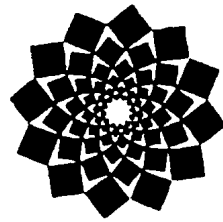


Building on Experience— Building for Success

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Stage 6

Print and non-print materials: Adapting for classroom use

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Introduction

Too often teachers have become addicted to the philosophy of a textbook author and have adopted certain methods and materials or new approaches simply because it is the thing to do. True, the textbook is basic and will often dictate the method of instruction, but this does not mean that teachers have to accept the package without making any changes. When we rent a furnished apartment, we rearrange the furniture to suit our tastes and needs as well as those of our immediate family; if the apartment is unfurnished, we provide our own furniture and our own décor. The textbook might also remind us of a tourist city map: we cannot visit all the places of interest in the short time available. Rather, we pause at some length at as many sights as possible, leaving others, perhaps less important, to another occasion.

The greatest problem facing language teachers today is the serious drop in enrollment. Our courses and methods are, in part, responsible. Although

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faced with outdated state or provincial guidelines with which textbooks must be congruent, we must not be shackled by such restrictions. As teachers we have never lacked either ingenuity or creativity.

There are those rare teachers capable of compiling a grammar outline for a language, using as illustrations solely the inscriptions on postage stamps from that country (Finlay, 50). There are thousands of teachers who accept the textbook as a guide but successfully manage to inject into it vitality and motivational interest which alter the picture. Taillefer (152), for example, took a unit from a traditional grammar textbook and provided a wealth of exercises which brought interest and "life" into an otherwise boring lesson. There are very few teachers who do not adapt print and non-print materials to suit their own personalities as well as their students' interests and learning styles.

According to Postman and Weingartner (134), "in the learning environment, there are at least four critical elements: the learner, the teacher, the 'to-be-learned,' and the strategies for learning. For this environment to fulfill its function, these elements must serve, complement and derive meaning from each other" (pp. 51-52). "Today's classroom," stresses Papalia (126), "must be a multidimensional environment where learning takes place and students are encouraged to realize their own potential. A learning environment encompasses a series of relationships between the student and himself, the student and other students, the student and the teacher, the student and the curriculum materials, and the student and the method of instruction. How these relationships are cultivated will in large part determine their effectiveness" (p. 28).

What follows is a limited compendium of suggestions by eminent colleagues who tried a particular technique and, on finding it successful, shared it in print, in various books or professional publications. "Share" is the keyword, and if a number of these ideas filter into the classroom from time to time, then the efforts of these colleagues have not been in vain.

Injecting the fun element in the learning process

It is difficult to disagree with the contention of Latorre and Baeza (91) that "games have long been accepted in language teaching as a means of relieving the students of much of the strain which results from work demanding concentrated attention" (p. 45). Lee (92) agrees that "language teachers in particular have constantly to search for means of securing variety and can ill afford to neglect whatever language-teaching possibilities games offer" (p. 1). But it is important, as Latorre and Baeza stress, that "in view of their appeal to the various types of learner, games should have a definite linguistic aim along with their function as a welcome change of activity" (p. 46). Phillips (132) concurs that keeping the fun in learning, capitalizing on the appeal of the present in order to achieve the long-range goals of language

learning, is the motivational and instructional task of the foreign-language teacher. "Why do pattern drills have to be done exactly as the texts present them?" she asks.

She suggests that a few minor variations can make them more fun while still retaining their value as a practice exercise: teachers may insert names of students for those in the text, use gestures to sustain attention to meaning as well as pattern, or make the sample sentences more relevant by changing the predicate to reflect students' life-styles.

Maiguashca (98) identifies three deficiencies in language drills:

- 1 the language register is often incorrect
- 2 structures are often incomplete and/or meaningless
- 3 the stimuli are often artificial.

She suggests contextualization of drills, a view also strongly held by Buckby (26).

To recall or expand basic vocabulary, Mollica (112) suggests crossword and other puzzles such as mazes, scrambled letters, scrambled words, and word-search puzzles. Bressan (22) prefers the crossword puzzle for the obvious contribution it can make from a linguistic point of view. "A carefully graded selection of crosswords in order of complexity will contribute to the acquisition of new words and phrases as well as the consolidation of previous knowledge through repetition" (p. 94). Bressan classifies direct-definition clues into the following main headings:

- 1 **Generic** e.g., Clue: *Prénom* Answer: *Ils*
- 2 **Synonymic** C: *Tout naturel* A: *Inné*
- 3 **Antonymic** C: *Pas fictif* A: *Réel*
- 4 **Allusive** C: *Echappe au rêveur* A: *Réalité*
- 5 **Allusive-negatory** C: *Bien de gens ne connaissent que sa marge.* A: *Loi.*
- 6 **Definitory** C: *Dont rien ne vient troubler la quiétude.* A: *Sereine.*
- 7 **Descriptive** C: *Recueillent des malheureux.* A: *Asiles.*
- 8 **Punny** C: *Il avait vraiment la bosse du théâtre!* A: *Polichinelle.*
- 9 **"In" clue** C: *Lettres d'amour.* A: *Am.*

Latorre and Baeza (91) point out that "the clues are central to the drilling objective of the crossword, since most of the information the student gets for doing the exercise is found in them. The clue is to the crossword exercise almost what the prompt is to the old pattern drill: it is the stimulus that keeps the drill going. As such, there is no place here for ambiguity, deliberate or otherwise. On the contrary, clarity is essential. By reading the clue, the student must know with a fair degree of accuracy which word is required, since in most cases he is being confronted with a linguistic problem well within his capabilities and knowledge" (p. 51).

Suppose that teachers have taught the names of some domestic and wild animals. A crossword puzzle may provide a pleasant way of recalling them. At an introductory level, teachers may wish to *show* a drawing or a picture of the animal and call out the instructions as if playing a bingo game: e.g., “*Verticalement, 2,*” etc. Teachers may wish to offer definitions for each animal. In this case, a definitory clue might be: “*grand mammifère à crinière, plus grand que l’âne.*” At an advanced level, teachers may point out that, for more picturesque speech, names of animals are often used for imagery. For this same word, teachers may provide an incomplete idiom as well as its meaning as the definition: “*Cela ne se trouve pas dans le pas d’un _____: c’est une chose difficile à trouver.*” (Mollica, 118).

A number of textbooks now incorporate crossword puzzles and other game elements as an integral part of the exercises (Da Silva, 39, 40; Merlonghi et al., 102; Mollica, 119; Wright et al., 162); publishers such as National Textbook Company make available a number of games on ditto masters or in booklets.

But the fun element should certainly not be confined to crossword puzzles. Da Silva (42) suggests that games, most particularly those that appear on television, work well. Since students already know the ground rules, they can plunge into “What’s My Line,” “I’ve Got a Secret,” “The Price is Right,” “To Tell The Truth,” etc.

There are a number of other puzzles which can involve students either individually or in groups. Mollica (112) singles out mathematical puzzles, legal cases, and the detective puzzle. Danesi (37) concurs with Mollica’s two-component model for using games and activities in language pedagogy, namely, a *lexical component* containing material suitable for recall and/or expansion of vocabulary, and a *language interaction component* which consists of activities designed to promote and encourage the use of the language. But he adds *grammatical and stylistic* components to the pedagogical model for mathematical puzzles. Thus, mathematical puzzles may be utilized for morphological and syntactic review and/or instruction, as well as for stylistic analysis since they may be written in both dialogue and narrative form.

A number of books are designed to provide a wealth of ideas for classroom games (Crawshaw, 34; Hubp, 75, 76; Schmidt, 144), but teachers should ensure that the element of fun is an integral part of language learning and not separated from it.

Identifying and bringing out cultural characteristics in the textbook

It is difficult not to concur with Valdés (156): “The perennial lament that cultural content is not available because the administration has chosen such a textbook is not valid. A few weeks of hard work in planning the introduc-

tory second language course can provide the teacher with an integrative approach which has as its main objective the teaching of language in its sociocultural context and, most important, as a system which once begun can be revised and improved each year” (p. 358). For Weiss (158), language teachers are also culture teachers. Just as they present the structure of the language factually and impartially, so should they present the culture of that country objectively, dispassionately, and accurately. Teachers should attempt to dispel from the English-speaking student’s mind the stereotyped image they may have of the people whose language they are learning. Too often Italians have been portrayed as spaghetti-eating, Chianti-drinking people, rowing a gondola in Venice’s canals and endlessly singing “*O sole mio!*” (Mollica, 115). Too often Germans have been presented in dirndl dress celebrating Oktoberfest with floods of beer (Koch, 85). Spaniards with throbbing guitars, clicking castanets, swirling and alluring dresses, and tapping heels (Gold, 63)—Frenchmen with black berets, five o’clock stubbles, a red bottle of wine under their arms (Koch, 85)—all of these conceptions are derived from loosely interpreted facts rather than from direct contact with the nationality concerned. One thinks of the Father’s protests against his Step-daughter’s conception of him in Pirandello’s (133) *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, “It would be an atrocious injustice to judge us by one action alone, as if all our existence were summoned up in that one deed” (pp. 232–33). Do not teachers often promote certain biases and clichés? The travel and tourist industry constantly reinforces these favored images through the visual stimuli of posters and brochures. Taylor (154) suggests that teachers model their interest in current affairs by being well informed; students should be encouraged to work on projects that de-emphasize folkloristic themes; teachers should select textbooks that present a “balanced diet,” with regard not only to culture but also to geography. Pfister and Borzilleri (130) provide an evaluation design that will help identify the most suitable text for cultural studies. Both Becker-Cantarino (9) and Mollica (112) suggest a series of activities and quizzes that impart information about a country’s geography.

The task of bringing out cultural elements from the textbook falls mainly on the teacher. The cultural content and connotations of the words and idioms selected will have to be made clear to the student. Where words seem to correspond lexically in the *denotation*, they may diverge considerably in their *connotation* or in the emotional association which they arouse (Rivers, 136).

The mere mention of such things as wine at table, an examination, or whistling at a football game—frequent occurrences—involves cultural differences which, if ignored, are understood by the student in his native patterns, and are therefore misunderstood. Wine at table might be understood by the Canadian or the American student to imply a special occasion, when it does not have that implication to an Italian.

The works of Miller et al. (104, 105, 106) are excellent sources in con-

trasting words and ways of living. A section in each of their culture capsules, "Let's relate it," makes the series even more useful and suitable for classroom activities. Papalia's (123, 124, 125, 128) work with culture assimilators is also of significant importance.

Sexism in language should also be pointed out. French, like many other languages, is as sexist as English. It designates the masculine gender as the norm and the feminine as the deviation, and words denoting high-prestige roles are almost always masculine—*le professeur, l'écrivain, le docteur, l'auteur*—which can sometime result in bizarre statements such as *Le professeur est enceinte!* Lord (97) also points out that certain tasks dealing with child care exist only in the feminine: there are *ménagères* (but not *ménagers*), *sages-femmes* (but not *sages-hommes*), *puéricultrices* (but not *puériculteurs*); and she tells of Thérèse Laliberté who refers to a class in which girls outnumber boys as *les étudiantes!* Stern (149) deplores the fact that sexism is perpetuated in textbooks by both men and women. She examined twenty-five foreign language textbooks published after 1970 and found that each perpetuated the sex role stereotyping prevalent in American and foreign cultures. The fact is that language merely reflects social behavior and history and is not the cause of it. The problem of women's status will be solved not by dismantling the language but by changing the social structure.

For Mead (101), "foreign language study is a key to the understanding of another way of life as well as the best means of ending one's own cultural parochialism" (p. 3). To achieve this, Knop (84) discusses three techniques and their advantages and disadvantages for teaching cultures: the culture capsule, the culture cluster, and the culture assimilator.

Learning about culture helps students become aware of another way of life, often creates in them an interest about that other way of life, and ideally, develops acceptance and even appreciation of those differences. Learning about culture is a short-range goal in the language, whereas a cultural fact or insight may be acquired in just one class period. At the same time, cultural learning is long-lasting: students may forget how to conjugate a verb but they usually retain knowledge and interests developed in cultural study. For all of these reasons, culture is a valuable part of foreign language study (Knop, 84, p. 54)

The dialogue

Dialogues "should cover major areas of similarity and contrast between the two cultures in as wide a variety of situations as is feasible but without becoming pedantic and unreal" (Rivers, 136, p. 275). Authors should make sure that dialogues are constructed around an experience compatible with the age and interests of the students; the language therefore, should not be pedantic or unreal. It becomes the task of the teacher to clarify some of the

cultural content, otherwise students will assume that what is said and done have exact counterparts in their own culture. The opening dialogue of basic textbooks generally begins with greetings and queries about one's health. For example, "*Buon giorno. Come sta?*" is a form of greeting as well as a concern about one's health. The use of the pronoun *Lei*, understood in the verb form *sta*, indicates the degree of intimacy. The inevitable concomitant of teaching the forms of address is teaching the social customs and situations which determine the use of one form rather than another. The very rules for using the forms of address afford cultural insights as to the psychology of the Italian people, their attitudes of respect for elders and strangers, their sensitivity to nuances of speech reflecting family relationships, degrees of intimacy, and differences of age and social status.

Rivers (136) suggests that after students have learned dialogues thoroughly, they use these freely in communication situations contrived in the classroom. If students are well trained to act out prepared dialogues, they may eventually be asked to act out "situation" dialogues which may be written to supplement or complement those presented in the basic program. Humor should not be discounted in this activity, and often a teacher is able to find dialogues which ingeniously combine humor/language/culture. Leonora Fabbri's (48) anecdote on the fussy barman ideally combines all three elements.

Il barista pignolo

Un signore entra in un bar e chiede al barista:

Cliente: Vorrei un bicchiere di vino, per favore

Barista: Bianco a rosso?

Cliente: Rosso.

Barista: Dolce o secco?

Cliente: Secco.

Barista: Locale o di marca?

Cliente: Locale.

Barista: Di fiasco o di bottiglia?

Cliente: Non importa. Se sapevo che ci voleva tanto tempo avrei ordinato un caffè.

Barista: Allora vuole un caffè?

Cliente: Ma sí, mi dia un caffè.

Barista: Nero o macchiato?

Cliente: Nero!

Barista: Ristretto o alto?

Cliente: Ristretto.

Barista: Corretto o semplice?

A questo punto il signore scappa disperato.

From this dialogue the student will have been given an insight into ordering wine (*bianco*: white; *rosso*: red; *dolce*: sweet; *secco*: dry; *locale*:

local; *di marca*: of high quality; *di fiasco*: from a flask; *di bottiglia*: from a bottle), as well as choosing the variety of coffee which is available (*nero*: black; *macchiato*: with a drop of milk; *ristretto*: very strong; *alto*: of medium strength; *corretto*: laced with spirits; *semplice*: regular). If the dialogue appears on a transparency, students may more easily act it out, for the transparency will act as a giant cue card.

Teachers are encouraged to use auditory and reading dialogues as well. Blume (13, 14, 15, 16), Giusto (62), and Levy (94) have prepared a series of dialogues which can easily be used to complement any basic text. Arranged in a carefully graded sequence from Series A to Series F, the dialogues aid the student either in mastering auditory comprehension or in interpreting the written language.

Series A includes ten situations, each consisting of a setting and one line of dialogue followed by four possible responses. The student selects and writes the appropriate responses. Series B also presents just one line of dialogue following the setting. However, this time the student responds by writing one dialogue line of his own. In each of the remaining series, the number of original sentences to be written by the student increases. Finally in Series F, each of the twenty situations requires the student to write five lines of dialogue. This type of exercise has often appeared in Regents Exams (Cascarelli, 30; Kendris and Newmark, 82, 83).

Di Pietro (45) suggests that although the dialogues found in textbooks may indeed lend an air of credence by attaching a likely cultural environment or situation to the points of structure being covered, they remain, nonetheless, stylized. Students called upon to play the part of a hotel clerk or customer in a pharmacy may find no reason to associate their personal desires or needs with those of the fictionalized characters. A contrived conversation, no matter how skillfully designed, bypasses the stage of personal motivation which each of us feels before we decide to speak at all. Di Pietro suggests a number of protocols which may be used to show attentiveness in a conversation and a series of verbal strategies which the speaker can execute in those settings where the outcome is not predetermined by social constraints. He feels that the dialogue with options is a particularly valuable device for language teachers and stresses that it does not require a deep understanding of linguistics or methodology to be conceived and utilized in the classroom.

Supplementary materials: Time, interest, choice _____

Successful foreign language teachers must consider students' needs and learning styles before selecting content and methods of instruction. They should choose activities expressed in the cone of experience, as conceived by Dale (36), which begin with students' concrete experiences and move to

abstract learning (Figure 1). "Although the bands of the cone interlap and blend into one another," Papalia (127) points out, "they are an aid in indicating graphically that successful foreign language teachers attempt to select curricular activities moving from "doing and observing to verbal symbols" (p. 5). Research findings on learning support the point that students seem to learn better when they are "doing" things or when the materials are pictures rather than words.

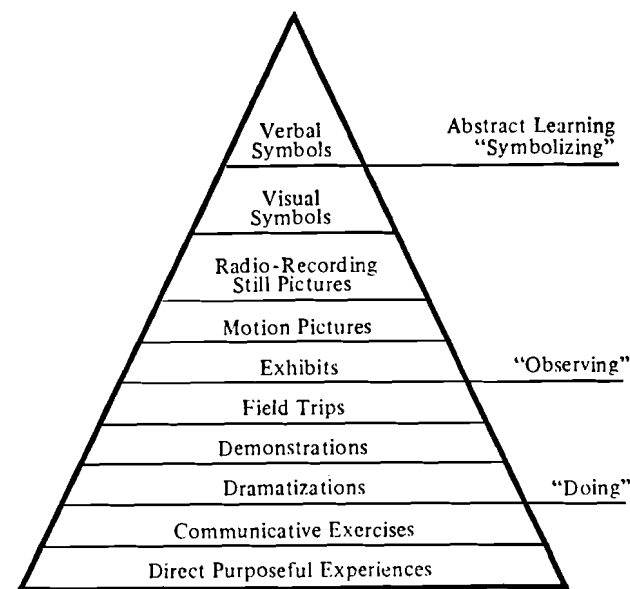


Fig. 1 Dale's cone of experience (36)

One of the problems immediately facing teachers is the time factor. The next problem is the interest factor. "There are many things which interest my students! Which materials should I choose?" The fact is that ancillary materials should be an *integral* part of the program; these items should *complement* and *supplement* the basic textbook. In drilling interrogative forms, why offer a series of boring exercises when a game such as "What's My Line?" may very well bring out most interrogative words. Why spend hours *explaining* a cultural trait, when a photograph may do the job in a fraction of the time?

The solution is to *plan ahead*. Teachers should mark in their textbooks the type of activity which either substitutes or modifies some of the exercises. Proper filing of materials—for quick access—will facilitate the task.

The experience has generally been that instead of losing time to “cover course content,” teachers actually gain time!

Audio- and audiovisual aids

Songs

There is general agreement with Zola and Sandvoss (166) that songs represent not only valid material for language study but, also, a valid medium for language learning. Mollica (112, 115) suggests that songs be sung in the very first language class to teach pronunciation and stress. A note generally represents a syllable, and since every note must be sung carefully in order to stay in tune, words cannot be stressed incorrectly. If they are, students will be singing out of tune. At the beginning stage, it is important that teachers choose a song whose melody is already familiar to students. For this purpose, foreign-language versions of English popular songs might be chosen initially. Students, already familiar with the tune, will then focus their attention on the lyrics. Every culture has, however, a rich repertoire of songs, and teachers should gradually de-emphasize those translated into the foreign language and introduce students to authentic songs of the country whose language is being learned.

In addition to helping “effectively to teach pronunciation and, incidentally, comprehension, grammar, vocabulary constructions and background knowledge” (Gelman, 59, p. 13), songs give pleasure and have authentic aesthetic value.

Songs ordinarily provide both literary and colloquial expressions, which is evidence that they may be more than just “fun” materials. “If the words of the songs are selected with an effort to further develop the learner’s cognition and to add relevant vocabulary items, the songs become valuable teaching materials in themselves. For an enthusiastic teacher, it does not require much time to locate songs which contain grammatical structures identical to those being taught in class: everyday expressions, dialogue-style ‘question and answer’ songs, narration (or ballad) style songs, or even those intended to accompany some motor skills” (Jolly, 80, p. 13). By careful selection the teacher can introduce the song at almost any level of instruction; hence one criterion for using it: adaptability (Brown, 25).

Bartle (8) is convinced that “songs are a definite advantage in memorization of phrase constructions. They are more easily learned, and tend to ‘stick’ longer than straight-out grammatical examples” (p. 11). Elliot (47) illustrates this conviction by pointing out that, in the carol “*D’ou viens-tu, bergère?*,” the refrain in the form of a question asks that one repeat “*Qu’as-tu vu, bergère, qu’as-tu vu?*” thus leading the student to ask questions correctly in the *passé composé*. Jolly (80), however, cautions that “songs adopted for use in the language classroom should not contain unfamiliar

grammatical structures, nor grammar or vocabulary items not within easy association of the material already presented” (p. 14). Brown (25) stresses that the song has many potentialities as a pedagogical device and that song-poems may also be studied as part of the oral tradition in literature, especially as it relates to the poetry of the Middle Ages and to folklore.

Songs are useful for presenting “cultural” similarities and differences. Teachers of Italian may wish to compare “Downtown” with its version “*Ciao, ciao*.” In the English version, Petula Clark suggests that when you are alone and life is making you lonely, you can always go downtown. It is there—North America’s center of excitement—that you forget all your troubles. But where do you go if you are in Italy? To the sea (*al mar*), to the beautiful unpolluted beaches (*spiaggia limpida*) where you meet your old friend (*vecchi amici*) under a hot sun (*sole caldo*).

Ritorno <i>al mar</i>	e mi salutano:
dove ho sognato con te	“Ciao, ciao.”
e sembra dirmi:	E sulla <i>spiaggia limpida</i>
“Ciao, ciao, ciao.”	non è cambiato niente.
Rivedo ancor	Sotto il <i>sole caldo</i>
i <i>vecchi amici</i> che ho	io ti cerco tra la gente, etc.

Perhaps the song gives a stereotyped image of Italy, but a comparative study will show that each song presents scenes peculiar to its culture.

Imaginative teachers can invent their own lyrics to suit a particular situation. Judy Glass (Glendale Secondary School, Hamilton, Ontario) has incorporated a number of reflexive verbs in what one may call “*La journée d’un étudiant*,” to be sung to the tune of “Ta-ra-ra-boom-di-ay.”

1 Quand il fait très, très beau, Je me réveille très tôt, Et je me lève tout de suite, Puis je me lave très vite.	4 Puis je me brosse les dents, Et vite j’embrasse Maman. Puis pour l’école je pars, A huit heures moins le quart.
2 Puis je me rase aussi, Et puis je fais mon lit. Alors je m’habille vite, Et je descends tout de suite.	5 J’arrive à huit heures vingt, Et là je travaille bien. Et quand l’école finit, Je pars avec mon amie.
3 A la cuisine je vais, Je prends un verre de lait. J’ai toujours très, très faim, Alors je mange du pain.	6 J’arrive chez moi très vite Je veux manger tout de suite. Nous mangeons le dîner, Dans la salle à manger.

7 A dix heures et demie
Je dis toujours “Bonne nuit.”
Puis je me couche tout de suite,
Et je m’endors très vite.

—Courtesy of Judy Glass

Glass has a second set of lyrics which stress the *passé composé* of both transitive and intransitive verbs. Jolly (80) suggests that if “the songs are presented with attention-catching visual aids to strengthen their value, the effectiveness of the songs as teaching aids can be enhanced even further. The students’ response to the use of songs under these circumstances would not represent mere mechanical, drill-style repetition, but rather active participation in the pleasant flow of melody” (p. 13).

Radio

Radio provides an excellent source for developing the aural skills. *The French Review* has published a number of articles on the subject. Grigsby (65) writes of his experience in a pilot course in which radio served as virtually the exclusive source of learning. The aim of the course was to improve “third-year college students’ understanding of French spoken at a speed which would attract and hold the attention of educated, busy persons with native fluency” (p. 557). Lister (95) tells of a similar experiment conducted in Canada and provides a detailed description of various pedagogical activities. Grigsby and Lister focus mainly on newscasts, but Howlett (74) stresses also the use of commercials to develop listening comprehension.

Jakobsh (77) adds another dimension to the above uses—radio plays. He notes that “most notable literary radio plays are quite recent; therefore, both language and context are such that they may be called relevant for those learning to speak, as well as for studying literature. Although in length they may vary considerably, plays are generally much shorter than dramas, close in length and structure to a one-act play or a short story, and averaging somewhat less than one hour of broadcasting time” (p. 40). Jakobsh provides some pedagogical applications and points out that in elementary language classes radio plays can also serve as reading material. Vocabulary, idioms, and syntax are those of conversational language, and are therefore quite simple and those which students should meet at this stage.

Photographs

For Scanlan (142) the “pedagogical possibilities offered by photographs are as limitless or as restricted as the ability and the enthusiasm of the teacher and of the students. They unquestionably open up vast areas of discussion, but optimum use of them requires preparation and forethought on the part of the instructor as well as good will and co-operation on the part of the learner” (p. 420).

The most readily available source of photographs is the textbook. Unfor-

tunately, in some cases, photos become mainly ornaments which authors and publishers hope will enhance the esthetic appeal of the book to teachers. In many instances, photographs are drawn mainly from Tourist Offices and tend, naturally, to give a tourist-like picture of the country. Rivers (136) encourages teachers to collect pictorial material to illustrate their lessons from the wealth of existing magazines and newspapers. In doing so, however, some caution must be exercised: pictures should depict natural situations, life as it really is; illustrative material caricaturing the life of the people or presenting a false cliché should not be used.

Boyd (20) concurs that pictures are often excellent stimuli in conversation classes for students to ask questions of one another. If the aim is to stress speaking skills, pictures need not come from the milieu of a country whose language is being learned. For this purpose, photographs which appear in North American newspapers or magazines are also ideal. One excellent source may be the volume *The Best of Life* (Scherman, 143). It provides a variety of illustrations which, if cut and pasted on colored art paper (and laminated for durability), may be used to promote discussion and conversation. Boyd (20) suggests that students be given a picture about which they prepare two to four questions. They then ask these questions and their partners respond. The pair then reverses the procedure. Teachers can thus evaluate the students’ ability to ask and answer questions based on a particular theme.

Anthony Bruculere’s photograph which appeared in *The Best of Life* (Figure 2) is an ideal example for this type of activity. Da Silva (41, p. 234) suggests questions which focus directly on the photograph (“¿Quiénes serán estas tres personas? ¿Cuántos años cree Ud. que tendrán? ¿Dónde están? ¿A quién quiere más la chica? ¿Cuántos detalles observa Ud. en esta fotografía?”), but the photograph may also stimulate a discussion on morals and values, personal opinions, and an identification with the three young people themselves. The following may be some suitable questions:

- What thoughts, do you think, are crossing the minds of each of the young persons depicted in the picture?
- What is your opinion of the young lady? If you were the boy in the middle and knew what was happening, how would you react?
- Should the girl and the boy reveal their feelings to the boy in the center? Justify your answer.

Other photographs may be used to illustrate cultural differences on which dialogues can be created.

Scanlan (142) believes that in working with a photograph, teachers and students should conceive of it as but one small piece of an infinitely large puzzle made up of countless interlocking pieces. In fact, Hajdu (66) suggests that teachers start with a picture and then cut it in half so that each half makes little sense alone. For example, she cut in two a picture of a glum-



Photo: Anthony Bruculere

Fig. 2

looking man and his broken television set. After dividing the class, she showed each half a different part of the picture and then let students work in pairs to tell each other what they saw. A single picture, which formerly gave only one or two students an opportunity to speak, is now a conversation stimulus for the entire class.

Scanlan (142) proposes a number of activities with pictures:

- 1 "Feed" students the necessary lexical items for the questions they might ask about a picture, perhaps writing each word on the board after the student has properly pronounced it and used it correctly. This approach lessens the problems of faulty pronunciation which are usually due to the student's incorrect reading.
- 2 Distribute a list of the vocabulary items which are necessary or most useful in discussing the photo in advance so that the oral exercise flows more smoothly.
- 3 Teachers may wish to distribute or display the picture in advance, provide students with dictionaries, and have them prepare the necessary vocabulary on their own.
- 4 Students may be asked to describe the photo (orally or in written form) to someone else, who supposedly has not seen it.

Boswell (19) offers a slight variation by asking students of all levels to choose a picture of interest to them. They are to attach it to a sheet of $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ paper which will fit in their notebook. On the back they are to describe in French what the picture is about or what it suggests, underlining any words which they look up in the dictionary. He suggests the following assignments by level for the first picture: Level 2 will write 3–5 sentences; Level 3 will write 5–8; Level 4 will write 8–10 and Level 5 will write 10–15 sentences. He then marks the assignment for free composition. He stresses his practice of never marking too severely since he wants to encourage self-expression in the target language regardless of errors.

Visuals, cautions Ziegler (165), must be selected according to their language relevancy. Arendt (5) applauds the use of visuals in the language classroom. "By their very introduction various visuals add variety to learning and attract by their novelty. The visuals remove the teacher from stage center or replace a text for a time, offering a welcome change" (p. 53). Taggart (151) points out that there is a great deal to be done in this area. "The planning, production and use of pictorial materials for second-language teaching constitutes a rich field for creative experimentation on the part of course designers, methodologists, audio-visual specialists and especially . . . teachers" (p. 93).

Cartoons and comic strips

It is surprising that very few textbooks contain humor. The situation is gradually being remedied, but in the meantime, students may be given an introduction to the target language's humor by posting carefully chosen cartoons, comic strips, and anecdotes on the bulletin board. Cartoons are extremely useful in the teaching of a language since they may help stimulate conversation or provide a point of departure for oral and/or written compositions. If a number of cartoons is available, the teacher may decide to post a different one each day, thus providing "Today's smile" in the target language. Fowles (51) points out that cartoons can be had fairly cheaply—for the price of a magazine—and suggests that they be mounted for class use. "Not being ephemeral like a joke or a sight gag," says Fowles, "they can be studied closely. They usually have a line of dialogue which can be learned, and a picture which goes some little ways towards showing the conditions under which the language is used. And like all humor, they are innately intriguing or at least diverting" (p. 156).

In addition to increasing cultural knowledge, Mollica (110, 115) suggests that cartoons be used:

- 1 to provide humor in a general way
- 2 to reinforce the teaching of both morphology and syntax
- 3 to teach vocabulary and illustrate idiomatic expressions

- 4 to satirize current or topical news events
- 5 to satirize styles and ways of dressing
- 6 to provide humor on a given theme or topic.

Cartoons whose caption has been deleted will also provide a source for oral or written work.

- 1 They may be used for oral testing.
- 2 Students may be asked to provide suitable captions. This should not be too difficult since the cartoon itself will suggest most of the vocabulary. Teachers may decide to post these on the bulletin board as well, thus rewarding students for their work and encouraging them to continue.
- 3 Cartoons may be transferred onto a transparency with the original caption on an overlay. Students will be curious to compare their caption with the original.
- 4 Cartoons with three or more sequential vignettes are ideal for short oral or written compositions. Teachers may: ask a series of questions, the answers to which form the basis of the vignette description; ask students to indicate some of the vocabulary and idioms; ask students to give an oral description; or ask students to write a twenty-five to thirty-word composition based on the sequence of the vignettes.

Quite a number of articles has been written on the last suggestion. Rollet (137) suggests that comic strips (in French, *bandes dessinées*, commonly abbreviated *B.D.*) help students express themselves as spontaneously and as freely as possible in the target language. Montredon (120) opts for the humorous comic strip, for it can be better understood by a foreign observer, and to familiarize oneself with the humor of another country is to go to the very heart of its culture. For Brooks (23), humor occupies an important place in the teaching of culture, so much so, that he lists it among the matters which appear central and critical in the analysis of culture.

In an effort to encourage North American scholars and teachers to exploit the pedagogical potential of comics, Brown (24) proposes a theoretical framework for comics in the foreign language classroom. He reviews the major areas in which scholars in France formulated a pedagogy of comics and provides a short bibliography of the most recent studies. Most of the methodologies so far devised center on pedagogical applications of comic strips to the teaching of language, culture, and literature (André, 2; Fresnault-Deruelle, 53; Friedman, 56; Gauthier, 58; Gillon, 61).

Rollet and Tremblay (138, 139) provide exercises which guide students and help them to describe the individual pictures, to make links between them, and to produce original dialogue. Both Montredon (120) and Rollet (137) have suggested a series of innovative exercises which focus on language learning and stress both oral and written skills. A short inventory of exercises is offered by Marsadié and Saint-Perron (100) while Larochelle

(90) provides comic strips for the learning environment, discussing theoretical information in detail and suggesting creative exercises for their use.

Personal teaching experience has shown that cartoons or comic strips can be a good stimulating and motivational force in language learning. Provided that they are used wisely, sparingly, and effectively, they can become an indispensable tool in the acquisition of language and culture.

Advertisements

Advertisements from current magazines and newspapers may be both entertaining and instructive. They may be used for testing comprehension, as a means to expand students' basic vocabulary, as a basis for translation exercises, and, on occasion, as a means of supplying insight into the culture of the target language. In addition, a host of activities can be created to provide ample opportunities for language interaction. Easily found in daily newspapers or magazines, the advertisement may be cut out and mounted so that it will stand out better, or be quickly transferred onto a transparency. Loew (96) suggests using the opaque projector for this type of activity. Whatever the method, the aim is to ensure that students are able to see the visual material as clearly as possible. The teacher can then proceed with a varied series of activities depending upon the linguistic ability of the students.

Examining various movie advertisements, Mollica (111) proposes a series of activities to reinforce language skills and provide an insight into the target language's culture. One of these exercises is the matching of movie titles in English with those in the target language. It is obvious that a literal translation is often impossible and that, to overcome this problem, the plot of the movie plays a major role in determining the translation of the title. *True Grit* became *Cento dollari per lo sceriffo* in Italian since one hundred dollars was offered Rooster Cogburn (played by John Wayne) by Mattie Ross (Kim Darby) to track down her father's killers. Pietro Germi's *Signore e Signori* (literally, *Ladies and Gentlemen*), a hilarious satire dealing with the Italians' sexual mores, became *The Birds, the Bees and the Italians*. Universal Films's *Jaws* became *Les Dents de la mer* (Figure 3). Both titles convey a similar idea, but the French is more colorful and the imagery is accentuated rather than lost in the translation. The English title, emphasized by a picture of a shark, jaws open wide, ready to tear and gnaw human beings, suggests a gory image. *Les Dents de la mer*, on the other hand, conjures up an image of vastness (*la mer*) ready to engulf—not as gory an image as *Jaws* but nevertheless a cruel and frightful one. And the monosyllabic words which make up the title give the impression of a chewing effect (*les/dents/de/la/mer/*). The corresponding French word for a literal translation, *mâchoire*, would have been meaningless and quite ineffective as a movie title.

Advertisements are well suited to test students' comprehension of the

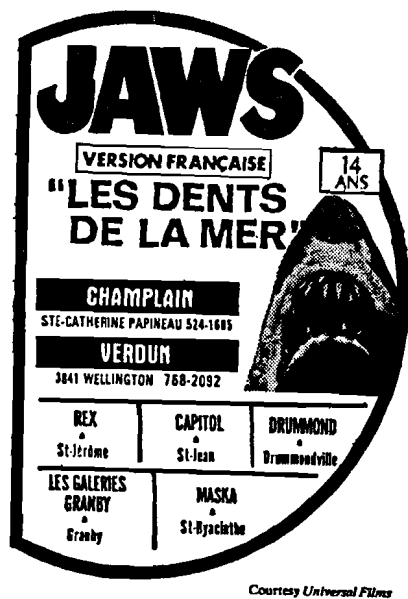


Fig. 3 Jaws advertisement



Fig. 4 Harvey's advertisement

visual material, to personalize questions, and to involve students in general activities on a given topic. For example, Figure 4 will illustrate the technique.

Comprehension

- 1 Comment s'appelle ce restaurant?
- 2 Où est-ce qu'il se trouve?
- 3 Qu'est-ce qu'on peut acheter chez Harvey's?
- 4 Combien d'argent épargne-t-on aujourd'hui?
- 5 Qu'est-ce que le prix de 99 cents comprend?
- 6 Enumérez ce qu'on peut acheter pour 99 cents.

Personal questions

- 1 Quand allez-vous chez Harvey's?
- 2 Pourquoi préférez-vous le restaurant Harvey's?
- 3 A quelle distance de votre maison se trouve le restaurant Harvey's?
- 4 Comment y allez-vous? (à pied, à bicyclette, en auto, en autobus).

Activities

- 1 *Making a TV commercial.* Imaginez qu'on vient de vous demander de

préparer une annonce pour la télé. Essayez de persuader aux téléspectateurs d'aller dîner chez Harvey's.

- 2 *Making a newspaper ad.* Imaginez qu'on vous demande d'écrire une annonce pour le quotidien de votre ville. Préparez une annonce pour le restaurant Harvey's et illustrez-la.

Linguistic/Cultural Curiosities (Here, Canadianisms)

- 1 *spécial:* signifie valeur exceptionnelle article recommandé et ne s'emploie pas au féminin. Le mot est un canadianisme et n'est pas reçu dans le bon usage de la francophonie (Bélisle, 10).
- 2 *patates frites:* des pommes de terre frites. L'expression est un canadianisme (Bélisle, 10).
- 3 *liqueur douce:* boisson gazeuse. Ces mots sont des anglicismes (*soft drink*) et il serait généralement souhaitable de les faire disparaître de la langue (Bélisle, 10).
- 4 In the address, students should note that the direction precedes the name of the street (cf., King Street West) and that the direction (*ouest*) is followed by a comma.

The *curiosités linguistiques/culturelles* are an excellent way of making students aware that language changes constantly and that sometimes one language influences another. Here, language has direct appeal and accentuates local color.

Careful attention must be paid, however, to advertisements "translated" from another language. The results may be disastrous or hilariously funny. Hill (67) tells us that General Motors was puzzled by the lack of enthusiasm the introduction of its Chevrolet Nova automobile aroused among its Puerto Rican dealers. The reason, it turned out, was simple: *Nova* means *star* in Spanish, but when spoken it sounds like "*no va*," which means "it doesn't go." The company quickly changed the car's name to *Caribe* and it sold nicely.

It is interesting to put an English slogan in another language, and Collins (31) proposes such an exercise. Do you recall the Esso slogan? The English "Put a tiger in your tank" stresses the place when potential strength is to be found. And it seems that both Spanish (*¡Ponga un tigre en su tanque!*) and German (*Pack den Tiger in den Tank!*) concur with the slogan (almost!) literally. French and Italian disagree as to where the strength is to be found, and they put the power ("tiger") in the motor: "*Mettez un tigre dans votre moteur*" and "*Metti un tigre nel motore*." The four slogans provide an interesting discussion (Mollica, 116) and Italian (is it male chauvinism?) even changed *una tigre*, usually a feminine noun, into *un tigre*, an archaic and no longer used word. As for the symbol of the tiger, Ash (6) provides interesting reading.

An analysis of four advertisements will show how different activities can be suggested.

Figure 5 presents verbs from the world of violence (*assassinare, freddare*).



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

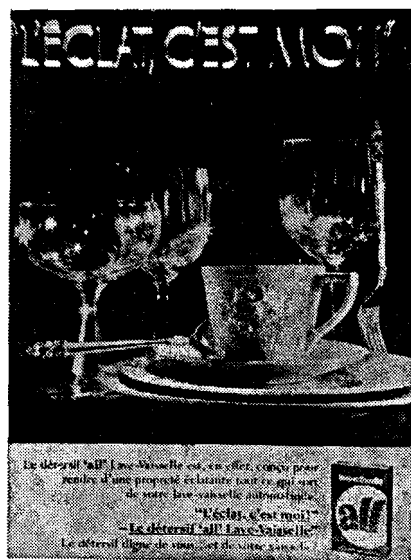


Fig. 8

Students may be assigned an exercise aimed at vocabulary expansion. Other verbs with similar meanings might be *uccidere*, *ammazzare*, *trucidare*, *massacrare*, *fucilare*, *sterminare*, *stecchire*, *traffiggere*, etc. In addition to vocabulary building, teachers may also wish to point out that the lady shops

daily—a “cultural” characteristic evident in the photograph. Comprehension questions may also be asked. Figure 6 lends itself well to role playing. Students may be asked to act out the scene. The dialogue may be drawn directly from the ad (reminiscent of the *fotoromanzo* format) or made up by students. Teachers may point out that soap comes in a *fustino* as well in Italy. Figure 7 provides a point of departure for introducing proverbs (*La pratique amène l'excellence*), but the proverb also illustrates the activity in the picture (the boy plays the piano and baseball—an opportunity to introduce *jouer de* and *jouer à*). Practice will make perfect for the boy just as practice has led Harding carpets to excellence. The durability of the product is assured: the boy (running shoes on his feet, baseball bat near the chair) seems to indicate that these carpets can take a lot of wear and tear. At another language level, Figure 8 alters the famous Louis XIV quote to suit the ad. The slogan, like the product, stands high, absolute, above different items of various sizes (representing possibly the subjects). *All* is the *nec plus ultra* among similar products. Everything sparkles in the picture—including the slogan. Students may be given other famous sayings and asked to alter them for different ads.

Loew (96) suggests that ten-minute oral discussion on advertisements might provide answers to the following questions:

- What kinds of products are advertised?
- To whom?
- Why do people buy these products?
- What influence do American products have on the foreign market?
- Compare/contrast the advertising approach with that in similar American/Canadian magazines.

Let students draw their own conclusions on what the foreigner buys and how he or she is approached. Another day, take one or two short advertisement texts, duplicating them on ditto (Jorstad, 81; Rallo, 135; Schulz, 145; Seelye and Day, 146). Choose those that are interesting, possibly even amusing, and those that contain structural materials under study in the class; for example, commands are in many ads. Have an ad on display during the class to show how it is set up and to aid students pictorially. Loew (96) also suggests that teachers gloss particularly difficult words with cognates and use this as an intensive reading assignment. They might also: point out or elicit familiar structures in the text; pronounce new words and difficult sounds; have students read the ad as if it were being broadcast over TV or radio. Ads with a dialogue are particularly good for role playing. The language used can prove interesting to students as well as to teachers; the increasing number of English words in Italian advertisements, for example, reveal the American influence on Italian life: *comfort*, *privacy*, *camping*, *nite dancing*, *after shave*, etc. (Tursi, 155). Several authors include advertise-

ments in readers or basic texts (e.g., Da Silva, 41; Kozma, 86), or as a collection of ads to be studied separately (Wielandt and Wild, 160).

Pedagogical applications of advertisements in the language classroom are often discussed at length and in detail (Ganderton and McBride, 57), excellent bibliographies are readily available (Lacoste and Metz, 87; Phelouzat and Yahi, 131), grammar textbooks frequently include a discussion on advertisements (Annaratone and Rossi, 3; Biagi and Heilmann, 12), and learned journals devote entire issues to them (Friedman, 54, 55)

Slides

Slides and filmstrips are readily available from many commercial firms. They provide an excellent visual element in the classroom and can emphasize various aspects of the life and culture of the country whose language is being studied. Slides may be used for vocabulary building, grammatical exercises, free conversation stimulus, as well as in compositions, culture, and literature. Runte (140) suggests that when introducing vocabulary items in a unit, a slide of the word might be shown. For example, a word like "croissant" adds cultural background and provides a change from a transparency on which the teacher has sketched one. Salt (141) believes that pictorial impressions help a student to remember "new words." They also allow the teacher to concentrate upon areas of vocabulary which are of obvious interest to students. Slides may complement a basic language program. In *Basic Italian* (Speroni and Golino, 148) there are many references to Fiesole, Milan, Naples, Capri, Venice, Siena, Pisa, Rome, but the city most emphasized in this text is Florence. The many slides readily available for Florence make it possible to prepare short descriptions on its churches, its monuments, its museums, its paintings—vestiges of an era for which Italy is justly famous. A guidebook may be a useful source to assist teachers in describing the views presented. Jaremko (79) tells of a project developed in Calgary, Alberta, in response to an urgent need. "*Le français à Calgary*" is a series of filmstrips and tapes prepared as a supplement to the first fourteen lessons of the course *Voix et Images de France*. Calgary houses, stores, the Stampede, scenes at school, students en route to the movies, shopping, visits to a large local park all emphasize interests of junior high school students. Jaremko's main goal in the pilot project is to adapt the course materials to students' lives in Calgary.

Mollica (115) suggests that slides be used to develop more fully topics to which only a passing reference has been made. In *Basic Italian* (148), the authors refer to the *palio* (a horse race at Siena) and yet a full description is never given. The teacher may take the reference as a point of departure and prepare a unit on the *palio*. A similar unit could be developed on "Art in Florence" in which paintings of both the Uffizi Gallery and Pitti Palace could be shown and discussed. Arendt's (5) teachers have developed slide sets on French, German, and Spanish foods. The possibilities for this type

of activity are limited only by the number of slides the teacher has or by the number of projects the teacher may wish to assign.

Slides may be used to illustrate imaginary tours. Given a city map (e.g., Florence), students are told that the whole class will be taking a sight-seeing tour of that city. With the aid of slides, the teacher (acting as a guide) describes the various points of interest as the bus travels through the city. The teacher may decide to stop at any given place and tour the interior with the class. To encourage student participation, the teacher may ask three or four students to take turns as guides for part of the trip. The same procedure can be followed for a "walking tour," and students should be encouraged to "stop" along the way and do some shopping. This latter technique will increase student participation since some will be acting as vendors and others as tourists. Students involved actively in this presentation will be required to do some advance preparation (Mollica, 117).

Slides may be used to introduce or recapitulate a reading selection. Some reading passages in *Basic Italian* (148) lend themselves beautifully to this technique. Examine, for example, the *lettura* of Lesson 24, in which slides can be easily integrated with the reading material. If, however, finished slides are not available, what may be used instead? Howlett (72) suggests that pictures related to the core of the course be collected from magazines and newspapers, and turned into slides.

Runte (140) points out, however, that for slides to be an effective tool, certain pitfalls must be avoided: 1) an overdose of slides caused by the enthusiasm of the instructor, and 2) teacher monopoly on images and conversation. This situation can be reversed if individual students are allowed "to show" the slide(s) and ask questions accordingly.

Transparencies

Perhaps the most useful aid in the day-to-day classroom situation is the overhead projector. A well-chosen, well-prepared transparency will save the teacher a tremendous amount of time and will give the student needed visual reinforcement. Particularly at the early stages of language learning, the transparency may be used to illustrate vocabulary items, and prevent the teacher from giving an English translation. Such a procedure will also establish the fact that English will be kept at a minimum in the language classroom. Mollica (115) suggests several uses of transparencies:

- 1 *Teaching general vocabulary.* Commercial firms (such as Gessler, 60, or Wible, 159) make transparencies which can be used in any language to teach parts of the body, articles of clothing, household items, foods, tableware, fruits, vegetables, beverages, and desserts, professions, occupations, trades, animals—both domestic and wild—, travel, means of transportation, and so on. These items should be taught in context. The transparency on foods, desserts, etc., could be a suitable introduction to

- a restaurant scene or to the preparation of a menu in the target language. The transparency illustrating the various trades, professions, or occupations could be used when teaching "to be (*être/ser/essere/sein*) plus profession or occupation."
- 2 *Teaching the vocabulary of a given lesson.* The teacher may wish to prepare a transparency illustrating nouns appearing in a textbook lesson. Some texts, such as Da Silva's (39) already provide a visual vocabulary, however.
 - 3 *Teaching time.* A transparency of a clock with movable hands is most useful for this purpose.
 - 4 *Visual reinforcement during oral exercises.* There are always some students who do not pay attention to oral answers. Many drills in textbooks may be written out or done orally. In either case, these drills may be quickly corrected if the answers appear on the transparency. The entire exercise should be masked and the answers shown one by one. The student who did not hear or pay attention to the spoken answer will see it in written form. The student who did hear or did pay attention to the answer will have a visual reinforcement.
 - 5 *Cue cards.* If a dialogue is transferred to a transparency, it can serve as a cue card, and the students will be able to accompany the dialogue with suitable gestures.
 - 6 *Aids to grammar lessons.* As a review of the present tense, for example, the teacher may type the infinitive stem on a basic transparency; the endings—in a different color—would appear on an overlay.
 - 7 *Geography of a country.* Mollica (115) suggests that a map is ideal for both teaching and testing. A blank map might be distributed to the students who are then asked to name the various Italian *capoluoghi*. The answers can be treated as vocabulary items. The same can be done with the various regions of Italy. Answers can be checked after the "test" maps are exchanged for marking. This can be done with overlays if the blank map is placed on a static transparency. The map of Italy with its regional boundaries and dots indicating the cities should be the static transparency while the names of the regions and cities should be placed on overlays.
 - 8 *Conversational stimuli.* Yale Book Co. (163) has an excellent series for French, German, Italian, and Spanish, each accompanied by teaching guides.
 - 9 *Miscellaneous.* Transparencies may also be used to provide summaries of short stories (Mollica, 114), and material for oral testing and directed dialogues, and for short or oral compositions.

Newspapers and magazines

Echard (46) offers perhaps the best reason for including newspapers and magazines in the language classroom: "Any sequential course of language

studies which does not at some period include exposure to the language through a medium not specifically tailored to the teaching of that language will remain a very artificial thing" (p. 27). James and Lange (78) not only agree with her but also describe how newspaper and magazine material can be used for vocabulary building, speaking practice, reading comprehension, and written and cultural exercises. Whether it be short material (such as advertisements, want ads, weather reports, cartoons and comic strips, entertainment listings), long material (full length feature articles, editorials, letters to the editor, fictional stories), or technical material (headlines, photograph captions, mastheads, tables of contents, column headings and datelines), the printed matter offers a springboard for a host of pedagogical activities which, if used effectively, will help the acquisition of language skills and provide an insight into another country's culture. The value of the newspaper is so widely recognized that it is often included even in first-language classes. Although teachers will benefit from a reading of James and Lange (78), other authors such as Campeau and Ménard (28), Partlow (129), and Soulières (147) should also be considered for their many useful and innovative ideas.

The past decade has seen books in Spanish, French, and Italian which systematically present articles originally published in newspapers and magazines. Authors such as Alegría (1), Gregor (64), Morton and Morton (121) are among those providing good coverage of topics of current interest, and their books are generally well annotated, with factual questions, topics for discussion, vocabulary aids, etc. Echard (46), however, complains that books of this nature present the students with a "package deal" at a point when most can profit from a more free-ranging personal exploration; they cannot be adopted with the same degree of ease to serve individual interests; moreover, they lose their topicality in direct ratio to their years. Jorstad (81), Rallo (135), Schulz (145) and Seelye and Day (146) have provided duplicating masters to assist teachers in obtaining quick copies but an opaque projector will also be of considerable aid.

Howlett (71) shares the view that "The newspaper is a living force. It is current; it is real. Best of all, it was never intended for classroom use. It was never adopted lexically or structurally. Just think of it, no pattern drills, no structural exercises. Good old living French. Unbelievable! But the newspaper must not be considered as a frill, a diversion, or entertainment. It should be an integral part of the course. It can provide the starting point for short discussions; it can help build a rich and varied vocabulary" (p. 752). Echard (46) points out that "besides its diversity, there is contemporaneity not only of subject matter but also of vocabulary. Pollution, ecology, hi-jacking, transplants, drugs, women's liberation, the generation gap, all these are subjects which we cannot begin to discuss adequately without having recourse to magazines, newspapers, etc. It is only there that we find the words we need; they have certainly not filtered down into dictionaries as yet," (p. 27). Teachers are advised to subscribe to magazines or newspapers directly

from the country or province (in the case of Québec) of origin, since publications by various ethnic groups in North America are often influenced by both English language and North American culture.

Films

Since films continue to be a major vehicle for recreation and social ideology, they should constitute an effective tool for language learning. Mitchell (107) identifies three major reasons for including film in the course of study:

- 1 Motion pictures are a major contemporary artistic expression, a distinct genre
- 2 Their cultural value now lies far beyond pure entertainment
- 3 As a part of its continuing responsibility in the broad field of the arts, education should contribute to the development of a more informed and discerning film audience

Teachers often struggle to create the illusion of a foreign language milieu. "A film can provide it, complete with gesture, costume, customs and individual idiom. It transports students into another world. The visual medium is more absorbing than the printed page and more readily creates emotional appeal" (Mitchell, 107, p. 30).

Connole (32) concurs with Mitchell and suggests that film may be studied as a psychological document, as material for sociological study dealing with life and culture, or as artistic expression. Mitchell chose *Les visiteurs du soir* (written by Jacques Prévert and directed by Marcel Carné) for study with her Level V students, and the film involved students in many meaningful and interesting class and out-of-class assignments.

Walbruck (157) tells of an experiment in which one group of students used films and handbooks, the other tapes and handbooks only. In subsequent tests the group using the films scored better in language absorption than the group without films. He points out that using films saves time, since the visual content helps to communicate meaning, and retention is increased because of the impact of the pictorial impressions.

Arendt (5) is not overly pleased with the language films available from commercial sources. He feels that they are generally plodding, lifeless portrayals of life abroad, but singles out the *Toute la Bande* films for French and the *Guten Tag* and *Guten Tag Wie Geht's* films for German as exceptions to this generalization.

A quick survey of the recently available literature would indicate, however, that it is the full-length or feature film which is used in high school courses (Mitchell, 107) or at the college/university level (Bondanella, 17; Connole, 32; Figge, 49; Markey, 99; Michalczyk, 103. Courses on the cinema have become increasingly popular in the last few years, not only

because of a country's important contribution to the development of film art but also because many small departments have viewed them as a means of expanding enrollments beyond the traditional areas of language or literature.

Figge (49) suggests some possibilities for teaching German culture through the medium of fictional film and gives brief examples of German films that he found useful in communicating some aspect or problem of twentieth-century culture.

Michalczyk (103) notes that "on the human level the students learned to avoid generalizations and idealizations. They found themselves putting aside prominent myths of a 'romantic' Paris, especially after seeing the housing, traffic, and population problems; and that of the provinces as '*le désert français*,' after coming into contact with the rich and varied cultural level of the small, southern village" (p. 234).

Moget and Ferenczi (109) point out that showing a film introduces into the classroom a world of singular representations whose affective impact arouses an intense participation. Darkness and the impression of isolation make students unaware of their surroundings and their attention is riveted on the screen. The result is an effect of bewilderment which breaks the rhythm of routine activities, and the innovation in the use of time fights fatigue, avoids saturation, stimulates, and frees the student's energy.

Films can be a motivational source as well as a teaching aid. They can change the class' atmosphere and multiply conversational exchanges between teacher and students. Indeed, in some cases, the film constitutes part of the French examination. Connole (32) reports that in Australia in 1973, the written section of the French examination was reduced by ten minutes and a short test on the study of films took place on another date. The test consisted of six questions based on two excerpts which were shown twice. The first was a multiple-choice language question dealing with three expressions found in the sequence shown; in another, candidates were asked to describe the context of the two questions which linked the excerpts shown to the principal themes of the films.

Connole points out the flexibility of films:

- 1 In the course of a viewing it is possible to stop the film at any given point and to focus on important sequences or to go back for an in-depth study and discussion.
- 2 Where English subtitles exist, students may be involved in an interesting discussion on the difficulty of translation. (Connole's students were very critical of the subtitles.)
- 3 Sound tracks may be used in class or given to students for review.
- 4 The dialogue may be used to prepare language lessons at varied levels for structured exercises.

Dahms (35) discusses in detail how exercises based on films reinforce

grammar. For example, if adjectives and their endings are being reviewed, he selects a set of ten sentences from the script, omitting the adjective endings. If relative clauses are being studied, the students are given sentences to be made into relative clauses. At a less advanced level, verb tenses may be changed, sentences converted to singular or plural, and so on. For the actual film period, Dahms often constructs a set of questions in the target language on the content of the segment. These questions usually require extremely short answers which can be gleaned directly from the film and reproduced almost verbatim, the aim being to check comprehension. Questions ranged from the very simple *Who? When? Where? How?* sort to more complex ones, depending upon the level of the class. For more advanced students, the additional questions, discussions, and written assignments deal in social, cultural, historical, and ethical problems raised by and related to the film texts.

Television and videotapes

Television and videotapes are other sources which, like film, can create a target-language milieu and reinforce the teaching and acquisition of language skill. Berwald (11) proposes a number of activities which can take place if the sound portion of a telecast is erased and a new one is produced.

- 1 Narrate the action on the screen in the foreign language as it is taking place
- 2 Dub a dialogue in the foreign language
- 3 Dub material totally unrelated to the action on the screen to create humor

He also encourages teachers to start with American television, by selecting a program and asking students to take telegraphic notes, in French, of a five-to ten-minute segment of the program. A student might copy notes that read as follows: */homme entre maison/parle avec enfants/en train regarder télé/téléphone sonne/qui demande M. Jones/*. After the segment has been viewed, students are asked to expand their notes into composition form, observing proper agreement, verb forms, tenses, etc. It might be better, however, to use material which is already in the target language. In Ontario the government has established the Ontario Educational Communications Authority. Programs for French, Spanish, Italian and Russian are often telecast, and educators may have them dubbed by OECA for a minimal charge (Howlett, 73). These are programs designed specifically for students learning a second language, and scripts and pedagogical guides often accompany the tapes. The aims of these programs may be summarized as follows:

- 1 To provide classroom teachers with an opportunity to immerse their students in a real-life situation in the language

- 2 To provide language reinforcement
- 3 To provide cultural enrichment.

Mollica (113) has examined one such program and has suggested a number of pre-viewing and post-viewing activities. While the post-viewing activities will vary, the pre-viewing activities are suitable for a wide range of programs. It is important that students be prepared in advance in order for them to derive the maximum benefit from the program. Consider the following suggestions:

- 1 Teachers may relate in their own words, in the target language, the essence of the program. Thus, they can introduce new elements and familiarize students with the plot in advance.
- 2 Teachers may distribute copies of the script in class, have students read it, and teachers discuss it with them before viewing the program.
- 3 Teachers may hand out a mimeographed sheet with a list of words or expressions taken from the program with which students should be familiar.
- 4 If the script for the program is provided by teachers, they may want to edit it by preparing marginal vocabulary and footnotes.
- 5 Students may be asked to act out the play they have read *before* seeing it on TV. They will probably identify with a particular character, when the scene is viewed on television.
- 6 Teachers may play the sound track of the program alone, without the visual element, so that students may get accustomed to the speed of delivery of the actors.

More recently, OECA (122) has produced a series of thirty ten-minute episodes built around a basic French vocabulary presented in attractive skit form and featuring the noted Québécois clown "Sol." Written by Denise Boiteau and David Stansfield, *Parlez-moi* may be obtained from OECA at minimal cost. A script which accompanies the tapes may be reproduced for educational purposes as long as credit is given to OECA.

Berwald (11) used TV commercials in French, for they lend themselves well to instruction on several counts:

- 1 Often the same commercials appear in an English version in the United States. Students are interested in seeing how the same message is treated in another language (or in another culture).
- 2 There is often much humor, action, and variety in a tautly prepared sixty-second dramatization.
- 3 Written sentences often appear on the screen to aid comprehension and reinforce the spoken form.
- 4 The addition of music or a jingle renders the announcement more interesting and amusing.

- 5 The time factor is excellent; there is much that can be done with a minute of material, and yet it is an allotment of time students can handle without getting confused or bored.
- 6 A commercial is also a good starting point for further use of television.

An advantage of a videotaperecorder is the pause button which allows the action to be "frozen" on the screen (much like the film projector), thus allowing teachers to pose as many questions as they wish.

Arendt (5) suggests still another use of the videotape; he reports that one of his teachers videotaped a bullfight on location in Mexico and received permission to tape a number of commercial television programs as well. The programs were well received by students and teachers eager to see what foreigners are watching for entertainment.

Buehler (27) used the VTR to train teaching assistants. The flexibility of the VTR allows the instructor to stop or rerun any segment of the videotape for closer analysis, discussion or general critique.

The bulletin board

Holt (68) comments that although he has been in a good many school buildings—hundreds, many of them very new—he can count on the fingers of two hands those in which the halls were made more alive and human by art or decoration, by the children or anyone else. Mitchell (108) shares that view.

In many a language classroom there is almost nothing which would immediately identify it to the eye as a place where the "other-language" lurks. Posters and other visual material on the walls not only render the learning environment more pleasant, but carry a subtle cultural message as well. This is admittedly easier for teachers who are located in one room for all their classes than it is for an itinerant teacher or one who circulates from room to room during the day. But even the latter can make some arrangement with the other teachers involved, to establish, in the room they use, some visual contact with the language (p. 257).

Just "decorating" the classroom is not enough. Materials for this purpose should be changed often and should have an integral role in classroom activities.

To what extent does the environment of the language classroom appeal to the senses? How much smell, taste, touch, emotion and visual impact has the language lost by being forced into the classroom? Is it

possible that, in order to squeeze the language into the learning box, we have lopped off the very things which lend meaning to the language? How often do students leave a language classroom, not entirely sure whether they have just had a French lesson or a period of Math? All that we need do, perhaps, is compare the student's exposure in the classroom to what he would experience in the actual milieu where the target language is used natively. How much of the cultural background, the paralinguistic blanket, is to be found in school? . . . Our language programs surely have to allow the students not only to discover language facts, but also to soak up some of the feelings, the sounds, the sights and the smells which accompany them. This is what gives to language some element of reality, of life; this is what makes it enjoyable and meaningful to learn. (Mitchell, 108, p. 256).

Arendt (5) suggests that by clipping pictures from magazines, alert teachers have created attractive bulletin boards, have taught vocabulary, structure drills, and basic sentences, and have stimulated oral and written compositions.

The bulletin board can be a "visual" force helping to stress language skills. Thematic bulletin boards (Christmas, Easter, national holidays) provide insights into the other culture as well as expansion of vocabulary. Students should be encouraged to collect pictorial materials from magazines and should be made responsible, on a rotating basis, for sections of the display area. They are generally eager to cooperate, and prizes may even be offered to those students who prepare the bulletin board with the greatest eye-appeal.

During an era of dwindling language enrollments, teachers should seize every opportunity "to sell" their subject. Though school corridors could be brightened up with murals and pictures, they are often bare. Enthusiasm is contagious and it will not take long for other students to start wanting "to drop into" the language classroom. Let us make that place welcoming and appealing!

Conclusion

It is easy for any teacher to become overconfident with a good enrollment in the first year. But how many students stay in the same course in the second and subsequent years? It is equally easy to blame declining enrollments on the absence of language requirements, inadequate textbooks, or lack of encouragement by an unenlightened administration. "In the past two decades," says Lafayette (88), "we have spent an inordinate amount of time seeking one correct approach to teaching foreign languages with the result that every ten or fifteen years a new approach is introduced and immediately placed at odds against the old. Hopefully, the current enrollment and

retention problems will suggest to all of us that the past is not to be emulated. Rather than pursuing the search for the one faith, we should gather all that is good from various past methods and entertain the possibility of using different approaches with different students" (p. 352).

"We are going to have to provide the student some options in what he *wants* to learn of foreign languages," urges Strasheim (150). "We can use his interests to go where we think we must, but we must use *his* interests" (p. 53). Mitchell (108) echoes her concerns. Because language programs are sequential—or at least continuing in nature—one starts off with a base of a certain number of students, and each year or at each level thereafter some students drop out. Hardly ever do students "drop in." This results in a pyramid effect, with only a small portion of those who started reaching the apex in senior years. To offset this, Mitchell suggests that teachers should be devising supplementary language programs of various kinds, both to ensure appropriate experiences to the greatest number of students, and also to allow some of them to "drop in" on language study, if only for a limited time.

In addition to the varied activities, Mitchell urges that we offer a variety of language courses tailored to fit students with different backgrounds; that we adjust our classroom procedures to make the situation more comfortable for the learner; that we capitalize on interests students have before they walk through our classroom doors; that we help Johnny and his parents to be aware of just how much progress he is making in the language.

Daniel (38) designed a questionnaire suitable for any foreign language program and for several grade levels. It was hoped that in the development and implementation of program, teachers would be assisted by having on hand some data on certain *student* views such as:

- 1 Reasons for studying foreign language
- 2 Perceptions of the aims of foreign language programs
- 3 Evaluation of certain aspects of foreign language programs
- 4 Reasons for discontinuing the study of a foreign language.

Colleagues have also provided either short, quick quizzes for self-evaluation of language teachers (Lannéval, 89) or longer, foreign-language attitude surveys designed to help teachers explore their own attitudes and assumptions concerning language learning and teaching (De García et al., 43). Teachers realize, as Phillips (132) points out, that "the neatly wrapped package for uniform distribution to a group of potential language learners has failed to live up to its advertising. There is no one right method for all learners at all stages. Alternatives in pace, content, goals and learning strategies require teachers and students alike to make choices—choices about *how* they learn and *what* they learn, all within the foreign language context" (p. 11).

Papalia (126) firmly believes that:

It is necessary to understand and identify the learning styles a student utilizes in order to enhance motivation and increase learning . . . Is the student an *incremental learner* who likes to learn step by step? An *intuitive learner* who leaps to generalizations? A *sensory specialist* who learns better by seeing or hearing? An *emotionally involved learner* who depends heavily on interpersonal relationships? An *eclectic learner* who is able to adapt to any learning style? In seeking answers to these questions, teachers acknowledge that each student is an individual who learns in a unique way and that options in learning should be provided for all students. By seeking these answers, they can better adjust their teaching materials and classroom pacing and grouping, and tailor instruction to the needs of each individual. Individualizing the mode of learning is as essential as individualizing the rate of learning (p. 15).

Zampogna et al. (164) concur: "Language teachers interested in individualizing instruction should design learning environments which provide varying degrees of structure, and should use different strategies and materials compatible with the individual differences of the learner" (p. 447). Recent writings by Hosenfeld (69, 70) and Wood (161) also reinforce the suggestions.

Figure 9 shows five settings proposed by Papalia (126).

Setting One: To facilitate 1) the introduction of new material; 2) the use of audio-visual aids; 3) testing; 4) activities where everyone is doing the same thing; 5) independent work; and 6) choral work.

Setting Two: To facilitate 1) teacher mobility; 2) eye contact; 3) pupil attention; 4) communication; 5) game playing; and 6) teacher control.

Setting Three: To facilitate 1) large-group discussion; 2) participation of the teacher as an equal; 3) an informal atmosphere for oral presentations; and 4) communication directed to all, not just to the teacher.

Setting Four: To facilitate 1) remedial activities; 2) tutoring; 3) use of tape recorders and media; 4) reinforcement of learned material; 5) use of self-instructional materials; 6) peer teaching; 7) skit planning; 8) games for two; 9) one-to-one teacher-pupil interaction; 10) self-pacing; 11) teacher awareness of individual learning problems; and 12) grouping according to interests or needs.

Setting Five: To enhance 1) peer interaction; 2) peer teaching; 3) "specific skill" grouping; 4) variable pacing; 5) tutorial work; 6) games, simulations, and role playing in a competitive or noncompetitive setting; 7) group projects; and 8) oral practice (pp. 34–35).

Like a puzzle—using different pieces to provide a beautiful picture as the end result—these suggestions for using supplementary material should provide a lasting mosaic which helps to ensure success in language learning and teaching.

As UCLA's W. H. Magoun pointed out to Leonard (93), "In our sense

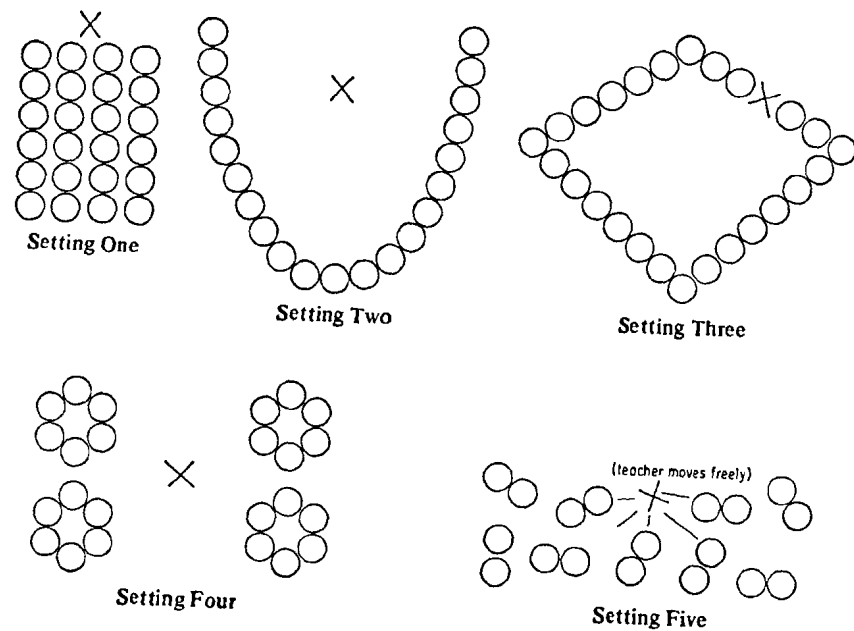


Fig. 9 Classroom settings (Papalia, 126)

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organs—eyes, ears and so on—we possess the most beautifully controlled, delicate and effective access to the brain. If we want to change a brain, we can best do it though through our natural senses. That is what we *are* doing everyday, what society has always done. The puzzle for the future is how to do it better" (p. 34).

Each day we face impressionable young people who are spending their formative years in our classrooms. Our task is to educate them—*educare*, in its Latin meaning, *to lead out*—and to provide classroom settings as well as teaching which is interesting and dynamic. Teachers have never been known to lack creativity or imagination. We are molding tomorrow's world leaders today. No other profession can boast of such creative responsibility.

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