TexTESOL III Newsletter

Texas Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

February 2005   www.textesol.org/region3

Letter from the President

On New Year's Eve, I had lunch with a good friend. I asked him if he was going to make any New Year's resolutions. He answered quickly with a NO! I asked why not. He sighed and told me why should he when he couldn't keep them for more than a week!

This conversation started me thinking. Why should we make so many resolutions when we can't keep any of them? Why not just make one and make a good, honest effort to keep it? I wondered how I could apply this newly discovered insight to teaching my classes.

As I prepared for my classes for the new semester, I wondered if I was doing anything differently from what I did the last time I taught the course. Or was I falling into what I feel was a trap of using the same materials over and over again- even if they did produce the results I wanted? I must admit that I do my share of hand-wringing at the end of the semester because some of my students are just not getting it. I do feel guilty about this. As a result, I started to review what worked and what didn't work with the students. Did I take for granted that they knew something that I could have offered as a review and introduction to a new point?

Consequently, I discovered that I didn't always begin a class where the specific students sitting in front of me needed to begin. Now I begin with some background for each assignment. For example, I had one class of students who couldn't write summaries the way I thought they should be written, even though I did give a model to be

followed. Giving the model didn't work, so I had to re-think this particular lesson so that students would learn how to write a summary properly. I started thinking about what a summary is and what it includes. According to one of my reference texts, it is about one-fourth to one-third the length of the original. I needed to find some way to teach the students to condense the material, but at the same time to keep it relevant to not only my class but also other classes that they are or will be taking.

I decided that my students needed to know how to write an outline. I explained to them that an outline is used for both reading and writing. For reading, it could act as a quick review of the material before a test. And for writing, the outline could be used as the foundation of a summary or a plan for an essay! The next step was to instruct the students to add what would be a summary sentence and appropriate transitional words. This change made summary writing more fulfilling for both my students and me.

Contents

This is a rather long way around to suggest to you that change is a good thing. What I am suggesting is that you look at what you are doing and see what makes your lessons stronger and better. Make one New Year's resolution to look at what you are doing in one class and make change in how you teach one topic. Reflect on what students need to know before they do the topic and provide them with this added lesson. Make connections to how they can use it in their classes. Everyone will feel good, including you. And you will have not broken your New Year's resolution!

Keep in touch.
Anne-Marie
President TexTESOL Region III
aschlend@austincc.edu

DISCOVER A NEW WORLD OF EDUCATION

Sponsored by the United States Department of State, the Fulbright Teacher and Administrator Exchange arranges: direct one-to-one classroom exchanges to over thirty countries for teachers at all levels. Most exchanges occur for an academic year. Argentina, Mexico, and the United Kingdom offer fall-semester exchanges. The United Kingdom and Morocco offer six-week exchanges.

In addition to the teacher exchanges, there are administrative exchange opportunities in Argentina, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Mexico, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Thailand, Turkey and the United Kingdom. Jordan, and Uruguay currently offer opportunities to host incoming administrators during site visits to the United States. Germany offers a two-week special program for U.S. principals to study school systems there for several weeks.

The program also offers eight-week seminars in Italy or Greece for teachers of Italian, Latin, Greek or the Classics.

Prospective applicants must meet the following general eligibility requirements:
> U.S. Citizenship
> Fluency in English
> Bachelor's degree or higher
> Be in at least third year of full-time teaching
> A current full-time position

The application deadline is October 15, 2005 for the 2006-2007 program year. For more information and/or an application please visit: www.fulbrightexchanges.org or call (800)726-0479.

Vocabulary Acquisition through Storytelling
by Dr. Beniko Mason

It has been demonstrated that vocabulary acquisition is possible from listening to stories (Elley, 1989), but it has also been argued that this source of vocabulary is insufficient and inefficient, that students need direct instruction as well (e.g. Nation, 1990). In this study, I attempt to confirm that listening to stories leads to the acquisition of vocabulary as well as to determine how efficient this acquisition is, i.e., how it compares to direct instruction.

Experiment 1: Story-telling vs. List-learning

The 60 participants (n=27, n=33) were first-year English majors at a four-year private college in Osaka, Japan. All students participated in both treatments.

In the storytelling treatment, participants first took a pretest on 30 words (writing definitions in Japanese). They then listened to a story, "The North Wind and Sun," that contained the 30 words.

The words on the sheet were also written on the blackboard in front of the class. While the teacher told the story she pointed to the words on the board so that they could tell which word was used to tell the story. The participants occasionally raised their hands to indicate to the teacher when they did not understand the meaning of the word, which the teacher then explained or clarified using a drawing. The story took about 20 minutes.

After listening to the story, the participants retook the vocabulary test on the 30 words. A week later, students took an unexpected follow-up test on the same words, but presented in a different order.

The second treatment was given a week later immediately after the same participants took the follow-up test for the storytelling method. The same participants were tested on a different list of 30 words. They were given the Japanese definitions of the words and were told to try to learn the words in the next 20 minutes, using any techniques they wanted to use. Students were allowed to work together. Subjects then took a post-test and a follow-up post-test one week later, which may or may not have been expected.

As shown in table 1, the List-learning method was very successful immediately after learning. The mean score of the list method immediately after list-learning was 28.5 out of 30, while the mean score of the Story-telling method was 17.2 out of 30. The results of the follow-up test showed a large drop in retention for list-learning with much less of a drop for words acquired from story-telling. Sixty-three percent of the list-learned words that were learned were forgotten on the follow-up (26.1 words unknown, 24.6 learned, 15.7 forgotten), but only 25% of the words acquired via story-telling were forgotten on the follow-up test (21.7 words unknown, 17.2 acquired, 2.2 forgotten).

These results and interpretation were confirmed by an Analysis of Covariance. The adjusted means for the follow-up post-test were not significantly different (list-learning = 14.6, story-telling = 13.2; $F = 1.5$, $p = .23$).

Table 1:

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	Gain	Loss
LIST PRE	35	3.9	2.6		
LIST POST	35	28.5	2.6	24.6	
LIST FU	34	12.8	4.4	8.9	15.7
STORY PRE	38	8.3	2.8		
STORY POS	38	17.2	4.7	8.9	
STORY FU	27	15.0	3.2	6.7	2.2

FU = follow-up, one week later
Subgroups. Washington, DC: NIH Publication 00-4654.

Experiment 2: Story-telling plus skill-building vs. Story-telling alone

Subjects were 58 first-year Japanese female students at a junior college in Osaka who had very little exposure to aural input in English. One class (*n* = 27) was the Story-Only group and another (*n* = 31) was a story plus supplementary activities group (Story-Plus Group). The Story-Only group experienced the following method:

(1) The 20 target words from a story ("The Three Little Pigs") were written on the board in front of the class.
(2) The participants took a translation test (pretest) on these 20 words (lasted 5 minutes). They were asked to write the meaning in Japanese for each English word on the list.
(3) The students put down the paper and the pencil and listened to the story, which contained the target words (15 minutes).
(4) After listening to the story, the participants took the post-test on the same list of the words (5 minutes).

The Story-Plus group experienced the following method:

(1) through (3) were identical to the method followed by the Story-Only group.
(4) The teacher asked oral comprehension questions that used the target words in a way that the target words had to be used to answer the questions (10 minutes).
(5) The participants took the same translation test again (mid-test, 5 minutes).
(6) After taking the test, the participants exchanged test papers with their neighbor and checked the answers with the teacher who gave the correct answers in Japanese (10 minutes).
(7) The students read a written version of the story. They were asked to underline the words they wanted to learn including the target words. (10 minutes)
(8) The participants told the same story to their study partner. They were encouraged not to refer to the text, but to use the target words that were on the board (20 minutes).
(9) The participants took the same translation test again as the posttest (5 minutes).
(10) The teacher gave the correct answers for the test (5 minutes).

The Story-Plus group spent almost the entire class hour (85 minutes. 5 minutes for other business) doing different activities using a story as described above. The Story-Only group listened to a story for only 15 minutes.

There was little interaction between the teacher and the participants. The participants saw the words on the board and took the pre-test which primed them to notice the words and pay attention to the words during the storytelling. When the participants looked uncertain, the teacher clarified the meaning of the words using drawings or verbal explanations.

Note that the Story-Only group took the translation test twice, but the Story-Plus group took it three times. In addition, both groups were given an unexpected follow-up test 5 weeks later.

Results

Mean scores on the pretest were similar (Table 1). The Story-Plus group was better on all measures, including the surprise follow-up test given five weeks later, learning about twice as many words as the Story-Only group. All differences were statistically significant ($p < .001$).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Vocabulary Test

Group	Test	N	M/SD	Gain	Final Gain
Story	Pre	27	4.6/2.3		
	Post	27	13.9/3.4	+9.3	
	Delay	27	8.4/3.5		+3.8
Story+	Pre	31	4.7/1.7		
	Mid	31	15.1/2.6	+10.4	
	Post	31	19.7/0.6	+15.0	
	Delay	31	16.1/2.2		+11.4

The Story-Plus group, however, invested much more total time than the Story-Only group. In terms of efficiency, the Story-Only group looks much better: If we count time for testing, the Story-Only group acquired .15 words per minute and the Story-Plus group acquired .13 words per minute, very close results. Testing time not counted, the Story-Only group looks even better, acquiring .25 words per minute.

Table3: Efficiency

Method	Story-ONLY	Story-PLUS
Time Spent	25minutes including testing time	85 minutes including testing time
Remembered Words	3.8	11.4
Rate	0.15 per minute	0.13 per minute

Discussion and Conclusions

The first study showed no difference between a story method and a list-learning method for vocabulary learning on a delayed posttest. The second study found no difference in efficiency in vocabulary learning between story-telling only and story-telling supplemented with vocabulary learning activities. These findings are consistent with the results of previous studies showing that hearing stories results in vocabulary development. The results appear to be consistent with the Comprehension Hypothesis (Krashen, 2003), which claims that language development is the result of the comprehension of messages. The story-telling method used here, however, used some focus on form: subjects knew that

vocabulary development was the goal of the story and they were directed to pay attention to the new words. The Story-Only groups, however, did no language production and did not have their errors corrected, which conforms to an important aspect of the Comprehension Hypothesis: production and feedback are not necessary for language development to occur.

The finding that story-telling is as effective as more traditional methods is encouraging. Stories are far more pleasant and engaging than traditional instruction, and students can gain other aspects of language from stories, as well as knowledge.

References
Elley, W. (1989). Vocabulary acquisition from listening to stories. Reading Research Quarterly, 14, 174-187.

Krashen, S. (2003). Explorations in language acquisition and use. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Publishing Company.

Nation, I. S. P. (1990). Teaching and learning vocabulary. New York: Heinle and Heinle.

Beniko Mason has been investigating the efficacy and efficiency of comprehension-based methods since 1985. She has published several studies on the use of extensive reading in the EFL class, and her recent focus is the use of storytelling.

Call for Newsletter Submissions

Do you have some thoughts on the teaching of English to speakers of other languages? Do you have personal stories to share that are related to TESOL issues? Do you have some helpful tips for other TESOLers? If you do, please consider submitting an article to TexTESOL III Newsletter. Submission deadlines:

Submission	1/1	4/1	7/1	10/1
Publication	2/15	5/15	8/15	11/15

Visit http://www.textesol.org/region3/ for submission types and guidelines.

Ten Steps to Develop a Volunteer Training Program
By Robert Pinhero

This article is Part I of a three-part series. Look for Part II in the next TexTESOL III Newsletter.

The competitive environment for resources makes it attractive and in some cases necessary to use volunteers in many programs that previously relied totally on paid instructional staff. Effective tutor training equips those volunteers with the skills to provide direct instructional services and plays a role in the recruitment and retention of volunteer tutors and learners as well. A quality training program also serves to enhance the organization's reputation among learners, funders, and entities that may offer opportunities for collaboration or resources.

Programs should avoid copying training schedules used by other literacy groups directly. Demographics and needs vary from one community to another. Use some of the suggestions included here to help you tailor your training to your community needs. Before developing your training schedule, prepare an implementation plan and training calendar. Be sure to consider tutor orientation programs and workshop publicity when you write your plan. Also consider the logistics of your training environment, i.e. physical space, equipment, and location.

1. Assess the literacy environment nationally and locally. Literacy statistics vary by location and it is important to understand the data for your area. The National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) is conducted after each census and provides a breakdown of literacy levels nationally and locally. Local workforce development boards, as well as national and regional literacy groups, may provide you with this information.

2. Identify the populations to be served. Frequently an organization's mission statement will define the population to be served. Many new organizations attempt to serve everyone who comes through their doors. This approach can result in diluting the programs effectiveness and spreading resources too thinly. Training inherently has time and resource constraints. A clear focus on who your program will be serving is necessary in order to design an effective training.

3. Develop a community profile. Know your community! Gather information about public, private, and faith-based organizations that may be able to assist with your training. These organizations may have available equipment, materials, volunteer trainers, space and a means to publicity. For example, a local business or service organization might be willing to sponsor a training by purchasing the materials or providing meals and refreshments. They could be recognized at the training workshop and credited in the written materials.

4. Compile a resource inventory. Make a list of your program's training resources and begin to develop a list of what is needed. You may want to prioritize the list and distinguish between essential items and "nice to have" resources.

5. Develop a tutor operational plan. In addition to skills training, orient the tutors to the program's assessment procedures and reporting requirements. Tutors play a critical role in program accountability in terms of documenting learner progress and goal achievement. Prepare a list of suggested community locations where tutoring may occur (e.g., libraries, community rooms in other agencies, etc.). Tutors may be able to use facilities at their place of employment. Brainstorm possible locations with the new tutors; they may have ideas for other tutoring locations.

6. Recruit and retain trainers. Provide trainers with positive feedback and adequate resources to carry out the training goals and objectives. Involve tutor trainers in planning sessions and offer

opportunities for cross training to maintain "freshness" and inject new perspectives.

7. Develop a training team. Many programs rely on their current staff as trainers. It is important to begin developing a training team as soon as possible. Teamwork capitalizes on the synergy of the group and results in well-structured workshops. Presentations should transition smoothly from one topic to the next so that the information is presented in a logical order. The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) has chapters in most major cities and they may be willing to offer assistance or even personnel in this area. A local university may have resources that can help too.

8. Select appropriate materials and instructional strategies. Once you have identified the population to be served and inventoried your available resources, your training team should begin to select the materials and instructional strategies that will be presented in the tutor pre-service training. Tutors must be provided with an adequate background on the program's curriculum and they must learn the instructional techniques recommended for their assigned learners. Remember, the materials and strategies presented in your training must relate to the curriculum and instructional strategies selected to assist learners in achieving their goals. Simply put, if 70% of your learner populations are low-level ESL learners, then a substantial portion of your training should address this. Training should be activity-based, interactive, and use a variety of instructional styles to engage all participants.

9. Develop the training workshop. This is one of the more difficult tasks in this process. Trainers must consider time, space, available resources, and characteristics of the volunteer pool. The current trend for pre-service training ranges from 10 to 18 hours and is usually offered evenings or weekends to accommodate volunteer work schedules. Keep your volunteer pool in mind when planning. Retired volunteers may not mind attending an 18-hour workshop, while volunteers with full-time jobs and young families may not be able to donate as much time. The agenda should take advantage of

individual trainer strengths and allow for active participation by all trainers.

10. Consider workshop topic areas. Many organizations offer training materials and approaches that you may modify to fit your local needs. These organizations will provide information that will assist you in making training decisions. State adult education organizations and other groups listed in the resource section may also provide training materials and ideas. They key is to select topics and strategies that make sense for **your** community of learners.

Robert Pinhero was the director of a literacy program, held positions on several non-profit boards, and has instructional and training experience in Adult and Family Literacy, ESL, GED, and Workforce Literacy. Locally he served as an adjunct consultant to the Texas Family Literacy Center; serving on the original committee that developed the Texas State Plan for Adult Education. He operates a consulting business and serves on the National Governance Council of ProLiteracy America, the Board of South Central Literacy Action and the Board of the Texas Association of Nonprofit Organizations.

Literacy Day at the Capitol

Wednesday, February 23

Meet with lawmakers to point out the important link between adult literacy education & economic development and ask for their support for Adult Education.

For more information, visit the web site of
Literacy Coalition of Central TX

http://www.willread.org/

Calendar of Events

March, 2005

4-5. University of Texas Foreign Language Education Conference, "Critical Pedagogy in Foreign Language Education: Putting Theory to Practice." Contact: TexFLEC, Foreign Language Education Program, University of Texas at Austin, D6500 SZB 528, Austin, Texas, 78712, USA. E-mail TexFLEC@ccwf.cc.utexas.edu. Web site http://www.utexas.edu/students/flesa/texflec.

10-13. Georgetown University Round Table 2005, Washington, DC. "Educating for Advanced Foreign Language Capacities: Constructs, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment" Web site http://www.georgetown.edu/events/gurt/2005/index.html

30-April 4. The 39th Annual Convention in San Antonio, Texas USA (TESOL 2005) "Teaching learning, Learning Teaching: A Nexus in Texas" *Take advantage of the early registration rates (see the table below)*. For more information, visit http://www.tesol.org.

Registration Class	Early Registration (on or before February 25)	Late Registration (after February 25 or on site)
1. Member Registration (member dues additional)	$226	$262
2. Nonmember Registration (membership not included)	$395	$415
3. Student Member Registration (member dues are separate)	$75	$75
4. Retired Member* (member dues additional)	$140	$160

April, 2005

15-17. SALSA XIII (Symposium About Language and Society—Austin). University of Texas at Austin. Web site: http://studentorgs.utexas.edu/salsa/index.shtml

May, 2005

1-6. International Reading Association 50th Annual Convention. San Antonio, TX. Web site: http://www.reading.org/

July, 2005

24-29. The 14th World Congress of Applied Linguistics hosted by the American Association for Applied Linguistics, Madison, Wisconsin, Web site http://aila2005.org/.

August, 2005

10-12. 1st Congress on Sociolinguistics and Sociology of Language & Interim Conference of International Sociological Association Research Council 25 (Sociolinguistics). Mexico City, Mexico. "'Glocalization' and language use: Joining the global and local." Web site: http://www.staff.hum.ku.dk/smo/smo2/RC-next-conf-fr.htm.
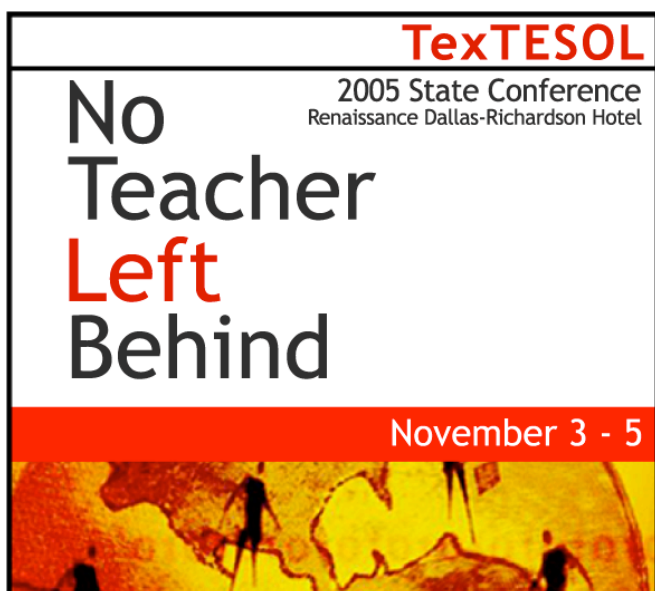
November, 2005

4-5. 2005 TexTESOL State Conference. "No Teacher Left Behind." Renaissance Dallas-Richardson Hotel. Web site http://home.flash.net/~presv/Frames/Frames.htm. *See **Call for Participation** on the next page.*

October, 2006

2006 TexTESOL State Conference Austin, TX *(more details coming soon)*

TexTESOL Annual State Conference 2005

November 4-5, 2005 Renaissance Dallas Richardson Hotel

Call for Proposals

You are invited to submit a proposal for the annual TexTESOL State Conference. The conference information and online forms can be found at http://www.textesolv.org/. To submit your proposal, fill in the required information in Part A and complete Part B on a separate sheet of paper. Deadline for submission: June 25, 2005.

Questions about registration? Contact Bari Ramirez at (972) 218-7136 or e-mail bnramirez@att.net or check our website at: http://textesolv.org/. Confirmations will be sent via mail or e-mail only for pre-registration forms received by Oct. 1. Receipts will be in registration packets.