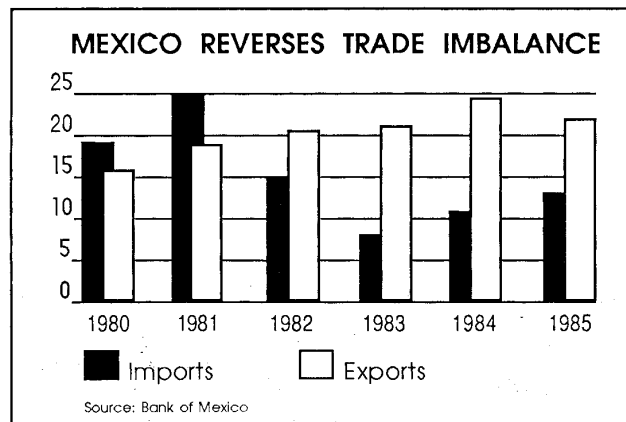
For this graph, the teacher should provide background by
discussing the topic and special vocabulary such as *imports, exports,*
balance of payments, trade imbalance, rise, exceed, decline, and *reverse.*

Once this has been accomplished, the bar graph can be presented
to students for interpretation:

• What do the numbers going up the left, 0 to 25, represent?
• Why are there two bars for each year, a gray one and a black
  one?

When students understand the graph, they should work in pairs to
complete the following worksheet, which gives them focused practice
in distinguishing simple past and present perfect *vis a vis* trends or
states that are completed in the past (signalled by the simple past), as
opposed to trends or states that continue into the present (signalled
by the present perfect).

1. In 1980 imports _____ exports by four billion dollars.
2. Imports _____ exports in 1980 and 1981.
3. Exports _____ imports since 1982.
4. Exports _____ imports in 1982, 1983, 1984, and
   1985.
5. The trade imbalance _____ in 1982.
6. Since 1983 exports _____ imports by more than
   ten billion dollars.
7. From 1981 to 1983 exports ___(a)___ , but since 1983
   they ___(b)___ .

After the class works together to share and correct answers on the
worksheet, students (individually or in pairs) should write a paragraph
about balance of payments in Mexico between 1980 and 1985 with
attention to correct use of the simple past and present perfect.

IMAGINATIVE USES OF GRAPHICS

Most of the preceding activities exploiting graphic aids have been rather
information-based and academic in nature. These teaching aids,
however, also can be used for humorous or amusing activities, while
still allowing for grammar practice. We therefore conclude our discus-
sion with two activities on the lighter side. One provides communicative
practice of *wh*-questions and complex *yes/no* questions with *that* com-
plements, while the other provides practice in comprehending negative
yes/no questions.

As background for the first activity, the teacher will have to provide a list of the twelve signs of the zodiac, along with the birth dates ruled by the signs, and one or two of the dominant personality traits that supposedly correspond to each sign. This information is provided on the following worksheet, which will be used as the basis for the activity:

Sign (constellation)	Dates	Trait	Names of Classmates	Notes on Traits
Capricorn (goat)	Dec. 22–Jan. 19	dedicated, tireless		
Aquarius (water carrier)	Jan. 20–Feb. 18	dynamic, colorful		
Pisces (fish)	Feb. 19–Mar. 20	meditative, compassionate		
Aries (ram)	Mar. 21–Apr. 19	strong willed, enthusiastic		
Taurus (bull)	Apr. 20–May 20	graceful, wise		
Gemini (twins)	May 21–June 20	cheerful, energetic		
Cancer (crab)	June 21–July 22	sensitive, sincere		
Leo (lion)	July 23–Aug. 22	charming, clever		
Virgo (virgin)	Aug. 23–Sept. 22	decisive, upright		
Libra (balance)	Sept. 23–Oct. 22	intelligent, loyal		
Scorpio (scorpion)	Oct. 23–Nov. 21	resolute, diligent		
Sagittarius (archer)	Nov. 22–Dec. 21	forthright, honest		

Before distributing the chart, the teacher can warm up the class by asking if anyone believes in astrology. Usually a few students will answer positively. Then the teacher can say, "I'm a _____ (sign)" and call on one of the students who expressed some belief in astrology by asking, "What's your sign?" or "What are you?" Both the teacher's and the students' signs can be written on the board; ask the class to provide names of some other signs and discuss their significance. The teacher must also ensure that students understand all vocabulary in the "trait" column. After this brief warm-up, some students who are unfamiliar with the Western-Middle Eastern-Indian zodiac might want to know what their sign is, so this would be an appropriate time to distribute the handout.

Next, the teacher must decide on the optimal grouping and configuration for this activity. For example, if the class is small (fifteen or fewer students) there can be one group. Larger classes should be divided into two or more groups. If students in the class occasionally act unruly, the groups should sit in large circles, with one student being interviewed at a time. More mature students can circulate and interview each other one-on-one.

The three tasks for each group (regardless of configuration) are:
1. Determine the sign of every person in your group.
2. As soon as you have elicited the sign, ask whether the person feels she exemplifies the trait(s) on the chart.
3. In more advanced classes, group members then work in pairs to write a paragraph summarizing the findings from the survey. It should end with a logical conclusion about the validity of the zodiac's predictions for group members (e.g., Since ten of the twelve members in the group did not feel that the zodiac correctly predicted their personality traits, we can conclude . . .).

The first task requires simple *wh*-questions such as: "What's your sign?" or "What are you?" whereas the second task elicits a complex question with a *that* complement typical of an interview context: "Do you feel/think that you're loyal?" Students should also take notes as they gather the information. Finally, the pairs of students in each group should share or exchange their paragraphs to check for accuracy of content (i.e., facts about the group), soundness of the conclusion,

and accuracy of form (i.e., grammar). This can be done very easily if students working in pairs write their paragraphs directly onto an acetate transparency for later projection to the class on an overhead projector.[1]

For the second whimsical activity, which affords a delightful way to introduce negative *yes/no* questions, the teacher needs nine photocopied pages of sheet music—or photocopied pages from a book—which should be taped up or pinned to the board in a three-by-three configuration. The pages, which should not contain illustrations or other idiosyncratic markings, can be more or less randomly selected from any piano anthology, novel, or textbook.

To carry out the activity the teacher needs an accomplice, preferably a good student, whom he has briefed in advance. The accomplice leaves the room or turns his back so he cannot see the board while a class volunteer comes to the front and secretly chooses one of the nine sheets. Let's say the volunteer picks the middle sheet in the center of the configuration.

The accomplice turns around or reenters the room, and the teacher points to any sheet and asks either, "Is it this one?" or "Isn't it this one?" being careful to keep the intonation as uniform as possible regardless of question form. The use of the affirmative *yes/no* question with its neutral expectation signals to the accomplice that the answer is "no." The use of a negative *yes/no* question, with its more strongly positive presupposition, signals to the accomplice that the teacher is pointing to the target sheet, and this form thus elicits "yes" from the accomplice. For variety, the teacher and accomplice may exchange roles while the procedure is being repeated. The teacher and accomplice should be careful to vary the number of times the questions are asked before the target sheet is identified.

The class's task, of course, is to figure out how the accomplice, or the teacher, knows with perfect accuracy which sheet has been secretly targeted. As soon as a student thinks she knows the "trick," she should try to be the accomplice. If she can pick out the target sheet three times in a row, the teacher can step back permanently and let

[1] For other ideas on how to use the zodiac for language practice, see Shaw and Taylor 1978.

the new student and the accomplice carry on and exchange roles until another student figures out the "trick." The rotation of new students into the task continues. Often students think they understand what is going on, but they do not, and this becomes apparent when they cannot identify the target sheet. (This is frequently a source of amusement to classmates.)

After several students have figured out what to do, then the "trick" and its linguistic basis can be explained to the remaining students. Allow the whole class a few minutes to practice the activity in small groups with an appropriate visual aid, such as nine playing cards on a desk, so the remaining students also have an opportunity to contrast the use of affirmative and negative *yes/no* questions in this context.

This activity helps learners to better comprehend the presuppositions of affirmative and negative *yes/no* questions in English, at least in this type of context, and is an entertaining presentation of this contrast.

CONCLUSION

When using graphic aids, ESL teachers should realize that not everyone can readily interpret such visuals. Initial proficiency depends partly on one's culture and level of education. These graphics are a very western concept. The activities presented are intended to be suggestive and illustrative, not exhaustive. Shaw and Taylor (1978) provide several other useful suggestions for incorporating graphic aids into language practice.

ESL textbooks are not necessarily the best source of visuals for these activities. Textbooks in economics, geography, psychology, sociology, and business usually contain many tables, charts, and graphs, some of which can be adapted for use in the ESL classroom. Such textbooks, of course, become even more relevant if your students happen to be studying one of these content areas. Certain newspapers and magazines are also good sources of graphics to adapt for language practice.

In the most authentic ESL teaching materials, graphics often accompany a written text. Thus, with intermediate and advanced

students, it might be best to include the relevant text and to develop reading activities for comprehending the text, as well as oral activities for interpreting and discussing the graphic.

Using this type of resource in the ESL classroom becomes particularly urgent if your students are preparing for some competency-based exam, since these tests typically demand that the test-taker demonstrate an ability to interpret tables, charts, and graphs.

In any case, graphic aids are the analytic counterpart to the more holistic pictures we discussed earlier in Chapter Six. Both match form with meaning, and both can be very effective tools for teaching grammar. While pictures can be used for presentation, focused practice, and communicative practice, graphics are generally best suited for focused or communicative practice. However, as our last exercise suggests, they can also be used on occasion during the presentation phase. In addition, many of the activities involving graphics encourage a form-discourse match as well as a form-meaning match, since texts are often read or generated in the course of doing these exercises.

·ACTIVITIES·

Discussion Questions

1. What groups of language learners will benefit most/least from the use of graphic aids?

2. Would you use graphic aids to practice a grammatical structure(s)? If so, what structure(s)?

3. What are some good sources of graphic aids other than the ones mentioned in this chapter?

Suggested Activities

1. Examine some current ESL textbooks until you find one that uses a graphic aid to teach a structure. What is the graphic, the structure, and the task? Do you feel the proposed exercise is fully effective? If not, show how you would modify the exercise to increase its effectiveness.

2. Go through a newspaper or magazine. Find a graphic aid that can be used to teach a particular structure. Outline the way you would use the graphic to teach the structure. Share your idea with some colleages. What was their reaction?