

Context:

Newcomers in California's classrooms

Volume 22, No. 150, March/April 2002

Beyond the registration form

On the first day of school, 1979, the principal of my school in Rancho Cordova called me over, and as I approached, I saw a clutch of scared Asian children hiding behind him. All the regular classroom teachers were standing on the blacktop, heading up orderly lines of 34 children, waiting for the morning bell to ring. As a resource teacher who worked with groups of struggling learners in a pull-out program, I didn't have 34 children assigned to me on that first day.

These six children, the principal informed me, would be in my first pull-out group. I'd teach them English. There I stood, in front of a little line of six children, wondering who they were.

It turned out that these kids were ref-

ugees from Vietnam, part of the forty or so families housed in one of our crumbling apartment houses by Catholic Social Services. They were all fifth-graders, and had been bussed from their home school to our school. I remember two of them clearly.

Duc and Hai. Duc, a wisp of a boy, wore a woman's flowered polyester blouse and a pair of cartoon-figured pajama bottoms, with plastic thong sandals on his feet.

I looked at his name and toyed with its pronunciation: Duck? Duke? When I asked him his name (What-is-your-name? Loudly and slowly.), he responded with a familiar initial consonant phoneme, /d/, followed by a vowel that reminded me of my high school French class struggles with the vowel in "bleu." Duc. The final consonant wasn't really there, more of a stop to the flow of sound, not a crisply released /k/ that is part of English. I realized there were sounds in this boy's language that couldn't be spelled in English, and that I wasn't sure how to call his name. Hai's name was easier: not "hay" but "hi," a friendly hello. Since I knew "mai tai," I could relate to his name. Later I would learn that both names had distinctive tonal patterns that would have to be memorized, since English had no way to represent the tones that were as much a part of their names as the vowels and consonants.

Duc and Hai, and the other four children whose names I've forgotten, provided me with the beginning of anthropology in the schools. We all thought at the time that

In this issue

1• Beyond the registration form

5• Academic language: English Language Arts standards K-8

10• Resources

13• Title III \$\$\$: Will you get it?

15• NCBE #5: What are the most common language groups for LEP students?

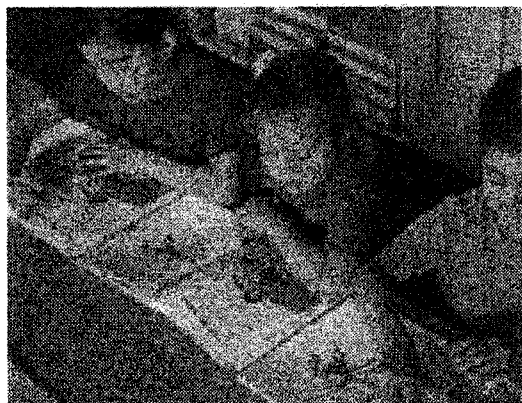


the presence of non-English speaking Asian children in our schools was a temporary situation, not worth the investment of time or energy to design a program. Most of the Asian students left the district six or seven years later, to be replaced by new refugee children from the former Soviet Union. Different names, different alphabets, different ways. Many of the questions turned out to be the same. The program we didn't design emerged.

A California principal, coordinator, or administrator can expect to open the school doors on any given morning to children who are different from all those who study within. Twenty years after Duc's appearance, some schools are just now greeting linguistically and culturally different children for the first time, and the variety of languages and cultures can be bewildering.

A recent report indicates that there are 400 languages spoken by the people of the United States. Our experience with Duc, whose family came from Dao Tching Lan Xan, a remote fishing island off the coast of Haiphong, Vietnam, and with Hai, whose family came from Cholon, the Chinese Saigon, and later with the family of By Khang, Lue Vang, and other Hmong from the mountains of Laos, taught us that all 400 language groups are not important at the same time. We learn about one group at a time, and once we've learned about two or three or four different groups in comparison to the American language and culture, patterns begin to emerge, and that makes the learning about others, as they arrive, easier.

This article is for new principals and administrators who are facing newcomers for the first time. Ideas are in the form of bullets, bits of information that may come in handy.



- Actually fill in the registration forms for the first few families. You'll learn a lot

about how to communicate with only a few words.

- Realize that Americans have *first names* and *last names*, but much of the rest of the world has *family names* and *given names*, reflecting different attitudes towards the individual.
- Ask the child's name and really listen. Ask for repetitions, and try to hear sounds that don't exist in English. Write on the registration form pronunciation hints for the child's name. Make sure that a two-part given name is not shortened into just one part, and that the parts are in the correct order. Make sure the office staff, teacher, and nurse have the pronunciation hints along with the other paperwork on the child.
- Use the Home Language Survey (required for all newly registering students in California). Find out the answers to the four key questions, but ask more. If two languages are spoken at home, find out which language the child understands and speaks best. For never-before-encountered language names, go to www.ethnologue.org and find the language and its alternate names (the languages are listed by country, so it would be necessary to know the country of origin). *Ethnologue* also provides information on the degree of literacy among speakers of the language, an important piece of information.
- Find out how many years of schooling the child has had before leaving the home country. Find out what language the teachers spoke when teaching, and the language of the books. If there appears to be no schooling or a gap in schooling, find out about conditions in the home country. Were other children of the same age and region attending school? If so, why not this child? Was there war or flight from war or other disruptions that made school attendance impossible?
- Find out if the family lived in a city or a town or a village. If from a village, was

there a school? If so, how many years did children usually attend school (typically 3, 5, 6). If from a town or a city, how many years of school did children usually attend school (typically 9 or 10). Did it cost money to go to school or to board with a family in town in order to attend school? I'd ask if the children learned English in school. Finally, I'd ask if there were any problems that made learning difficult.

- Find out the name of the country of origin, the reasons for coming to the United States, and why the family chose to live in this area. Newcomers are generally immigrants, refugees, sojourners, and American-born children of recent immigrants or refugees (who have similar needs when first entering school). Refugees are actually a subgroup of immigrants, and their reasons for coming to the U.S. are much different from voluntary immigrants and sojourners (those who live part of the time here and part of the time in another country). I'd want to know the conditions in the country from which refugees have come. There are several websites that provide both background information and current conditions on refugee-producing countries: www.unhcr.org, www.uscr.org, www.cal.org/corc, among others. An internet search for "resettlement" plus the name of the country or ethnic group, will bring up centers in the U.S. for different groups. The sites themselves or a phone call to the center will open doors to all kinds of information important to understanding the backgrounds of refugee students, including how to pronounce names, dictionaries, and sources for background information. Another publication (print and CD), Culture-Grams (www.culturgarms.com) provides a 4-page brief on the country and its population (unfortunately, there is no "Hmongland" or "Mienland," marking an important distinction between nationality and ethnic identity). In general, groups who arrive as non-refugee immi-

grants will have both educational and vocational backgrounds that make transition to English-based schooling easier. Among refugees and sojourners, we are likely to find the parents both highly educated professionals and unschooled laborers or self-sufficiency farmers or fishermen. There's a great deal of variation between English learners, and the type of instructional approach, support, and timeline for fluency varies as well.

- Find out who the relatives are in the area. Find out if there are connections between people (lived in the same village, belong to the same church, work for the same company).
- Find out about the role of literacy in the family and within the immediate family or neighbors. Some groups arriving on your school's welcome mat will not have written languages at all; some have languages that have only recently been encoded and daily living does not depend on use of print; others have language traditions that reach back centuries, with cultural priorities and values that emphasize the ability to use writing tools and to decipher books. The latter will find the learning of English and the apprehension of subject matter much easier than will the others.
- Watch the parent sign his name on the registration form in his own language: is it easy and fluent, or is it the deliberate strokes of a recently-memorized unfamiliar activity? For those whose signatures are labored, I'd like to be a fly on the wall of their homes: are there any print materials? Are there pencils, pens, crayons? How do people use print? Is it for phone numbers, accounting of shared resources, and notations of kinship links only? Do adults pick up



books, newspapers, or magazines by choice? Do children pick up print materials by choice? Does the family devote any of its limited financial resources on print materials?

- Find out if the child can read the mother tongue. If so, phonemic skills will be in place and learning a new alphabetic code will be easy. Older students will be able to use dictionaries, so remember to buy dictionaries for the office, library, classroom, and to check one out to the student. The Language Materials Project (www.lmp.ucla.edu) lists dictionaries and other materials by language. Yourdictionary.com is also a good source of dictionaries of all kinds, including subject area dictionaries. Delta Systems is an amazon.com-type website devoted to language learning materials (www.delta-systems.com). Also look for ESL dictionaries, in which the definition is not more difficult than the entry word.
- Place the new child carefully. Think about the receiving teacher: does s/he have good nonverbal language? Confident that language acquisition happens quickly? Able to think of alternate assignments that will make the new student feel successful?
- Place the student with others who speak the same language.
- If there are several English learners at a grade level, group them together, with a teacher who has training in language development.



- Place the student in grade by age.
- If there are other children at the school from the new student's language, make sure they're introduced the first day, and hopefully that they have the same lunch period.
- Schedule the child's day so there is extra

instructional time from the beginning. Use the extended day to work on vocabulary, the key to comprehension.

- Identify a corpus of vocabulary work on first. Recognize that a new learner of English will not be able to master 5,000 words (the number that an English-speaking kindergartner should recognize) all at the same time. Where to begin? In addition to pronouns, spatial words, a few verbs, and nouns, a new student will need to quickly learn high frequency words that make up text. Fry's and the Dolch high frequency lists are based on school reading and Sitton's appears to be based on newspapers and magazines. Have someone enter the words on a database or spreadsheet, with the level; this makes it easy to produce take-home books, flashcards, mastery lists, and so on. There are many commercial vocabulary programs for English learners, among them the classic *IDEA* kit (800 words in grammatical categories and at 8 levels) *Oxford Picture Dictionary* (4 or 5 versions, from about 800 to 2000 words, labeled pictures in thematic context), *Rosetta Stone* (computer-based vocabulary practice for older students). Speech therapy catalogues are also a good source of vocabulary picture cards. There are many online English learning sites (www.eflnet.com, www.eslcafe.com, <http://webster.commnet.edu>).
- Find a way to provide a link between the new English and the conceptual language to accelerate learning. Consider peers, high school students, parents, volunteers, aides, dictionaries.
- Provide teachers with the English Language Development standards (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12 for 5 proficiency levels). WestEd (www.wested.org/cs/wew/view/rs/479) provides a document that maps the ELD standards to the regular English Language Arts standards by grade level. Let teachers know that they are responsible for English language development, but that an average English learner will

travel about 20% of the distance towards fluency each year.

- Modify report cards so that English learners don't "fail" reading and writing, but rather receive a checklist of ELD standards mastered. (This is particularly useful at Beginning, Early Intermediate, and Intermediate levels of proficiency). If ELD standards are translated, schooled parents can help with the learning.
- Ask teachers to identify key words, phrases, or sentences from chapters and units, preferably those that also appear on the state's standards for science and social studies. Schooled parents can help children understand English by explaining concepts in the home language.
- Keep a file of English learners from the beginning, whether on index cards or on a database program. Ideally, the file would be districtwide, so there would be a way to look up family relationships and even locate groups by address. Whenever possible make placement decisions by family.
- Once there are a number of newcomer students at grades 1-3, 4-6, 7-8, and 9-12, consider newcomer centers as districtwide grouping options.
- Take time to "escort" the first members of newcomer groups through unfamiliar district procedures and find ways to make American school and local district expectations clear. Those who come later will learn from the first ones. (At the same time, avoid a paternalistic tone: adults are not children, even if they're new to the country or don't speak English). The key is to make no assumptions and be prepared to explain "why."
- Find ways to establish trust with both parents and children. Bilingual aides are key to this, if the aide has the ear of those who make decisions in the school and district. Have an aide assigned to man a desk in the front office for about a half hour before school starts and a half hour after school.
- Sign up for Language Line (phone translation service for 140 languages) and learn to work 3-way conference calls.
- Have the families' languages and cultures apparent in the office environment.
- Find out if there are dietary or activity restrictions or taboos associated with particular language and cultural groups, and make accommodations wherever possible.
- Encourage parents to volunteer, even if they don't speak much English. It's particularly valuable for parents or other relatives of new non-English speaking kindergartners to volunteer —both to help their student learn the routines of school, but also to see how American schools operate and what children are expected to know and do. Find English-free tasks for these volunteers to do.
- Identify someone in the school or district to keep up-to-date on legislation, court decisions, and research from across the nation and from other countries. Center for Applied Linguistics (www.cal.org) has links to research and even an "ask language experts" e-mail service. A fairly neutral review of research on effective programs for English learners is available at National Academy Press (www.nap.edu/books/0309054974/html/).
- Look to the general-funded program to provide grouping, qualified staff, and English language development materials (or materials that integrate ELD and content instruction), and use supplemental funds to provide primary language support and materials, additional learning time, translation, and parent assistance.

Since I first worked with Duc and Hai, thousands of English learners from about 100 different language groups have passed through our district. Their children are probably now in middle school, and new adventures wait in line on the blacktop.

[—Judy Lewis, editor]

Context:

Southeast Asians & other newcomers in California's classrooms
Volume 19, No. 137, August/September, 1999

Effective programs for English learners

“What does the research say about effective programs for English-language learners?”

The answer to this frequently-asked question becomes even more critical as high-stakes testing drives instructional choices and policy decisions. Unfortunately, it is difficult to provide the questioner with a cogent response that avoids promoting a favored approach.

Usually we refer the question-askers to one of several recognized authorities or to the ERIC website [<http://www.accesseric.org>] or to the Center for Applied Linguistics website [<http://www.cal.org>] or to James Crawford's website [<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/JWCRAWFORD>] or to one of the ten Regional Educational Laboratories [<http://www.relnet.work.org>] or we talk fast about concepts that come quickly to mind. From now on, we'll recommend that the curious get a copy of the National Research Council's *Improving Schooling for Language-Minority Children: A Research Agenda* (National Academy Press, 1997), edited by Diane August and Kenji Hakuta.

This book, funded by federal agencies and private foundations, represents the work of a national committee for analyzing and prioritizing research needs related to the success of English learners and bilingual students. Members of the committee are experts in language development, cognitive development, bilingual education, immigrant education, minority child development, education evaluation, and student demographics. The elements of effectiveness were derived from 33 studies.

The committee reviewed what is known about the linguistic, cognitive, and social processes

involved in the education of English learners. This background information is presented in a concise manner, with attention to the research strengths and weaknesses that underlie various conclusions.

This book is a valuable resource and is easily comprehended, but the question-asker (teacher, administrator, parent, journalist, foundation board member, employer, neighbor) might not have the time or inclination to find and read the report. In keeping with the goal of the Southeast Asia Community Resource Center to make information quickly and easily accessible, this issue of *Context* provides an outline of the key points of the report that relate to the essentials of effective programs for English learners.

At the same time, this outline demonstrates a strategy that a teacher of English learners in a subject matter class can use to demonstrate the relationships between the parts of a complex topic and to let students know which parts the teacher considers important to study. Like sheltered English students, the *Context* reader who has plenty of prior experience and background knowledge will be able to attach more meaning to this outline than a person who has no “prior schooling” in this area.

The report is available online at <http://www.nap.edu/books/0309054974/html> or can be purchased from the National Academy Press.



(continues page 2)

Contents

- 1 • Effective programs for English learners: Key points.
- 5 • Context renewal form for individuals and supporting organizations
- 6 • SAT-9 reading results for LEP v. EO/FEP students in California and Sacramento County
- 7 • ELD standards
- 8 • Resources
- 11 • EIEP News
- 13 • Cooperative Learning: A Positive Response to Linguistic Diversity
- 16 • Southeast Asia Community Resource Center Materials

Acquisition of a second language

- When controlled for socioeconomic status, there are no negative effects of learning a second language; some cognitive benefits.
- Acquisition is influenced by linguistic + cognitive + social factors.
- Older children acquire 2nd language faster.
- First language proficiency predicts better second language acquisition.
- Age and ability have an effect on second language acquisition; personality and attitude don't, consistently.
- Very fast shift to English among immigrants in the US; native language fluency minimal by the grandchild's generation.
- Native language preschool does not delay English acquisition.

Effective schools & classrooms for English learners

- Supportive schoolwide climate.
- School leadership.
- Customized learning environment.
- Articulation and coordination within and between schools.
- Some use of the native language and culture in instruction.
- Explicit skills instruction + student-directed activities
- Strategies that enhance understanding.
- Opportunities for practice.
- Systematic student assessment.
- Staff development.
- Home/parent connections.

Supportive schoolwide climate

- Value placed on linguistic and cultural backgrounds of English learners.
- High expectations for English learners' achievement
- Integral involvement of English learners in overall school operation.
- Teacher expectations raised by creating structures that result in higher student achievement.

**School leadership**

- "...someone assumed leadership for planning, coordinating, and administering the program..."
- Principal makes English learner achievement a priority (time/resources).
- ... provides ongoing direction & monitoring.
- ... recruits and keeps talented, dedicated staff.
- ... involves entire staff in improvement
- ... provides good physical and social setting.
- ... provides support and exerts pressure.

Customized learning environment

- Should reflect school & community context and goals.
- Should meet diverse needs of students. No one way to educate English learners.
- Identify conditions, adapt models.
- Have a plan for newcomers.

Customized learning environment: Secondary schools

- Variety in courses offered.
- Native language development, ESL, content instruction.
- Advanced as well as low-level.
- Variety in approaches to teaching content.

Articulation and coordination

- Smooth transition between levels of English language development (ELD).
- Smooth transition between elementary, middle, high school.
- Collaboration between content and ELD teachers, integrated ELD/content.

Use of native language, culture

- At a minimum, native language used to clarify and elaborate.
- Environments use native languages for many purposes and functions.
- Models: initial literacy instruction in native language; initial literacy instruction in English: both effective.
- Adapt instruction to cognitive styles, sociolinguistic patterns (reduce mismatch).
- Home culture is seen as a resource to build

on, not a liability to remediate.

Explicit skills instruction

- Phonics, word recognition, comprehension skills, writing conventions, etc.
- Active teaching. Teacher sets and articulates learning goals, actively assesses student progress, frequently makes class presentations, illustrating how to do assigned work.
- Substantial time allocated to explicit skills instruction.

Student-directed activities

- Production of oral and written English.
- Exchange of ideas, use of instructional conversations.
- Cooperative learning, peer teaching, partner reading, and so on.

Strategies to enhance understanding

- Teach metacognitive skills.
- Use routines and written cues.
- Adjust the level of vocabulary and structure.
- Use explicit discourse markers ("first," "next," "most important," and so on).
- Use language in ways that reveal its structure.
- Discuss vocabulary and structure explicitly.
- Demonstrate, explain what to do.
- Provide background knowledge.
- Use manipulatives, pictures, objects, graphic organizers.

Opportunities for practice

- Build redundancy into activities (rehearsal).
- Set up situations that require interaction with English-speaking peers.
- Focus on content of response, not correctness of language (in content classes), align response expectation to level of language proficiency.
- Require frequent writing to explain, communicate, elaborate.
- Ask followup questions that require elaboration, clarification.

Systematic student assessment

- Assess frequently.
- Use results to plan activities.

- Find a way to discuss student progress with other teachers regularly.
- Agree on end results and align teaching.

Staff development

- Plan activities to be characteristic of effective staff development programs.
- Help teachers gain skills that raise student achievement, which leads to higher expectations, rather than just telling them to have higher expectations.
- Involve all teachers, not just teachers of English learners.
- Recruit excellent content teachers, train them in English language development strategies.
- Avoid assumptions about students, rather interview parents and community members to identify local knowledge, values, beliefs, choices.

Home/parent connections

- Recognize parent contributions that are not visible to school.
- Align school expectations with parental efforts (volunteering in class is not the only way that parents contribute).
- Provide specific training on cognitive or academic learning at home.
- Avoid implicit criticism or disapproval with school choice of topics; rather involve parents in identifying topics.
- Arrange for many kinds of connections.

2 scenarios for acquisition of reading

- Psycholinguistic
Explicit instruction of subprocesses.
Begins with phoneme and builds to passage ("bottom up").
Proficiency develops through stages.
Basal readers, leveled books.
- Social practice
Literacy emerges from social interaction.
Begins with passage, moves to words and sounds ("top down").
Literature, trade books, natural language.

Prerequisites for reading

- Exposure to literacy.



- Abstract knowledge of sound and structure of language.
- Certain level of vocabulary development.
- Skills in oral connected discourse.

Exposure to literacy

- Literate households, communities.
Child has been read to.
Child's parents use literacy regularly.
- Understanding of literacy's role in life. Cultural meanings of literacy in the child's community. May be conflict between home and school assumptions about literacy's role & value.

Abstract knowledge of sounds

- Ability to segment into phonemic units.
Bilingualism promotes this ability.
Phoneme segmentation transfers across languages under certain circumstances.
- Vocabulary knowledge predicts reading ability—reading aptitude or mark of parental education and socioeconomic status?
English vocabulary knowledge is primary determinant of English learner reading comprehension.
Cognates help comprehension.

Oral connected discourse skills

- Uses oral language for nonpresent listeners.
- Recognizes (cultural styles) of genres.
- High transfer of oral discourse skills if both languages are used in educational settings; less so if one is for school, one for home.
- Instruction in second language comprehension can improve second language oral skills.
- Second language oral proficiency related to higher second language reading comprehension for some language groups, not all; less so for older first-language literate students.

Does first language help second language reading?

- First-language literates are better second-language readers (comprehension).
- They focus on unknown words.
... use cognates.
... monitor comprehension.

- ... make inferences.
- ... actively use prior knowledge.

Initial reading instruction

- Most children learn to read under a wide variety of instructional procedures, even second language before first language.
- Eclectic method is best: embedding direct instruction in meaningful activities.
- English learners with 2-3 years of instruction before arrival in US do better academically.
- Risk factors for poor reading skills:
Lack of explicit instruction in orthography.
Absence of background knowledge and skills from literate community,
Little semantic support (meanings).

Skilled readers

- Fast & efficient decoding & recognition.
- Know more vocabulary.
- Use metacognitive strategies.
- Focus on high-information words.
- Familiar with content.
- Familiar with features of text structure.

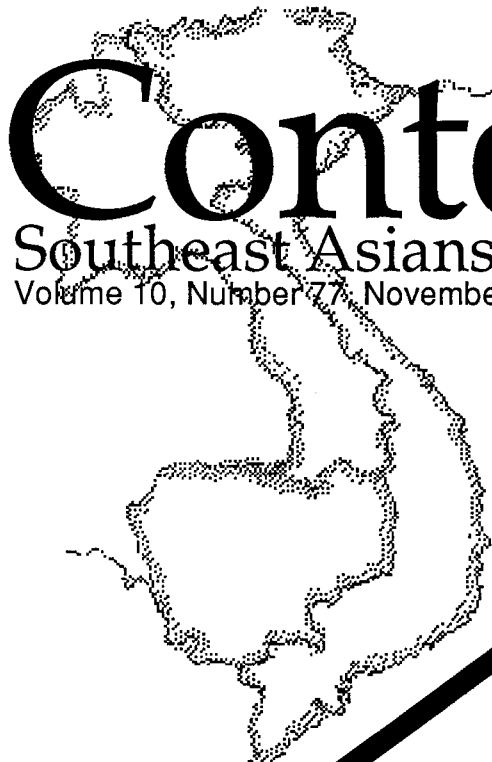
Content learning

- Integrate subject matter terminology into ELD classes or integrate content and ELD.
- Transfer of knowledge is quick; developing knowledge is slow; prior knowledge is a significant factor.
- Little research in this area.

Social nature of learning

- There are unwritten rules for classroom talk
Can be a mismatch (turn-taking, volume).
Can't assume all are aware of the same rules.
Classroom talk needs to seem familiar to child, contain familiar structures.
Talk is for constructing knowledge (different function than talk as social "glue.")
- Keep classroom routine, predictable (child understands goals).
- Encourage assisted performance ("performance before competence")
- Integrate community "funds of knowledge."





Context:

Southeast Asians in California

Volume 10, Number 77, November-December, 1989

(formerly "Refugee Update")

Folsom Cordova Unified School District
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova CA 95670
(916) 635-8815
Judy Lewis, Editor

From *Mirror of Language*
by Kenji Hakuta (1986)

Learning a second language

What's it like for children?

Do second-language learners resemble first-language learners? Do second-language learners of different languages go through the same process? Three generalizations can be made:

- *the order of appearance of morphemes (small units of meaning) in second-language learners does not come anywhere near resembling the order found in first-language acquisition.* This may be due to the maturity of the second-language learner's thinking; for example, in first-language acquisition, past tense develops late because it requires a developed concept of time.
- *the order of acquiring morphemes tends to be remarkably similar across different language backgrounds.* The order closely resembles the frequency of these morphemes in adult conversation (Larsen-Freeman, 1976).
- *the differences in the order of acquisition is explainable by transfer from the native language.* Spanish and Korean children differed on only one morpheme—articles—which Spanish has but Korean does not (Fathman, 1975; also, Zehler, 1982).
- *second-language learners use more "prefabricated language" than first-language learners, probably because of*

greater memory span and knowledge of the functional uses of language.

These are whole expressions which prove useful in interactions with friends, like "My turn", "Don't do that", "Do like this", "I know how to do it", "I'm the leader", etc. As many as half of the first utterances in a second language (among child learners, at least) may be of this type. This type of language, because it is embedded in social interaction and causes observable reactions in others, is highly memorable. Such prefabricated language plays an important role in maintaining the motivation the learner, and also produces immediate feedback about the correctness of the utterance.

Our language does not expect us to build everything starting with lumber, nails, and blueprint, but provides us with an incredibly large number of prefabs, which have the magical property of persisting even when we knock some of them apart and put them together in unpredictable ways. (Bolinger, 1976)

...and for adults?

Is adult second-language acquisition the same as for a child? If there are differ-

(next page)

ences, what are they?

- overall, the process appears to be the same for both adults and children, but there are differences in the extent to which each learns the new language. [However, studies have addressed only the product of acquisition, not the process itself.]
- all age groups show an annual increase in their language use until about the 5th year, but the older groups reached the plateau sooner than the young groups (Bachi, 1956).
- the younger groups were more native-like in both pronunciation and sentence comprehension.
- second-language learners who begin in childhood (before puberty) are more successful in both accent and grammar.
- adult second language acquisition is systematic (Corder 1971; Nemser 1971; Selinker 1972); more proficiency predicts better performance in all aspects of grammar.

How children and adults differ

Differences between child and adult learners, other than age and length of exposure to the second language appear to be individual variations, primarily intelligence and language aptitude, personality, attitudes, and sociolinguistic situations. A study by Patkowski (1980) found that the best adult learners are no different than child learners.

Intelligence and language aptitude

When dealing with language acquisition, *intelligence* is commonly referred to as *language aptitude*. Such aptitude includes abilities to code the sounds of a language, to recognize grammatical structures, and rote memory. Certainly, modern IQ tests rest on memory and analysis, and Oller and Perkins suggest that both language aptitude and intelligence are seated in the same cognitive base. However, another study by Klein and Dittmar (1979) showed that the amount of education a person had in the native country was a rough indicator of language aptitude, showing that school-based skills are ones that tests test best. Thus, years of prior education and/or language aptitude have a strong effect on second-language acquisition. [Recent studies with refugee

groups confirm a relationship between prior education and speed of English language acquisition (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1982-84; Green and Reder, 1986.). However, minority Laotian groups, who had little formal schooling are often described as having oral skills in at least two languages, showing that some kind of language aptitude is unrelated to schooling.]

Personality

One study by Guiora, Brannon and Dull (1972) found that learners of Thai had better pronunciation after having drunk moderate amounts of alcohol. Any adult second language learner knows personally of the great inhibitions that limit the willingness to "look foolish". A study in Canada found looked at personality variables and found that "field dependence-independence" (an ability to pick figures out of a field of shapes) and "tolerance for ambiguity" were correlated with success at second language acquisition. On the other hand, "extroversion" (being outgoing) showed less association with success (Naiman, Frohlich and Stern, 1975). Krashen (1981) suggests that individuals vary in the degree to which they monitor their utterances. Hakuta says that if a person possesses personality variables which lead to poor language acquisition, whatever they are, there is little that one can do to change the situation.

Attitudes

Learners who are positive towards speakers of the language to be learned are more successful at learning that language. Gardner and Lambert (1980) found that the attitudes that the *family* held towards the new group were critical. However, most studies are seen as having little validity, due to the difficulty of defining *attitude* and linking it in a direct relationship to acquisition.

Sociolinguistic situations

This variable refers to the nature of the target group, and where the learner is seen to fit within it. This variable is intriguing and overlaps (or may take the place of) most of the previous factors, but sociolinguistics is fairly new, and there has not been much research into the factors

which influence second language acquisition. A study of Spanish and Italian workers in Germany found that the best predictor of German proficiency was the amount of leisure time contact with Germans (Klein and Dittmar, 1979). A study of Puerto Ricans (Cancino and Hakuta, 1981) found that the best predictor of English (other than length of time in the U.S., prior schooling, and Spanish aptitude) was the amount of English spoken in the workplace. Keep in mind, however, that these two studies may not be widely applicable as they both involve people who have a generally positive attitude towards the target group—if not, they would not have been interacting either at work or at play.

Thus,

Second language acquisition takes place in both formal and informal settings. Personality and attitudes are related to second language acquisition in both formal and informal situations, but aptitude is related only to formal settings, like school.

For further reading:

- Bachi, 1956. A statistical analysis of the revival of Hebrew in Israel. *Scripta Hierosolymitan* 3: 179-247.
- Bolinger, 1976. Meaning and memory. *Forum Linguisticum* 1:1-14.
- Cancino and Hakuta, 1981. *The acquisition of English by working class adult speakers of English*. National Institute of Education.
- Corder, 1971. Idiosyncratic dialects and error analysis. *International Review of Applied Linguistics* 9:147-60.
- Fathman, 1975. Language background, age, and the order of English structures. TESOL Convention, Los Angeles.
- Gardner, 1980. On the validity of affective variables in second language acquisition: Conceptual, contextual, and statistical considerations. *Language Learning* 30: 255-70.
- Gardner and Lambert, 1972. *Attitudes and motivation in second language learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Guiora, Brannon and Dull, 1972. Empathy and second language learning. *Language Learning* 22: 111-30.
- Green and Reder, 1986. Factors in individual acquisition of English: A longitudinal study of Hmong adults. *The Hmong in Transition* (Hendricks, et al., eds.). NY: Center for Migration Studies.
- Hakuta, 1974. Prefabricated patterns and the emergence of structure in second language acquisition. *Language Learning* 24: 287-97.
- Hakuta, 1986. *Mirror of language*. New York: Basic Books, Inc.
- Klein and Dittmar, 1979. *Developing grammars: The acquisition of German syntax by foreign workers*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Krashen, 1981. *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Larsen-Freeman, 1976. An explanation for morpheme acquisition order of 2nd language learners. *Language Learning* 26: 125-34.
- Naiman, Frohlich and Stern, 1975. *The good language learner*. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
- Nemser, 1971. Approximate systems of foreign language learners. *International Review of Applied Linguistics* 9:115-23.
- Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1984. *A study of English language training for refugees in the U.S.*, Portland, OR.
- Oller and Perkins, eds., 1980. *Research in language testing*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Patkowski, 1980. The sensitive period for acquisition of syntax in a second language. *Language Learning* 30: 449-72.

Selinker, 1972. Interlanguage. *International Review of Applied Linguistics* 10: 219-31.

Sorenson, 1967. Multilingualism in the Northwest Amazon. *American Anthropologist* 69:670-84.

Zehler, 1982. *The reflection of first-language-derived processes in second language acquisition*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Amazon-ing!

Along a river which drains into the Amazon River, on the border of Brazil and Colombia, is an area in which there are at least 25 different languages spoken, an area about the size of New England. Anthropologist Sorenson (1967) spent several summers in the region and found that bilingualism was a required aspect of life.

People are identified by the language that their fathers speak, which determines their tribe. However, the social rules require that a person marry someone from a different tribe, that is, someone who speaks a different language. To marry someone who speaks your own language is seen as incest. Thus, a young man learns the language of his prospective wife's tribe. After marriage, she moves in with his tribe, and learns his language. Young children begin by learning the mother's language, and then as they grow up, they learn their father's language, the one which identifies them. One of the tribal languages serves as a lingua franca for trade and commerce, and by adolescence, most children know this third language as well. Because there are women from many different tribes in any one village, most children are exposed to several different languages in their daily interactions, and may learn some of these. During a lifetime, the people acquire other languages, and spend their adult years perfecting the languages they know.

Surprisingly, no one language has superiority over any other. The choice of language depends on the particular people one is grouped with at the moment, and languages shift easily. Each individual initially speaks his own father-language during such a conversation in order to assert his tribal affiliation and identification, but after a while, the junior persons change, without comment, to the language of the tribe where the conversation is taking place, to Tukano (the lingua franca), or to another language, whatever one is most convenient for the others. (Sorenson, 1967, p. 678). Apparently, the use of several languages in one society does not necessarily lead to deep social divisions.



Context:

Southeast Asians in California

Volume 13, Number 102, February-March, 1993

Folsom Cordova Unified School District
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova CA 95670
(916) 635-6815
Judy Lewis, Editor

*A revolution in the way computers work
brings us closer to understanding what happens
in the brain during language acquisition.*

Neural Networks: Simulated Language Acquisition

Lao, Cambodian, and Thai
New Year falls between
April 13 and 15.

Refugee Educators' Network meetings:

September 17
November 19
January 21
February 18
May 20

9:00 to 11:30
Southeast Asia
Community
Resource Center,
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova
635-6815

"NAAAMAAAMEEEEEMOOONAAA
AAAEeeeeeeAHHHHHHHH." The thin,
mechanical voice wailing from the tape re-
corder belongs to NETalk, a machine simu-
lation created by connectionist and bio-
physicist Terry Sejnowski that is teaching
itself to read aloud. "AAAH-NEEEE-
OOOOOEEEE-CH-CH-CH-EEEEIIII." The
bizarre nonstop chant, the coos and
clicks, fills the room with a noise that some-
body might make if he were spending the
first day with a new mouth.

"What we're hearing is the first training
session," Sejnowski shouts over the noise.
"It's reading the text, but doesn't have any
idea what it's doing. So it's basically pro-
ducing random sounds."

NETalk does not function like the typi-
cal serial digital computers found in the
home, business, and schools. Today's com-
puters "read" and "understand" a lan-
guage that is built from two contrasting
symbols—off and on. Chains of instructions
are followed over and over very quickly.
The results are logical outcomes of sequen-

tial steps. Since the brain's neurons are
known to "fire", their action has been
thought to resemble the basic on and off
signals that a computer understands.
Thus, the building of memories, the emer-
gence of language, the processing of infor-
mation to reach decisions must be a build-
ing of sequences between neurons that is
similar to the operation of a computer.
However, *neural networks*—a new kind of
computer hardware and software—repre-
sent a shift in the way that computers of
the future will work. NETalk is an example
of how neural networks model, in a crude
way, the operation of the human brain.

Today's serial digital computers solve
logical problems to get right answers ex-
tremely well, much better and faster than
the human brain. However, they are un-
able to perform *optimization* problems very
well. An optimization problem is one in
which there is no one right answer, but
only the "best fit" or the shortest distance,
or the closest match. Recognizing a
person's face after a new haircut, or recog-

Abridged from
**Apprentices of
Wonder: Inside the
Neural Network
Revolution**, by W.
F. Allman (Bantam,
1989).

nizing a person's voice when that person has a cold are examples of finding the best fit rather than the right answer. Babies can perform these tasks, yet the most advanced serial digital computers—those that fly to the moon—cannot. The human brain seems to process information in a non-sequential way much of the time, and this is particularly noticeable when answers are the result of insight or intuition.

In the next stages of development of the serial digital computers, these superfast, straight-line processors will simultaneously work on two or four or eight streams of information "in parallel", but it's a situation of doing more of the same thing faster. In neural networks, on the other hand, the fundamental setup is different, allowing multiple branching paths and multiple inputs at each switch point so that there can be a "partial on" or "partial off". This, it is believed, is more similar to the actual operation of neurons. A single neuron does not "fire" when it receives input, but "collects" input until a threshold is reached, at which time it does fire, sending an electrochemical message to as many as 50,000 other neurons. As a neuron sends an electrochemical message across the synapse that lies between it and another neuron, something, probably chemical, happens so that a connection is built between them. The connection is actually an increase in the likelihood that that particular synapse path will be followed again the next time. This process lies at the heart of transferring sensory input into memories and thoughts. Experience creates chemical ties between neurons—thousands, millions of neurons. Repeated firing of neurons create little sets of neurons, and those little sets build larger sets, until memories, patterns, and associations are laid down.

The main difference from conventional computers is that many signals are processed at the same time. Consider a speedy touch typist. Two scientists at UC San Diego, Norman and Rumelhart, looked at how

a typist can work with only one fifty-thousandth of a second between strokes. This is barely enough time for a signal to go from the brain to the finger and back again. The two scientists filmed the fingers of a typist at work and slowed the film down. The fingers were typing in parallel; when typing the word *vacuum*, the left index finger would go down to push the 'v' at the same time that the right index finger was moving up to the 'u'. That's four letters in advance. In other words, when you touch-type a word, you type the whole word all at once. All the fingers are reaching out for all the letters at the same time.

In neural nets there are layers of artificial neurons, with the work of "learning" taking place in the layers between the input neurons and the output neurons. Rather than program the network with sequences of instructions, it is given examples of relationships.

Geoff Hinton trained a neural net to "learn" the family relationships between two families, one English and one Italian. Examples of the relationship statements were "Sophia's mother is Lucia" and "James's wife is Victoria". The network was given 100 statements of relationships, and after processing, the network could produce answer to questions about specific relationships ("Who is Sophia's mother?") and could fill in the details of relationships it had not seen—the nationality, gender, and age of various individuals.

The network processed the input and captured important features in categories or prototypes—the father of a middle-aged person is an older person, the mother of an Italian is an Italian, and so on—in the intervening layers.

NETalk consists of 300 artificial neurons, connected to one another in a neural network. When NETalk "thinks," the neurons "talk" to one another, propagating signals throughout the web of more than 18,000 connections. (This is a tiny simple character-

ization of the actual brain's neural structure: a hundred billion neurons, each one with as many as 100,000 connections capable of receiving or sending electrochemical messages to another).

"EEEEEOOOONEEEMAAAAAA
OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO." The eerie cacophony continues for another minute or so, then gradually, slowly, NETalk's wail changes, taking on an order of sorts. The voice still has a high-pitched, continuous tone, but it's no longer monotonous. The long vowel sounds are regularly broken into smaller bits by consonants. It's a sound that you might hear in a nursery.

"MAMAMAMAMAGAMAAMTATAT
MAMAMAMA." "Now it's going through a stage where it's babbling," says Sejnowski. "The first thing it discovers is the distinction between vowels and consonants. But it doesn't know which is which, so it just puts in *any* vowel or consonant. It babbles."

To train NETalk to learn to read aloud, Sejnowski input a phonetic transcription of a child's conversation as a training text. The machine read the text over and over, experimenting with different ways of matching the written symbols to the sounds of spoken words. If it got a syllable right, NETalk would remember that (the connections were given a stronger "weight"). If it was wrong, NETalk would weaken the strength of those connections, trying out new combinations to find a better fit between input and output.

A few more minutes of babbling pass, then suddenly NETalk's steady stream of chatter stops. But only for a second. NETalk quickly sputters sounds again, stops again, and restarts. "Mop....Chi-Ah-Nee...Eee...Eee...Nib-an-pan-toe-nee."

"Something really strange happens here," says Sejnowski. "Hear the difference? Now it's discovered *spaces*, the distinction between words. So it speaks in bursts of sounds, pseudowords." NETalk rambles on, talking nonsense. Its voice is still incoherent, but now the rhythm is somewhat familiar:

short and long bursts of vowels packed inside consonants. It's not English, but it sounds something like it.

Sejnowski stops the tape. NETalk was a good student. Learning more and more with each pass through the training text, the voice evolved from a wailing banshee to a mechanical semi-English recitation. "What you just heard was the result of only about an hour and a half of computer time," says Sejnowski. "What you'll hear next is what happened after we left NETalk on overnight. We just let it process the text over and over for ten hours."

Sejnowski's proud-father face has taken over as he turns on the tape deck. NETalk's voice is no longer a monotonous wail or a mangled string of gibberish. The timbre is still somewhat mechanical, the inflection still a little out of kilter but the diction is definitely a few steps into the human side of the world: "I walk home with some friends from school," says the machine. "I like to go to my grandmother's house. Because she gives us"—NETalk pauses a split second, struggling—"candy."

One way for a computer to read text aloud, the way used by commercial text-reading machines today, is to store a long list of words and their pronunciations in memory. The machine matches a word in the text to a word in its memory to produce the proper pronunciation. If the machine encounters a word that it doesn't have in its memory, it uses a set of pronunciation rules—such as "if you see *sh* make a 'shhh' sound—to guide it. The machines work very well, but they don't really sound human. One problem is that we often pronounce a word differently depending on the words that come before and after it. (For example, *phone* becomes *phome* when followed by *booth*).

Because a word can be spoken several different ways, using a pronunciation dictionary requires a lot of computation. For a machine to locate a variant pronunciation when

a word is preceded or followed by certain other words, it has to look up not just one word, but a group of three words. Sifting through a pronouncing dictionary of 200,000 words may not take a high-speed computer very long, but sifting through 10^{15} possible three-word combinations of those 200,000 words can take quite a while. The task is even more complex when you consider that sometimes the pronunciation of words at the beginning of a sentence are influenced by a question mark at the end. It's nearly impossible to write a program to account for all the conditions.

Consider the first lines of "Jabberwocky," from Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*:

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.'

Looking up these words in the memory bank would not help. Yet most speakers of English will read the text in the same way. That we all tend to pronounce nonsense words similarly (as well as recognize which words denote actions, things, and descriptions) suggests that we have internalized the same set of general rules for pronouncing letters and words. There are many regularities in the way we pronounce written words, so linguists have for the last several decades tried to formulate explicit rules to capture those regularities.

The variability in the way words are pronounced has stymied the efforts of computer programmers to reduce our reading-aloud skills to a set of rules. But even if rules were to solve the problem of how humans go from text to speech, there is still the problem of the variability from speaker to speaker and from word to word in the same text.

The new neural network makes it possible to conceptualize the neural processes

that underlie what millions of children learn to do by the age of nine.

Much of our brain is prewired at birth, but the neurons adjust their wiring throughout life as we learn. The brain is physically changed with experience. Despite the best efforts of teachers to remind students that "when two vowels go walking, the first does the talking," or some such rule, we learn how to pronounce written text not by learning explicit rules but by experience. Children listen and read, and somehow they pick up all the regularities—and the exceptions—in the pronunciation of English without learning them as rules.

In setting up NETalk, the input was set (the written text) and the output was set (the sounds of spoken English), and between the two lay a layer of artificial neurons. By providing "back propagation" (feedback on errors), the computer adjusted the connections between neurons until the input and the output corresponded.

NETalk has a "window" through which it looks at seven letters of text at once, shifting one letter to the right as it reads. The output are the phonemes produced through a loudspeaker—NETalk's voice. Between where the text comes in and the phonemes come out is a layer of interconnected adaptable artificial neurons. The neurons are very simple, much less complex than real neurons, but are similar in overall behavior. Each receives signals from a number of neurons connected to it and decides whether to pass on a signal of its own.

The text is read through 29 neurons for each opening in the window, a total of 203 input neurons (the letters and spaces are typed in, as NETalk doesn't yet have "eyes"). Each of the 29 neurons signals the presence of a particular letter or space or punctuation mark in the window. At the other end, 16 output neurons are responsible for selecting a phoneme. Between the input and output neurons are 80 hidden

neurons, *hidden* because they neither receive input directly nor produce output directly. Each of the 203 input neurons is connected to each of the 80 hidden neurons, and each of those is connected to the 26 output neurons. In that layer of hidden neurons are 16,240 connections, and between the hidden layer and the output are 2,080 more, a total of 18,320 connections. Each of the 18,320 connections is weighted; the higher its connection weight, the more likely it will pass on the signal it receives.

At the first training session, all the phonemes of the 1000-word child's conversation were input into the machine. The correct output phonemes were specified. At the beginning, all the strengths of the connections between the artificial neurons were set at random. Without any specific knowledge to guide it (back propagation, or feedback on errors), NETalk blathered. At it read the training text over and over, NETalk began to pick up features of the way we pronounce English, such as the existence of spaces between words and the regularity of vowels and consonants. NETalk began to make associations and build patterns.

After a day of training, NETalk could read the text with about 95% accuracy. More important, NETalk performed almost as well on any text, even those containing completely new words. "If NETalk was simply memorizing words and pronunciations, it would have a tough time with new words. But by incorporating the patterns and regularities of English, it is able to produce the correct pronunciations, even though it has never before seen the words."

NETalk does not manipulate symbols according to a sequential set of rules. However, it does operate in a rule-like manner. The "rules" exist as patterns of connections that are created between artificial neurons in the machine. It's a *rule-deriving* and *rule-following* system, not a *rule-based* system. If it is a true but crude representation of the

human brain, then it suggests how biological "wetware" (the real brain) turns experience into patterns that produce generalizations.

This book is found in the computer section of bookstores, with books on artificial intelligence. The revolution of which it speaks is not only a move from serial digital computer processing to neural networks (a neural net of 512 artificial neurons has already been manufactured on a silicon chip) and "fuzzy logic", but also a paradigm shift for psychology, linguistics, and anthropology. Insight joins logic as a legitimate scientific tool.

The relevance of neural network theory for approaches to language acquisition (oral language as well as literacy) and development of crosscultural skills is clear. Implications for educators include:

- *experience teaches, and the teacher arranges experiences.*
- *to speak, a child needs repeated experience (listening and reading) to speak and write.*
- *to read aloud, a child needs to connect what is heard to what is seen.*
- *feedback on correctness speeds up the strengthening of connections.*
- *context and meaning allow new neural connections to be associated with existing connections.*
- *experience creates patterns that become prototypes, categories, and generalizations.*
- *changing prototypes (stereotypes) requires experience that strengthens connections between other neurons.*
- *insight and intuition are neural processes as real as retrieval and deduction.*
- *all children have plenty of neurons, but some children lack the repeated experience needed to strengthen connections between neurons.*
- *eating foods that increase the activity of neurotransmitters can't hurt.*



Context:

Southeast Asians in California

Volume 11, Number 84, September, 1990

Folsom Cordova Unified School District
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova CA 95670
(916) 635-6815
Judy Lewis, Editor

*Is there a "cognitive gap" between people with
different literacy experiences?*

Literacy and Cognition

US immigration laws after the mid-1920's required that a person knocking on the golden door be able to read and write. This requirement still holds—in principle—but osmosis through the semi-permeable national borders and the granting of asylum to political refugees who hail from remote mountain villages has brought to US classrooms a mix of students never before seen. Teachers face a living laboratory for observing the relationship between of schooling, literacy, and cognition.

Some refugee groups—most of the Hmong, Mien, Khmu, Lahu, and T'in, and some of the Khmer, Lao, and Chinese from North Vietnam—would never have qualified to enter the US through regular immigration channels because they had never attended school. What has emerged after ten years of classroom work with the children of these groups is that oral English skills can be excellent while reading skills lag far behind. Language acquisition theory explains that these children have not had sufficient input in the form of reading, a proposition that applies to native English

speaking children who lag in their acquisition of reading and writing skills as well. Bilingual education theory explains the lag in terms of "subtractive bilingualism"—children who have limited proficiency in the skills of two languages.

While teachers wrestle with the problems of producing capable English-literate individuals, there is another problem—that of the generation and cultural gap—*gulf*—between immigrant parents and their acculturated children. What the cross-cultural studies of cognition suggest is that this gap is complicated by different ways of thinking, different forms of cognition. The children's experiences in school, along with literacy skills, and socializing with others unlike themselves produce different ways of perceiving, classifying, describing, remembering, manipulating words as real things, and drawing conclusions. Parents and children perceive, categorize, compare, and reason differently. Yet each side assumes that the other processes information and forms conclusions in the same way.

Cross-cultural studies of cognition & literacy

Research from anthropology and cross-cultural psychology suggests that there are differences in cognition between culturally different people, but these differences fade with new exposure and changed experiences. Most of the research comes from work with the tribal Vai, Wolof, and Kpelle people of Africa and rural villagers in Russia. Most of the research has focused on perception, classification, memory, and logic, and suggests that the critical experiences include Western-style education, urban experience (mingling with people outside one's immediate group), and literacy. What emerges is that *American schools teach specific ways to use words as tools* for ordering what is seen, organizing things to remember, describing unseen things, and progressing from hypothetical propositions to conclusions, which are believed as absolutely as real experience.

Western society has not always been associated with literacy. Widespread literacy first occurred during Plato's time in ancient Greece, and produced an alternative to the oral transmission of knowledge and culture prevalent until that time. Havelock analyzed epic poems and scholarly dialogues of Plato's time, and found that there were differences between oral and written texts. The styles, syntax, and lexicons were different, with the epic poems featuring memory-enhancing devices such as rhythm, narration, emotional imagery, and repetition. The dialogues, on the other hand, featured abstract concepts and an orderly sequence of premises leading to a logical conclusion. Goody and Watt looked at the coincident emergence of alphabetic literacy, history and logic, and argued that alphabetic literacy produced the other two disciplines. They noted that literacy makes language permanent, which enables discourse over time, and the building of one idea upon another. Aristotle's development of the syllogism and logical inference would

have been impossible without the opportunity to examine written records and compare statements. Written language promoted abstract concepts and new ways of categorizing knowledge.

General assumptions

Several researchers are important in the study of cognition in different cultures. The Russian psychologist, Vygotsky, linked cognition and sociocultural experience. His basic premise was that the mind is changed through interaction with the environment. The universal processes of abstraction, generalization, and inference vary with the nature of a particular language and the conditions prevailing in any individual society. Oral language, a universal symbol system, is crucial to the development of higher cognitive processes in children. Other symbol systems, like writing, are not universal, and this leads to culture-specific differences in the organization of the higher cognitive processes.

Greenfield, a psychologist from Harvard, looked for cultural influences on concept formation among Wolof children in West Africa. She matched children for age and urban exposure, and found differences between the performances of schooled and unschooled children. She proposed that schooling provides children with the capacity for talking about things that are not immediately present, and for understanding oral or written passages that lack context clues (nothing to see, hear, touch). Canadian psychologist Olson looked at the development of logical thought among children. He found that preschool children lacked the ability to separate language from the interpersonal relations in which it is embedded. Older children and adults can deduce logical consequences by manipulating the words themselves; "John hit Mary" can be verbally manipulated into "Mary was hit by John". The logical reasoning that underlies this kind of verbal manipulation

develops along with literacy and/or school. Jerome Bruner has also researched the effects of culture on thought. He proposed that cultural inventions such as written language make cognitive processes develop at earlier ages, and expand the upper limits of thinking processes. Thus, Bruner, Olson, and Greenfield see cultural inventions such as writing as instrumental to cognitive development; literacy is an "force that brings into existence entirely new mental structures or processes".

Learning to read in American schools

Reading is often looked upon as a mysterious process that takes years to master and requires the artistry of highly skilled teachers. Approaches to reading have fluctuated over time, from sight reading to phonics to Distar to the whole language approach. What does current research say about English-speakers learning to read English? The Commission on Reading published a summary of the research and recommendations for educators in 1985. The findings included:

- Good readers recognize words automatically and without conscious effort.
- Explicit instruction in phonics is helpful, when it is presented early, and kept simple. The important skills are recognizing the sounds of letters in isolation, the blending of sounds together—particularly the initial consonants and medial vowels, and the retrieval of words with similar patterns—reading by analogy.
- Beginning readers should be presented with interesting material from the earliest stages.
- Generalized reading skills (underlying cognitive skills) begin with experiences in which there is "scaffolding". Someone actively limits the complexity of the reading, points out important key parts, repeats key words, and creates predictability.
- Reading improves with more reading. There should be both oral and silent

reading. Reading and writing are related in the same way as listening and speaking; to write better, one needs to read more.

- Reading is constructive. Readers use reasoning and background knowledge to pull meaning from the text.
- Reading instruction should explicitly teach the reasoning sequences used to arrive at conclusions.

Thus, *learning to read in American schools assumes prior cognitive skills* such as the ability to discriminate shapes and pictures on a page, some ability to classify shapes and phenomena, the ability to predict, and experience in relating abstract graphic symbols to real life experiences. *Reading then develops other cognitive skills;* whether or not these cognitive skills would develop on their own is the essential question.

Perception

Literate individuals look at pictures and recognize what the images represent. This does not happen naturally. Non-literate traditional Kpelle villagers in Liberia were shown photographs of familiar utensils and tools, but could not recognize them. Cole and Scribner (1974) point out that it took centuries for Western society to work out the conventions of three-dimensional representation in two-dimensions. Recognizing drawn or painted figures, which are more abstract than photographs, takes even more prior experience. (This is evident in American workbooks, in which cartoon-like pictures are shown to children. It takes considerable practice to learn the association for each drawing, essentially an icon.) Likewise, conventions that show distance in drawings (perspective, relative sizes and positions of objects, placement of objects on the page) are learned. Research, largely by

Deregowski with the Zambia people, suggests that *it takes explicit teaching, rather than general exposure, for people to learn the conventions of pictorial representation.*

Classification

Classification, according to Rosch and Lloyd (1978), is a skill that allows people to grasp maximum information from the world with minimum effort. When I see a moving object on the road, it takes very few clues to identify it as some sort of vehicle; I don't have to study all its features to recognize what it is.

The perceived world is categorized according to common attributes (color, form, size, pattern), motor movements, functions, and resemblance to averaged shapes. Jerome Bruner's studies with children document a shift in choice of categorizing principles with age. For example, young children sort on the basis of visual features such as color, size, pattern, and so on. Older children utilize some sort of linguistic concept that names a class to which the various objects belong. For example, a six year old child will report on a sorting activity that "some are red, some are blue", but an eight year old will say that "they are all tools" or "you can eat with them" or "they all move". Bruner suggests that developing linguistic skills enable an older child to screen out the vivid perceptual details and concentrate on common features. *By being able to code the items verbally, it is possible to compare objects searching for commonalities.* Studies with children from Alaska, Mexico and Senegal show that children in different cultures do not make the shift to linguistic sorting in the same way as American children in Boston. Bruner suggests that *formal schooling accelerates cognitive growth through repeated practice with decontextualized situations that are a*

common component of school activities. These experiences *train the children to use verbal "code and compare" strategies to novel situations requiring categorization.*

Luria used categorization activities to compare literate and non-literate adults in rural areas of Russia. The literate adults had only one to three years of school. The groups were matched for urban experience and exposure to outsiders (whether they were in collectives or not). The most rural non-literate adults categorized objects (for example: hammer, saw, log, hatchet) on the basis of "going together" in a real life situation. The objects were grouped into some sort of ideational cluster regardless of common attributes ("I use a saw and a hatchet to chop up a log" or "I use a hatchet to make a handle for the hammer from the wood"). *Even though they can be trained to recognize that they are all tools, that fact has little relevance or importance.* The rural adults used these techniques 80% of the time, and employed semantic categorization only 4% of the time; on the other hand, the literate adults with minimal schooling used categorization 100% of the time, without prompting.

Scribner found similar results with bush villagers among the Kpelle. Fully 70% of the adult bush villagers (who had no urban experience, no school experience, and no literacy) *grouped objects, but could give no reasons for their choices.* They responded by saying, "I like them this way" or "my sense told me to do it this way." High school students from the same population could give category labels to their groups: "these are clothes" or "you can hunt with these." Individuals who worked for cash (and had some exposure to outsiders), but no school or literacy, fell between the two extremes. They tended to link the items together through their various uses: "the net is for fishing, the okra and peanut are cooked in the pot". These responses were similar to those of Luria's rural Russians.

Bruner, Olver, and Greenfield suggest that *school experience trains children to analyze objects into component parts*, and assignment of objects to groups requires this sort of analysis into parts. On the other hand, unschooled individuals respond to the global attributes of objects such as color.

Sharp and Cole tried reclassification tasks with Mayan youngsters of various ages, six to 20 years of age. Reclassification entails sorting a set of objects a second time, according to a different attribute (color, shape, number). As expected the children tended to sort by color at the youngest ages, then by shape as they grew older. However, years of education influenced the results more than age alone. On the reclassification task, only the youngest children and the teenagers with less than two years of school were unsuccessful. Scribner and Cole suggest that *school experience teaches cognitive flexibility: there is more than one way to classify a group of objects; there is no one correct way*.

Sharp (1971) taught Kpelle children to classify objects according to a certain criterion. He measured the number of trials it took to learn how to do the problem. He found that color was learned in fewer trials than number, and form was the most difficult of the three. He also found that older children learned more quickly than younger, and schooled children learned more rapidly than unschooled children. However, in further tests, he found that the difference between younger and older children lay in the fact that younger children applied a prior learned solution to a new problem (rote learning), whereas the older children learned by selecting a relevant attribute (conceptual learning). *American school children tended to abandon rote learning for even simple problems*, but the unschooled African children maintained rote learning even when the problem became too difficult.

Criticism of these studies focuses on the fact that villagers have little experience with

things like triangles, squares, red things, blue things, etc. Price-Williams (1972) looked at how children performed when they were faced with relevant and irrelevant objects. With Nigerian children, the age-related difference in the capacity to reclassify was apparent when geometric shapes were used, but there was no difference in performance when they sorted familiar animals and familiar plants that differed in terms of size, edibility, etc.

The common point to all these studies is that educational experience affects the ability to use language as a cognitive tool in solving problems. It also increases cognitive flexibility, in that there is no one way to classify things, and teaches analytical methods by mentally taking apart objects into component parts.

Memory

Many researchers point out the superlative memory skills of rural uneducated non-literate people. It may be that the kinds of things memorized are surprising to researchers, because they don't expect non-literate individuals to remember long oral histories or herbal remedies or family trees. The relevance of the concepts to be memorized is important. Deregowski (1970) found that tribesmen from Zambia did not remember time-related concepts as well as high school students from the same population. The villagers did not own time-pieces, but the schools ran according to time schedules. Therefore the *relevance of the items to be memorized is important to memorization*.

Non-literate societies stress practices that increase the likelihood that information will be transmitted from one generation to another. Mnemonic devices similar to those described by Havelock in the ancient epic poems are used to remember long tracts of tribal and family history. The Hmong oral texts are patterns with predictable poetic structure that contains semantic pairs, rhymes, distinctive rhythm, and repetition. The predictability of the sung patterns

reduces the ambiguity, and the number of repetitions of elements within the structure helps both the remembering and the understanding of oral texts. In this way, a young girl can hear a courtship chant, and can reproduce it largely intact; her creativity is shown in the ways she varies and recombines elements of the chant.

In general, studies have shown that *schooled children and adults employ different strategies for memorizing*. Most regroup objects into categories, then remember the objects one category at a time. The unschooled villagers tended to use memorizing techniques, but did not spontaneously reorganize the objects. Rather, they named the items, and rehearsed the names, and sometimes paired the objects with demonstrations of their functions. When the objects were presented in the form of a narrative story, the memory of the unschooled villagers did not differ from that of school children. "In the course of normal events, things are remembered because their natural contexts are organized in ways that matter to the individual and make sense in terms of the social experiences." Grammatically unconnected material was not well remembered by the unschooled adults, and they did not impose a structure on the objects unless they were taught to do so. *Success in school requires that children learn to memorize large amounts of unrelated material, much of it irrelevant and unfamiliar. Teachers often teach memorization techniques directly during school activities.*

Taking advantage of the narrative style of oral texts, using familiar structure, rhythm, rhyme, and a logical progression of events may help children from non-literate families memorize material in school. In addition, teachers can help children by explicitly teaching methods of regrouping grammatically unconnected items for recall.

Reasoning

Reasoning implies processing and reorganizing information to arrive at a

conclusion, as opposed to remembering a conclusion from a prior experience. Much of the cross-cultural research on problem-solving involves Piaget's classic conservation experiments and the solving of verbal syllogisms. Greenfield's work with the Wolof children showed results similar to those obtained in the perception tasks. Schooled and city children show development of the conservation concept similar to American school children (they reason that the amount of liquid remains the same despite the container shape). However, *rural unschooled children develop the concepts at a more advanced age, if at all, and rely more on perception rather than reasoning*. Greenfield suggests that *school teaches children to expect explanations to be based on physical criteria*, whereas unschooled children are more likely to give *social* explanations such as "you changed the amount of liquid".

In inferential tasks that require physical manipulation, unschooled Kpelle children and adults performed at the level of American kindergartners, with schooled individuals performing a little better. However, when revising the experiment so the equipment was not intimidating, the performance of all the groups rose considerably, so that researchers concluded that unschooled rural people do solve simple inference problems in basically the same way as urban Westerners. *The difference in performance hinged on beginning the task: those without school, city or Western contact did not seem to know where to begin, even though they knew the individual steps.*

When faced with verbal problems like "what do a dog and a chicken have in common", Luria's rural unschooled Russian villagers enumerated *differences*. Even when prompted, *they could not find commonalities*.

Verbal inferences have been used with African tribal groups as well as with the rural Russians. Luria found that the Russian villagers who had no school and no experience with outsiders *refused to*

accept the premises of the problem. For example, they were asked: "Cotton grows where it is hot and humid. In Village A it is hot and humid. Does cotton grow there?" They responded: "How should I know; I've never been to that village." *People with even minimal schooling accepted the propositions and followed them to their logical conclusions. When the Kpelle were presented with inference tasks that were embedded in a story, their percentage of wrong answers was the same as American high school students; however, the Kpelle groups (young and old unschooled adults and schooled young adults) all had at least one-fifth of their answers marked as irrelevant. Rather than choose the best of two unacceptable answers, the Kpelle chose a completely different response that was, to them, more socially acceptable.*

Slobin, in talking about the development of cognitive processes, suggests that *school experience teaches children that direct experience is not necessary to solve problems or acquire knowledge. Problems can be manipulated verbally. An individual can act on possible information as well as actual information, and possibilities can be eliminated logically.*

Learning styles

The social world of non-literate village people integrates many aspects into ongoing activity—religious beliefs, economic activities, teaching and learning. Learning is largely by observation and trial-and-error. In traditional societies, adults seldom verbalize a practice or a concept; rather, they demonstrate what is to be done. In addition, children in traditional societies are seldom heard to ask "why" questions. Fortes suggests this is because so much *learning is done in real-life situations, in which the context makes meaning clear.*

Studies designed to test whether villagers are superior at learning by observation, and whether or not they experience difficulty when the teacher and learner are not involved in a common ongoing activity, revealed that *styles of communication varied.* The unschooled individuals left out important parts of descrip-

tions, as though it was not necessary to fully describe an object for another person to identify it. Their *descriptions were based on an assumption that the listeners knew what they meant without precise verbalization.* Like young children, who describe objects in personal terms, not easily understandable to others ("pick the one that looks like my mother's hat"), the Kpelle seemed unable to "take the listener's point of view".

Often the communication styles that differ from English use few words to carry a lot of meaning—rather like teenagers' inside jokes. English tends to be very explicit; the legal contract is an extreme example of the way in which English reduces the chance for misinterpretation—it takes no outside "context" to figure out the meaning. On the other hand, Asian languages tend to be "high context" in that it takes an insider to understand what is being communicated. Thus, the forms of language used in students' homes may not conform to the patterns common in US schools.

Conclusion

Western schooling is related to better performance on tasks such as sorting, logic explanations, explanation of language, communicating instructions to games, and answering hypothetical questions. These are all skills that require "talking about" something, often topics that have no personal relevance to the speaker.

School did not influence performance in classification activities; it was experience with people unlike themselves that accounted for the differences.

Schooling improved performance on some other tasks, but was less important than other variables that co-varied with school (literacy, exposure to outsiders): story recall and memory for objects, abstraction, and logic problems. In the case of

memory, it was age that was the determinant.

Literacy skills that were learned outside of school also was associated with differences in performance. Knowledge of the Vai syllabary improved performance in auditory integration, using symbols to represent language, and using language to talk about language.

Non-literates were least able to perform tasks related to encoding language with symbols.

School provides students with the capacity to handle verbal explanations. Teacher-student talk often involve talking about the mental operations required to carry out some activity. This coincides with Slobin's proposition that school teaches children to understand context-free language and to learn from talk alone.

Implications

The Hmong, until fairly recently have lived in rural villages, without access to schools, much as the Vai, the Kpelle, and the rural Russian villagers lived. Some have have been exposed to Westerners and have moved into social contact with unrelated Hmong and other ethnic groups. Therefore, we could expect that the elder Hmong, unschooled and non-literate, would have different responses to certain tasks. These would be ones 1) requiring perception of two-dimensional representations of real objects; 2) classifying phenomena by linguistic categories; 3) reclassifying objects by a different attribute; 4) remembering grammatically unrelated and unfamiliar objects. They would typically remember best when information is presented in a familiar narrative

structure, especially when supplemented by mnemonic devices; they would learn best through observation. They would respond to reasoning problems from an experiential and egocentric point of view, refusing to accept the propositions of an argument and giving socially acceptable responses. In describing events or objects, they would be likely to omit relevant details, to be less than explicit. They would be unlikely to analyze phenomena into component parts, but would respond to global characteristics, particularly perceptual cues. They would be unable to verbalize why they have grouped things as they have, or to explain "why" they've chosen as they have. In explaining events, they would be more likely to use social or even magic explanations rather than assuming a logical world of physical criteria. Their lack of literacy would have an impact on tasks requiring encoding; teaching them phonics would require attention to experiences that would train them to represent language with abstract symbols. On the other hand, there is no reason to assume that their cognitive processes are inherently different; with experience and direct teaching, their performance on various cognitive tasks would equal that of newcomers from Western, urban, literate societies.

Their grandchildren, after living in urban settings, and after only a year or two in American schools, should perform differently on a variety of tasks. They should be able to recognize two-dimensional representations better, except for the iconic illustrations encountered for the first time. They should be able to categorize phenomena by semantic category rather than by perceptual attribute, and should show more flexibility in resorting phenomena into new categories. They should be better at verbalizing why they group things as they do. In terms of developmental cognitive tasks, they will be more likely to expect physical reasons and non-personal "laws" to explain happenings in the world,

rather than using magic or social explanations. The schooled children will be more likely to accept the hypothetical nature of logic tasks, and will be able to follow the sequence of syllogisms and other types of inference. Above all, their children will be able to handle verbal explanations of abstract concepts better than their parents.

The generation of the grandfather's son would fall between the two extremes in their performance on cognitive tasks. However, because of the erratic nature of their prior experiences, teachers cannot assume anything. These are currently the parents of the children in school.

Even though the children's experiences in American communities and in formal school makes their responses to tasks different from their parents, they are still the "bridge" between two worlds. Teachers cannot expect them to have the same home experiences as native-English speaking children of literate parents. For example, as a teacher, I would want to provide plenty of practice in using symbols to represent sounds and words, and I would want to make sure that the symbols on the page are perceived as I expect. If necessary, I would explicitly teach the conventions used to indicate relative size, position, and distance in drawings, and would make sure the objects represented on the page have already been seen in three dimensions. I would want to provide plenty of practice with categorization activities, explicitly teaching how any set of objects can be sorted according to different criteria. I would want to verbalize mental operations as much as possible, and to encourage Western-like descriptions. At the same time, I would want to teach by doing so the students can learn by observation, rather than presenting complex verbal explanations of how to accomplish something.

I would want to be aware that logical explanations may not fit with the kind of logic used in the home, and that people do not automatically accept hypothetical propositions as relevant. It is this difference in

processing hypothetical information to arrive at conclusions that may be the basis of the cognitive gap between immigrant parents from traditional villages and their Western-educated children.

This may also help explain the gulf in understanding that results when a doctor explains a congenital heart defect and expects parents to agree to open-heart surgery. The doctor assumes the parents to follow his logic, but the parents refuse to participate in the "syllogism game". From this difference in cognitive style develops a power struggle over who controls the welfare of a child.

Bibliography

- Anderson, Richard C., E.H. Hiebert, J.A. Scott, I.A.G. Wilkinson. *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading*. Washington, DC: The National Institute of Education, 1985.
- Cole, Michael and Sylvia Scribner. *Culture and Thought: A Psychological Introduction*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1974.
- Logan, Robert K. *The Alphabet Effect: The Impact of the Phonetic Alphabet on the Development of Western Civilization*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986.
- Luria, A. R. *Cognitive Development: Its Cultural and Social Foundations*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976.
- Rosch, Eleanor and Barbara Lloyd. *Cognition and Categorization*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum Associates, 1978.
- Scribner, Sylvia and Michael Cole. *The Psychology of Literacy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Slobin, Dan I. *Psycholinguistics*. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1971.
- Wertsch, James V. *Culture, Communication, and Cognition: Vygotskian Perspectives*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Context:

Southeast Asians & other newcomers in California's classrooms

Volume 18, No. 131, May-June 1998

Contextis published five times during the year as a way to provide staff with information and ideas concerning their immigrant, refugee, and sojourner students and parents. While the focus is on Southeast Asians, most articles and resources apply to other newcomer groups as well. District "qualified staff" and others receive a free subscription (contact Nguyet Tham at the Transitional English office). Outside subscribers pay \$10 per year to cover mailing and handling.

Editor:

Judy Lewis

Transitional English
Folsom Cordova USD
2460 Cordova Lane
Rancho Cordova
CA 95670
Phone (916) 635-6815
Fax (916) 635-0174
SEACRC@ns.net

Cognitive Skills in Cultural Context

In the 1960s, Michael Cole, now a psychology professor at UC San Diego, went to Liberia to find out why Kpelle youth performed at low levels in mathematics despite western-type schooling. The teachers listed the types of difficulties the Kpelle youngsters encountered: couldn't distinguish between geometrical shapes; had perceptual problems; couldn't do puzzles; didn't know how to classify objects into groups; could remember really well, but couldn't apply knowledge to new problems. These observations recalled the early European anthropologists' thinking that the primitive mind was different than the civilized mind. Explanation rested in a deficit model of cultural variations: a person who can't do a jigsaw puzzle must have perceptual problems; a child resorts to rote memory because of cognitive deficiencies, not because school learning requires recall of irrelevant disconnected material.

In visits to the Liberian classrooms, Cole found children remembering long passages of European poetry in English that they could not understand. They evidently thought that math equations, too, were mastered through memorization; $2 + 6 = ?$ would be learned in a lesson, but when $3 + 5 = ?$ was presented on a test, the children protested, saying that was material not covered in class.

However, in everyday life, Kpelle adults could do math. They traded in the marketplace, quickly calculating cost vs. selling price of goods. They out-bargained customers on taxi-fares, quickly calculating miles, road quality, quality of the car's tires, number of passengers, and distance, using a formula that worked to their advantage. They had ways of teaching these skills to their children. Although the Kpelle had difficulty sorting and resorting cards with pictures that differed in size, color, and shape, they had no difficulty categorizing when using



© Lewis 1986

traditional measures of dry rice. Adults and schoolchildren were shown 4 different quantities of rice and asked to estimate how many “kopi” (a unit of measurement) each represented. The adults erred by only one or two percent, compared to American adults, who overestimated the amounts from 30 to 100%.

Thus, when culturally different people performed poorly on a test designed by people from another culture, Cole looked for examples in everyday life in which the same cognitive skills were evident. In a famous experiment, Russian psychologist Labov demonstrated how the situation affects the complexity of a child's language use (1972).

Labov proposed that children who speak black English fail to perform well on standardized tests of language competence because of the test situation, not because of their language deficiencies. To demonstrate his point, Labov arranged for a comparison of language use by an eight-year-old boy, Leon, in three settings.

In the formal test setting, Leon is brought into a room where a large, friendly white interviewer puts a toy on the table in front of him and says, “Tell me everything you can about this.” Leon says little, with the friendly tester offering verbal prompts. Leon paused for as long as 20 seconds before making monosyllabic answers. The standard interpretation of this behavior is that Leon has failed to acquire grammatical competence. Labov's interpretation is that the child is actively avoiding saying much in a situation where “anything he says can literally be held against him.”

Labov then arranged for a black interviewer, Clarence Robbins, a native of Harlem, to interview Leon at home. The topic this time was street fighting. Thus, the interviewer, the setting, and the topic were all thought to be more familiar and interesting, the results were similar: the adult asked questions and when Leon responded at all, he did so in one-word answers.

In the third situation, Robbins brought

along a supply of potato chips and Leon's best friend, eight-year-old Gregory. He sat down on the floor with the two boys and introduced dangerous words and topics. These changes created a more informal, almost party-like situation in which the power relations between adult and children were changed. The effect of these changes on Leon's speech was dramatic. Not only did he use more than one-word replies to questions, he actively sought his turn, talking excitedly with both his friend and Robbins about street fighting, among other things. On the basis of these observations, Labov concluded that Leon had no difficulty using the English language and displayed a rich variety of grammatical forms typical of black English vernacular.

Labov drew two major conclusions. First, he said that what applied to his test-like situation applied to IQ and reading tests as well. They would underestimate such children's verbal abilities. Second, he emphasized that the social situation is the most important determinant of verbal behavior. Adults who want to assess children's abilities must enter into the right kind of social relationship with the child in order to uncover his/her skills.

However, the norms are all established in school-like situations. To say that Leon demonstrates the same cognitive skills in a the party-like situation, there has to be some assurance that the cognitive tasks are equivalent to those in the test-like situation. The adult (researcher, teacher, school psychologist) has to look for similarity in the tasks' structure, function, and cognitive demands.

Test situations present special difficulties for those being tested even if the child is interested in the topic, is unafraid, and speaks the same language as the tester. The basic problem is that acceptable responses are highly constrained; “someone knows the answer and it's not me,” thinks the child. Furthermore, the answer has to be given a correct form “to count,” but the child doesn't know what the rules of the game.

Conversations in other settings, by contrast, are more likely to allow shared control of topic, common understanding of the criteria for evaluating an acceptable reply, etc.

Another difference is that teacher-type questions and answers assume that learning is individual and competitive. The child is compared to the mythical "Norm." In an example paraphrased from Cole's account of their afterschool club (an unschool-like environment which was videotaped in order to search for cognitive tasks equivalent to those posed regularly by the classroom teacher or tester) the social aspects of cognitive life in a heterogeneous world become clearer.

Archie was a boy who had been diagnosed as learning disabled, and his teacher expected that he would be a behavior problem in the afterschool club. Examination of the videotape did not show Archie to be at all handicapped in performing well. However, his companion, Reggie, was often involved in interpersonal difficulties.

After being alerted to Archie's learning problems, the observers began to notice that he often depended on others to get information from the written text. His classroom behavior showed that he was very skilled at avoiding being called upon to answer questions. Interactions between Archie and Reggie showed how the adults and children all filled in for one another in a noisy, but tightly woven, division of labor that minimized disruptions in the activity. Reggie was an able reader, but he had trouble maintaining attention and cooperating with Archie. On one occasion, Reggie and Archie were together in a group without the regular third member who was usually the one who helped Archie. At the beginning of the session, Reggie refused to help Archie get the information he needed to make a banana cake. Archie tried to get the information from the adult present, but the adult made up an excuse for not helping and showed annoyance with Archie for failing to "listen the first time." After helping Archie decode a few items, the adult lost

patience and told Archie to figure it out by himself. The other kids were no more helpful, and after several confusions and refusals of help, Archie began to cry.

No sooner did Reggie see Archie crying than he agreed to be helpful. From that moment, a remarkable division of labor began. Reggie, who could read but not pay attention, had the text stuck under his nose when Archie needed information; Archie actively organized Reggie to pay attention so that the banana cake was eventually made. The following week Reggie began by telling Archie that he would cooperate, and the division of labor was replicated.

The ability of people to arrange and rearrange the circumstances under which they carried out an activity emerged as an important feature distinguishing tests from school lessons and school lessons from afterschool club activities.

What is to be learned from this work? First, failure to perform well in a test situation or in a classroom "I've got the answer and I'm waiting to see if you know it" should not be the basis of judgement about a child's lack of abilities. Rather, an educator needs to look into the child's social world to see if there are circumstances under which the same tasks are performed successfully. Second, learning of cognitive skills in social groups are not individual; the learning cannot be separated from the interactions between people.

A social group consists of people, roles, rituals, artifacts, meanings, and shared sacrifice for mutual benefit; all these learned facets taken together form the microculture of a group. The oldest of social links is that between kin. Bonds of friendship or cooperation among students or co-workers replicate kin-like links between unrelated people. Cole's group of undergraduates used concepts of anthropology to design an afterschool program for improving reading comprehension.

Their strategy, called Question-Asking-Reading (QAR), is similar to reciprocal

(continues on page 14)

(continued from page 3)

reading, but with some differences. In the original reciprocal reading design by Brown and Palinscar, the teacher and student silently read a passage of text and then engaged in a dialogue about it. Together they summarized the text, clarified comprehension questions, asked a question about the main idea, and predicted the next part of the text. The core of the QAR activity was the social group, with its roles and division of labor. As time went by, the individuals came to act as though they were linked by kinship, in that the “family’s” “older siblings” invested time and energy in guiding the “younger siblings” to greater proficiency in reading. To begin with, the roles were printed on index cards, and each participant had to fulfill at least one role. The roles were:

The person who *asks about words that are hard to say.*

The person who *asks about words that are hard to understand.*

The person who *asks a question about the main idea* of the passage.

The person who *picks the person* to answer questions asked by others.

The person who *asks about what is going to happen next.*

All the participants had a copy of the text to read, paper and pencil to jot down words, phrases, or notes, and their role cards. The steps in the procedure were written on the board where the answers were recorded. All these artifacts represented tools to be used by the adults who created a structured medium for the development of reading, and by the children to support their participation, even before they knew how to read.

The participants talked about growing up and the role of reading in a grown-up’s life. They discussed the difference between growing older and growing up. Reading became a marker of passage from one social age to another. The message was also clear that eventually everyone would “grow up.” Reading was not an ongoing test of indi-

vidual cognitive skills.

The activity began with a group discussion of the title of that day’s passage. The script was written on the board. The role cards were passed around. This usually caused a lot of excitement about who got which role (the “main idea” role was the least favored, while the “pick the answerer” was the most favored). The text for the day (usually taken from the newspaper) was distributed, one paragraph at a time. The participants (children, instructor, and at least undergraduate or other competent reader) bent over their paragraphs and read them silently. They then went through the steps of developing meaning from the words on the page, a paragraph at a time.

The QAR group was set up to enable poor readers to have “performance before competence,” in that they were not required to do the whole act of reading in order to participate. In the beginning, the artifacts and the more competent readers bore the load, but over time the load shifted to the developing readers, and they accepted this as a sign of their growing up. As the group internalized the process, other rituals developed—the timing of snacks, outside time while the quiz was developed, and so on. The QAR group became a microculture—roles, rituals, artifacts, shared meanings, and shared sacrifice for mutual benefit. Children learned by observation, imitation, trial-and-error, and feedback. The role cards and the script reinforced the necessary steps in reading comprehension.

Professor Cole has written a book called *Cultural Psychology: A Once and Future Discipline* (Harvard University Press, 1996), from which much of this article has been taken. He is available online (mcole@weber.ucsd.edu) and answers his email! An associate of his, Linda Stone, will be starting at CSUS in September. This may present an opportunity for area educators of Hmong, Iu-Mienh, Khmu, and other children and grandchildren of unschooled, non-literate adults. Their situation may not be too different from that of the Kpelle that Cole visited in Liberia thirty years ago.

Hold it! This article is not meant to imply that this approach alone is sufficient. However, as an extended day program or as the application complement to direct instruction, this social approach to learning offers an additional strategy, one that mimics traditional learning patterns.

Context:

Newcomers in California's classrooms
Volume 20, No. 142, August/September, 2000

When Reading is not Reading

"She can read any word in the book, but has no idea what she's reading." Native English speaking teachers often confuse the separate skills of decoding words and comprehension of text when asked if a child can read. English learning students themselves are very aware of the difference between word-calling and understanding.

Teachers with English learners in class seldom have reading materials designed for second language acquisition in the various content areas. Instead, teachers are faced with either ignoring the needs of their English learners or "deconstructing" the written text so that English learners can grab words' meaning more easily.

Pointing out features of text to English learners is not difficult, but it does require some idea of the process of language acquisition, some idea of the child's native language, and some idea of how oral and written English differ. To native English teachers, the critical characteristic is the difficulty of the words in terms of decoding. However, to the English learner, words that are easy to read can be difficult to understand and to differentiate from other slightly different configurations.

Once a student can read and understand 500 high frequency words, s/he can decode and understand (as individual words) as much as 75% of any text encountered in school. These basic words are used over and over again in groups and phrases, each with a different meaning.

In addition, there are idioms and usages in which the individual meanings of words do not equate to the meaning of the group of words.

Next, there are references to concepts that are based on prior experience, that not all new learners of English share.

Finally, there are propositions presented in text that rest on assumptions of the mainstream American culture that are not familiar to members of other language/thought systems and backgrounds.

The sections below illustrate these four characteristics of English text that need to be considered as carefully as the passage's readability coefficient.

Easy to read, difficult to understand

The words *used, have, had, go, going, got, to*, and other high frequency words can be assembled in many different ways that appear deceptively simple to native speakers of English. These strings of words are often used in the oral form of English, which simplifies structures and vocabulary over time. The following usages were found in commonly used reading materials for elementary and middle school students:

- I'm *used to* it (I'm *accustomed to* it)
- I *used to* go... (I *formerly* went...)
- I *had better* go (I *should* go)
- He *had to* go (He *was obligated to* go)
- He's *got to* go (He's *obligated to* go)

1 • When reading is not reading

4 characteristics of text that affect English learners' comprehension.

5 • Survival Strategies

6 • March 2000 Language Census

8 • Sacramento County's English Learners

9 • English learners and the SAT-9

11 • Resources

16 • EIEP News

17 • EIEP Feature: World Wise Schools

18 • Fast Facts: Today's newcomers

19 • SEA parent conference, October 28

20 • Order form

Phrasal verbs (synonyms)

run into (encounter)
 run out of (exhaust, deplete)
 ran after (pursued)
 come up (arise, appear, meet)
 set about (begin, began)
 end up (result, conclude)
 up to (able)
 subject I'm up on (competent)
 made straight for (headed for)
 get the hang of (understand)
 give it some time (be patient)
 take over (control, defeat)
 taken with (entranced)
 take off (depart, discard)
 for sure (certainly)
 blow the job (err)
 on the other hand (alternatively)
 wasn't much to look at (unattractive)
 no sooner said than done (immediately)
 put out things (display)
 put out a fire (extinguish)
 give him away (expose)
 all over (finished)
 knocked out (unconscious)
 blacked out (unconscious)
 show off (display, brag)
 sign up (register, enroll)
 felt funny (was uncomfortable)
 held up to (exemplified)
 hold my own (compete)
 deal with (handle)
 showed up (arrived)
 felt sorry for (sympathized)
 stand for (represent)
 go on (continue)

Basic Phrasal Verbs: Idiomatic
 American English Verbal Phrases
 (Spears, National Textbook
 Co., 1996) is one dictionary of
 phrasal verbs. Dave's ESL Cafe
 on the internet also has a list
 of phrasal verbs.

- He's *going to go* (He *will go*)
- They *got to* France (*arrived in* France)
- You're *going to have to go* (You *will be obligated to go*)
- ...the school I'd *been going to had* never *had* a cafeteria...
- ...let him *have it* (shout at him)
- What *have* you *got to* say?
- What *will* you say?
- What *do* you *have to* say?

In the last example, how does an English learner understand that “to” goes with “say” rather than “have” (“to say” vs. “have to”)?

- What have you *got*?
- What do you *have*?
- *Would* you *like to go*?
- *Do* you *want to go*?

Verb tenses in written English are essential to answering inference questions that depend on relationships of time. The verb tenses in oral English are slippery and increasingly simplified (listen to the reduction of *is*, *am*, *are to be* in oral English dialects). In addition, verb conjugating practice has been de-emphasized in teaching methodology and materials. However, for English learners from languages that don't use tenses of verbs to indicate time relationships, fine comprehension of written English can be near impossible. These examples are taken from texts:

- ...*had gone* home and *picked up* his lunch bucket. Now he *was walking*....
- ...*they were being stopped* and *searched*...
- ...*they'll start moving* around
- He *will say* I *have failed*.
- ...*had not expected* this. He *had to think* fast.
- It's a peaceful day. A cowboy *takes it easy* in the saddle as cattle *are driven* from one pasture to another where grass *is* more plentiful. The cattle *are being fattened up for marketing*.

- Corn chowder *was* by far the favorite dish on camping trips, and the boys never *tired* of it. By the middle of the summer, hundreds of cans of corn *had been used* in making chowder, and the boys *were always asking* for more. The also *begged to be allowed to do* the cooking, but Mr. Sherwood, the camp director, *felt* that it *was* best for Mr. Jones and the other counselors *to do* the cooking on the camping trips. But the boys *kept* right on *asking to do* it themselves. They *were disappointed* when the answer *was* always “No,” but never *discouraged*. They *seemed to feel* that some day the answer *would* surely be “Yes.”

Another way in which words that are easy to decode are difficult to understand is in the use of verbs that end with *-ed* or *-ing* as adjectives or nouns. English learners from languages in which there is no equivalent for “to be,” find predicate adjectives especially confounding. Second language errors signal this problem, for example, “I boring,” rather than “I'm bored.” Often *-ing* verbs used as nouns follow *tried*, *liked*, *began*, *kept on* (tried *skiing*, liked *eating steak*, began *sewing clothes*, kept on *singing*...).

English verbs *would*, *should* and *could* present problems in comprehension as well. These gradations of obligation, intent, and possibility are not present in all languages' verb systems. It's easy to see how comprehension questions about implied intent hinge on understanding the differences between these verbs. (Complicating the picture is the fact that *could* is also the past tense of *can*.) The following uses *would* and *could*.

- Besides, I figured they [*would*] *d* be pleased I [*had*] learned all that stuff. And I *could* see the teacher was getting a kick out of me.

Reading's a piece of cake

Examples of slang, familiar phrases, and idioms are easier to recognize; a few follow:

- in a sense
- kept their noses close to their jobs
- got rather pink

- get her bearings
- come of age
- of one mind
- more or less
- time and again
- more to the point
- might as well
- in a jiffy
- no matter what
- a funny look
- pretty funny
- pretty fair (athlete)
- in fact
- no big deal
- go the bathroom.
- get your hopes up
- keep his temper
- let him have his own way

Prior experience

Even if an English learner can read and understand all the combinations of high frequency words and key concept words in their texts, there are references to things and subjects that require prior experience to understand.

To identify these items, choose two or three imaginary English learners from different backgrounds (for example, a Hmong child born in this country of non-literate parents, a Mexican-born child of parents with 5-6 years of schooling, and an Eastern European exchange student), and ask yourself: “Would ____ know what this is?” If not, then it’s an item that needs to be identified and taught. Would Iva understand a reference to the “I have a dream speech”? Would a child from a totalitarian government and a fundamental congregation understand “civil rights movement”? Would a person from a subsistence society understand “time clock” or “shift” or “work your way up the ladder”?

(E. D. Hirsch and his “core knowledge” group, while controversial, provides us with a committee-chosen list of 5,000 such items that readers of American text will encounter; there’s a website and readily available books for parents: “What Your ____ Grader Needs to Know”). Here are a few examples (from *Cinder Edna*) that are easy to read but require

prior experience to understand:

- scrubbing pots and pans
- tuna casserole
- sixteen ways to get spots off
- mowing the lawn
- cleaning parrot cages
- play the accordion
- anteater from Afghanistan
- give a ball
- ball gown
- flossed their teeth
- fairy godmother
- magic wand
- put a dress on layaway
- carriage, horses, coachman
- review the troops
- recycle plastic, recycling plant
- Storybook Stomp, Cinnamon Twist, Worm, Fish, boogie, woogie
- play the concertina
- Barbados
- clock struck twelve
- buses stop running
- beauty sleep
- palace directory
- toenail polish
- pecan sauce
- pickled pigs feet
- Kalamazoo
- parade formations
- solar heating
- waste disposal engineering

Whether read and understood in English or translated into the native language, comprehension of the above concepts hinges on having had certain experiences and having heard particular stories and jokes.

Assumptions

One of the more difficult tasks is to identify assumptions that are implicit in the text—beliefs about human “truths,” which are in fact not universal, but different in various world views. Teachers who have experienced different cultures and who have tried to understand how another person’s point of view makes sense will have an easier time of it. Finding assumptions can be done by groups of teachers, with those who have crosscultural experience helping the others to identify

assumptions that are not universal. (The challenge is to suspend judgement and focus on understanding.)

One of the more prevalent assumption is the idea of individualism (“it just isn’t me”). Many stories promote the value of an individual over the good of the group. For example, recently adopted reading and literature texts promote equality of genders in the worlds of educational and occupational success. Gender equity’s time has come in modern, individual-based American society, but children of recent immigrants from other cultures are also encouraged to be self-concerned individuals... without equal time or consideration in our texts for the importance of group identity, cohesiveness, reputation, and stability, and the part that clear gender roles plays in groups’ success.

Another assumption in our stories is the value of competition and winning. This can be seen in the very common theme of “man vs. nature.” The idea is that humans can overcome any obstacle by strength, intelligence, or cunning; implicit is the assumption that humans should do it because they can. Some children come from world views that propose that it’s humans’ place to accommodate, rather than overcome. Still other children come from backgrounds that haven’t provided any experience that would allow a belief that it’s possible to overcome obstacles. On the other hand, the orphan theme (clever minority defeats powerful majority) is very familiar to many groups who are in this country as refugees.

There are other values presented in text that are not universal: teen-aged dating and experimentation, making one’s own decisions rather than obeying parents, eating fast food, spending money on self, expressing identity and value through displayed status items (name brand clothing, cars, houses, health clubs, tatoos, jewelry, etc.), separating from parents, trying out different identities, confronting others, and so on.

Even though English learners can read the words of these stories, they are faced with ideas and values that are not familiar. Look at

inference questions; how many assume common beliefs in order to arrive at the right answer?

What teachers can do

When English learners can read and understand the words but stumble over comprehension of English passages, look for one of these problems and intervene:

- Are there *phrasal verbs*? Help identify them as groups of words that go together rather than individual words, along with equivalent single-word synonyms (especially for educated English learners who use dictionaries).
- Are the easy words part of *verb tenses*? *Verbs used as adjectives or nouns*? Teach verb conjugations directly and have students practice. Teach grammar directly, use substitution exercises in a pocket chart along with writing variations of basic sentence forms. Teach functional forms of words (win, winning; shy, shyness, shy away from).
- Are the easy words part of *idioms, slang, or common phrases*? If the passage sounds rather stiff and old-fashioned, it’s less likely to contain a lot of “written oral English,” and easier to understand.
- Are there concepts that depend on *prior experience*? Identify them, and expose children to the topic via videos, multimedia encyclopedias, bilingual explanations, vicarious or actual experience. Use the core knowledge materials to guide supplemental instruction or take home materials.
- Are there *implicit assumptions* that may not be universal? (Look for “*should*.”) Create an atmosphere in which different values can coexist, then identify implicit assumptions in the stories and use them to help all students understand that “different is okay.” It is in this area that learning from culturally similar teachers is powerful, but any teacher can demonstrate curiosity, crosscultural understanding, and world view relativity.

Orality vs. Literacy Implications for Educators

Western society has not always been associated with literacy. Widespread literacy first occurred during Plato's time in ancient Greece, and produced an alternative to the oral transmission of knowledge and culture prevalent until that time. Epic poems and scholarly dialogues of Plato's time were analyzed and compared, and the differences between oral and written texts became evident. The styles, syntax, and lexicons were quite different, with the epic poems featuring memory-enhancing devices such as rhythm, narration, emotional imagery, and repetition. The dialogues, on the other hand, featured abstract concepts and an orderly sequence of premises leading to a logical conclusion. Literacy makes language permanent, which enables discourse over time, and the building of one idea upon another. Written language promoted abstract concepts, new ways of categorizing knowledge, and different styles of learning.

Researchers and casual acquaintances alike remark on the superlative memory skills of non-literate people, when they witness hours-long ritual songs and the naming of generations of ancestors. It may be that the kinds of things memorized are surprising, because they don't expect non-literate people to remember long oral histories or herbal remedies. The relevance of the concepts to be memorized is important. Likewise, memory-enhancing practices increase the

likelihood that information will be passed on word-of-mouth from one generation to another. Oral texts often have a predictable structure that contains semantic pairs, rhymes, distinctive rhythm, and repetition. In fact the repetition is helpful to remembering stories; think of the "Three Little Pigs" or "Little Red Riding Hood." Children's stories contain ample repetition of language, events, and characters. The predictability also reduces the ambiguity that accompanies oral texts; the receiver can't go back and re-read a passage. The predictability is important to understanding.

In general, studies have shown that schooled children and adults use different strategies for memorizing. Most regroup objects into categories, then remember one category at a time. Those villagers who have never been to school tend to name the items, rehearse the names, and sometimes pair the objects with physical actions. When the objects were presented in the form of a narrative story, the memory of schooled and unschooled children did not differ. Material that was unfamiliar or irrelevant to the unschooled individuals was not remembered, and grammatically unrelated objects were not well-remembered.

The social world of the non-literate villager integrates all aspects of life into ongoing activity. Teaching and learning are part of every-day events and interaction. Learning is largely by observation and trial-and-error. Adults seldom verbalize a concept; they demonstrate the concept. Children in these

societies seldom ask "why?" questions. This may be because so much learning is done in real-life situations, in which the context makes meaning clear.

Styles of communication affect learning. When asked to describe an object that the other person cannot see, villagers left out important parts of the description. Their descriptions were based on an assumption that the listener knew what they meant without precise verbalization. This lack of precision is similar to the descriptions of young children, who relate objects in personal terms, for example, "pick the one that looks like my mother's hat").

Teachers often have children in class who come from social groups that use oral means to transmit knowledge. Understanding differences between oral and literate styles of learning can help remove barriers to equal access in the classroom. For example:

- use pattern and repetition;
- tell stories;
- tie abstract concepts to familiar experiences;
- demonstrate;
- provide corrective feedback ("trial-and-error");
- explicitly teach and practice reorganizing strategies for memorizing unrelated or irrelevant concepts, well beyond the early years.



Folsom Cordova Unified School District
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova CA 95670
(916) 635-6815
Judy Lewis, Editor

*Number 79 was mistakenly skipped over.

Becoming a Nation of Readers: What About Language Minority Students?

*Report of the Commission on Reading,
1984 (National Institution of Education,
U.S. Dept of Education, Washington DC
20208.)*

Most newcomer students acquire the oral language skills of English quickly—within two years, usually. However, their reading skills often lag behind, and go unnoticed by teachers who listen to them speaking fluently. Students who arrive in American schools after third grade, and those who arrive without much prior school experience find reading English especially difficult. Overall, recommendations for improving the reading skills of native English speakers also apply to second language learners, with some modification.

In a nutshell, students *learn to read by reading* with understanding. In addition, reading—as a form of language *input*—increases general language skills. Speaking and writing (both forms of language *output*) emerge as the result of acquisition; thus, reading improves both these skills as well.

The major conclusions of the Commission on Reading are listed below, with parenthetical statements related to LEP students inserted by the editor.

Findings:

• **Skilled reading is constructive.**

Pulling meaning from text involves reasoning and the use of background knowledge.

[Use bilingual personnel to build background knowledge. Resources like Hirsch's Dictionary of Cultural Literacy may be helpful. Classroom periodicals like the one from New Reader's Press or US Express from Scholastic are designed for second language students. The old SRA reader-builder cards are great for general knowledge when used for comprehension rather than speed.]

• **Skilled reading is fluent.** Basic word recognition must be automatic.

[Ideally students should know a

(next page)

word—recognize it in oral language as well as know the meaning—before reading or writing the word. This is why learning to read the language one understands and speaks best is easier and more meaningful. Literate students can learn the new decoding rules fairly easily, and for older students there needs to be a comprehensive, sequential program that covers an entire phonics course in a fairly short period of time.]

- **Skilled reading is strategic.** Readers should learn to monitor comprehension and take corrective actions (keeping the problem “on hold” in the hope that later parts of the text will clarify; rereading parts of the text; looking ahead; seeking help from outside sources).

[Second language learners may miss , for example, every fifth word....try it and see how difficult it is to comprehend a passage. Students with prior school experience will bring competent reading strategies with them; students with no prior school will need to be taught strategies explicitly.]

- **Skilled reading is motivated.** Having access to a variety of written materials at a variety of levels is important. Watching others in the home/school actually reading, by choice, is also important.

[Reading anything is still reading. Steve Krashen recommends comic books, which provide plenty of context, along with dialogue and story elements. Imagine the number of comics every school's PTA could collect for every classroom!]

- **Reading skill improves with more reading.**

[Just as language acquisition improves with “comprehensible input”, literacy improves with “comprehensible reading”. Steve Krashen said recently that literate students read a million words a year. Each small reading experience builds towards that goal.]

- **Parents begin the process of learning to read.** The single most important

thing that parents can do for children is to read aloud to them, in any language, over and over again. [Parents begin to “scaffold” a child’s language environment from the earliest age. This means reducing the number of new words, simplifying the structure of sentences, repeating key words, creating routines in which the language is very predictable. It also means expecting the child to communicate, and guessing at what the child means to say. All these same factors are important in reading, and reading the child’s favorite story over and over again helps “scaffold” the early reading experiences. If parents don’t read any language, provide experiences in school with read-along books, cross-aged “story-tellers”, etc.]

- **Parents should support reading throughout childhood and beyond.** This is done by acquiring books, magazines, newspapers, and other reading materials and by taking children to the public library.

[Providing newcomer students with reading materials they can take home is helpful. Schools can collect magazines and distribute them; can send home discarded books; can encourage community groups to buy up paperbacks and comics for distribution; etc. Whatever happened to the bookmobile?]

- **Phonics instruction improves word identification skills.** The most important skills are learning the sounds of letters in isolation and in words; learning to blend sounds together; thinking of other words with a similar pattern (word families or decoding by analogy). Phonics should be taught early and kept simple. There should be immediate practice by reading interesting sentences and stories. [For second language learners, it is important to separate the issues of standard pronunciation from decoding skills. Pronunciation will approach the local standard with continued exposure and feedback. Teachers who wish to improve students’ pronuncia-

tion should provide adequate listening practice with minimal pairs...sounds that are not heard cannot be produced. Sight words have to be memorized, as most do not follow decoding principles.]

- **Both oral and silent reading are important.** Children should read a passage silently before reading it aloud. Repeated reading of the same passage by different members of a reading group until an acceptable level of fluency is reached is a good strategy. Most errors should be ignored unless they affect the meaning.

[Repeated reading of the same passage a good strategy for second language students. They have the opportunity to hear the words and sentences several times before having to produce the passage.]

- **Reading lessons should be devoted to explicit teaching** of the reasoning sequences used to arrive at conclusions. The teacher explains, models, demonstrates, and illustrates the strategies the students should be using. Teachers need to teach comprehension strategies directly. This needs to be done for science and social studies as well as literature.

[This is especially important for students without prior schooling in their own country. It is also important in teaching the cultural expectations for logical sequences and the structure of paragraphs, etc.]

- **Students need to do more independent reading.** By the 3rd or 4th grade, students should be actively reading self-chosen materials for a minimum of two hours per week.

[Remember, the goal is one million words a year, more or less!]

- **Teachers should maintain classrooms that are stimulating and well-disciplined.** There should be time allotted to independent reading, the pace should be brisk, and the rates of student success should be high.

50 most common words

These 50 words make up 60% of speech. 1,500-2,000 words are used in 99% of all American speech.

Uncle John's Bathroom Reader, Bathroom Readers' Institute, St. Martin's Press, NY, 1988. p. 79. (Stuart Flexner, I Hear America Talking.)

I	about
you	now
he	just
she	not
it	that
we	this
they	is
me	get
him	was
her	will
them	have
what	don't
the	do
a	are
an	want
on	can
to	would
of	go
in	think
for	say
with	be
out	see
from	know
over	tell
and	thing

Look at the most common word: "I". Does this reflect an American emphasis on individualism? Nine of the first ten are pronouns that refer to people—and the subjective form occurs more often than the objective. Does this mean that we more often talk about initiating actions rather than being the recipients of actions? Could this reflect the American "can-do" attitude towards life? Many of the other words are prepositions—see the next page.

Context:

Southeast Asians & other newcomers in California's classrooms
November/December, 1996, Volume 17, No. 124



California Reading Initiative for English Learners

Context is published five times during the academic year as a way to provide staff with information and ideas concerning their newcomer students and parents. While the focus is on Southeast Asians, most articles and resources apply to other newcomer groups as well. District staff with LEP students receive a free subscription (contact Nguyet Tham at the Transitional English office). Compliance file clerks should place a copy in CON24. EIEP coordinators receive a free subscription. Other outside subscribers pay \$10 per year to cover mailing and handling costs.

Editor:

Judy Lewis

Transitional English
Folsom Cordova USD
2460 Cordova Lane
Rancho Cordova
CA 95670
Phone (916) 635-6815
Fax (916) 635-0174
SEACRC@ns

Summary prepared by
the Early Reading
Instruction
Subcommittee of the
California County
Superintendents
Educational Services
Association, July, 1996.

A concise summary of research findings related to effective reading instruction has been distributed to all California schools and is available from the Department of Education's website ("goldmine"). These findings swing the California reading instruction pendulum back towards the center, balanced between *acquisition* of literacy through immersion in text and *learning* of reading through explicit practice in the principles and patterns of decoding and encoding. These research findings apply to students who have a receptive vocabulary in the language they learn to read.

Many California students do not have the opportunity to learn to read the language they understand. For these students, the findings are less applicable. On the next four pages are excerpts from the California Reading Initiative along with how the findings might apply differently to LEP students learning to read English.

Following that are several sound charts for practicing the initial consonant and vowel patterns for decoding single syllable words, using an approach that is used in overseas reading programs. These sound charts would be useful for students who already know how to read another alphabetic language, one that uses symbols to represent sounds in words. They can be used to provide repeated short practice, and to provide limits to the probabilities of English, thereby reducing the complexity of the input that an English learner must handle.



<i>Key topics from California Reading Initiative (7/96)</i>	<i>What is important for LEP students learning to read English?</i>	<i>What strategies could be used?</i>
Learning to hear sequences of sounds (phonemic awareness)	Child must be able to distinguish sounds they hear before they are expected to distinguish sounds they say.	Have students listen to cassette and follow the text, or use computer-based "living books."
Learning to associate sounds with written symbols (explicit phonics).	Contrastive analysis of home languages and English is essential for the teacher to be able to predict which English sounds are not part of the child's native language. Sounds which exist in both the languages will be retained more easily.	Use minimal pair lists to make game-like exercises for initial and medial vowel sounds (an, on; cut, cot, cat). Use dictation of minimal pairs.
Word & syllable characteristics	Characteristics of native language encoding may reflect and reinforce particular cognitive skills developed during child-rearing. Is the language monosyllabic? Are there final consonants or are there tones? How complex is the consonant blend system? Alphabetic? Ideographic?	Vietnamese, Lao, Thai, Hmong, Mien, Chinese languages use tones to convey word differences; Khmer, Korean, Japanese, Russian, Armenian, Spanish, English use final consonants. Use minimal pair lists to learn to hear and discriminate final sounds (eye, eyes, ice]. Monitor the rising or falling tone with which spelling words or reading words are said. Students from tonal languages will hear "now?" and "now" and "now!" and different words.
	Alphabetic literacy is associated with analytic skills (taking apart, putting together). Ideographic literacy is associated with gestalt skills (seeing the whole rather than the parts).	Try a variety of approaches to word memory to find the one that is most congruent with the culturally reinforced cognitive skills.
Rhyming (phonemic awareness)	In tonal languages rhyming words include vowel and tone rather than vowel and final consonants.	Use bilingual staff, peers, parents, or materials to provide practice in rhyming of familiar words. Use minimal pair games to help students hear consonants in final positions. Monitor use of tones in examples and feedback.
Sound-symbol memory	Animals or images that help native speakers remember the sound that goes with a letter may not have meaning for LEP students.	Have a bilingual person identify an animal or image from the native vocabulary that begins with the target sound. Use that icon along with the English icon. When there is no equivalent sound, use just the English icon.
	Understanding how other languages are written will help predict areas that need emphasis; for example, Lao, Khmer, and Thai students will want to discriminate marks above and below.	Provide practice in symbol discrimination, spacing, and relevant marks (periods, commas, apostrophes, capitals, question marks, etc.) to help students recognize significant marks.
Blending sounds	Ideographic languages (for example, Chinese) don't take apart words and blend them together left to right in a linear fashion; words are basically pictures. Arabic is alphabetic (blendable) but it goes from right to left. Lao and Thai put vowels over, under, and around consonants.	Use manipulatives and word play to help students take off sounds and put them on again. Having an aide do this with the native language will help. Once learned, the skill of blending will transfer to English. (We learn to read only once; skills transfer to a second alphabetic language.
	Beginning with the vowel, adding the initial consonants, then the final consonants is a familiar method for parents and foreign-taught children.	Overseas methods do blending like this: "a" - "ba" - "bat" "o" - "to" - "top"
	Children who read another alphabetic language know how to blend.	Use sound charts to help literate students quickly learn the sound-symbol code of English.

Recognizing a decoded word	A child decodes a word, then listens to it, and identifies its meaning by matching the word to one in his/her bank of receptive vocabulary. LEP students cannot rely on this strategy because their bank of receptive vocabulary is in the native language.	Find ways for LEP students to experience concepts before reading words that represent them: hear words; discriminate words from similar words; say the words; recall the words; know what the words mean in their native languages. Select key words from each reading passage and have a bilingual aide or peer "preview" them by talking about their meanings before the reading lesson in English. Send key words home so parents can explain them in the primary language.
Word families (rhyming words spelled the same)	Keep in mind that tone may cause students from Vietnamese, Chinese, Hmong, Mien, Lao to over-discriminate, to attach significance to sound differences that English speakers ignore (for example, the "t" in "top" vs. "stop").	Patterns help make complex input more comprehensible. Decoding by analogy (think of a word that belongs to the same family) will help, as the LEP student cannot rely on predictable syntax to provide clues. Try to keep the intonation similar when dictating words from a word family. For example, say "fall-tall." Does your voice go up and linger at the end of "fall"? Does it drop with "tall"? Students will hear "tall-tall" as different if you use the intonation that means "here comes another word of a pair."
Word lists	Language learners need to recognize about 500 English words to begin to communicate (nouns, pronouns, verbs, spatial prepositions, social phrases). Many of these words are also high-frequency reading words. Sitton's basic 500 words comprise 50-75% of any written passage. Not all these common words have an equivalent in other languages (for example, a, an, the).	Use the high-frequency words to teach memory skills, to involve parents in helping at home, and to provide an avenue for immigrant students who clamor for homework. Where possible, pair words in opposites, conceptually similar, linguistically similar, or functionally similar groups.
Feedback	First language receive lots of feedback about what they say and how they say it. Second language learners, too, need feedback. Feedback is not the same as correction.	Provide prompt, explicit feedback on skills as well as motivational feedback. Repeat child's utterances correctly or rephrase in a question. Whenever possible, guess the meaning to keep the LEP student responding.
	Students and parents expect teachers to point out mistakes and show the right way. Many immigrant students are familiar with "apprentice learning," or learning by doing. General character praise is less helpful.	Arrange for students to learn by doing rather than by listening. Rather than saying "Good job" on a spelling paper, try "2 more right than last week." Then arrange the conditions so that the learner gets 2 more correct the following week.
Emerging readers almost never skip words or guess.	LEP students do not have familiar English syntax in their heads. They won't know if they've skipped a word or not. They can't tell the important words from the "matrix" (high frequency) words.	LEP students do not need to know every word to arrive at the approximate meaning of a passage.
	New words (those that are not high frequency words) tend to carry the meaning of the passage; these are the key words.	For limited readers, highlight the key words, and ask the reader to understand these. The meaning is conveyed in much the same way that a telegram conveys meaning.
	Fast, accurate recognition of high-frequency words will help by reducing the number of new words to decode and comprehend.	Use multiple methods to teach LEP students to quickly and accurately recognize high frequency words' meanings.

Focus on meaning not accent	As LEP students learn to read English words, their oral production may be influenced by characteristics of the native language. Errors in production will resolve with feedback; after four or five years, students will have full command of two sound (and sy	Provide feedback by repeating a word or phrase correctly, in a way that does not embarrass. Provide plenty of experience with minimal pairs before expecting accurate pronunciation. Provide a multimedia program like "ELLIS," which tailors minimal pairs for particular languages and allows learners to record production and compare it to the original.
Spelling errors in writing	Writing is the highest level of language use, and reflects skills in listening, speaking, and reading. Additional reading will improve LEP students' writing. LEP students' errors in production are evident in spelling used in free writing and in dictation.	Specific teaching of spelling helps by reducing the complexity of input. Ensure that the student can hear the sounds in the positions they occur in English words. Spelling is a good early activity for LEP students who have had prior school. They can feel successful by memorizing words.
	Contrastive analysis helps teachers predict the kinds of errors that will occur (he & she confusion; tense confusion; dropping of medial sounds or final consonants, etc). These will correct with feedback and sufficient input (reading/listening).	Teachers can find ways to hook new words to existing concepts in the native language (dictionary work, peer teaching, at-home activity, high school aide or volunteer help). For example the student can learn to read and spell the word "restaurant" but writes its meaning in the native language.
	Research in immersion studies show that teachers do not include more advanced forms of syntax without a systematic plan. This is in opposition to the theory that second language acquisition needs only natural language input.	There needs to be systematic and comprehensive attention to language use and forms. Second language acquisition strategies need to include both implicit and explicit approaches.
Vocabulary development	LEP students do not have very large English vocabularies. Native English speakers start school with about 5,000 words in their receptive word banks. LEP students' vocabularies are in their native languages.	Link new word/concept to existing concept in native language. Use bilingual aides, peers, parents, or materials to build receptive vocabulary and concepts. Encourage parents to read or tell stories in the native language to build vocabulary. Then when a new English word is learned, there's an existing concept to hook it to. Avoid telling parents to speak English at home; rather encourage them to expect children to be fluent in two languages.
	Knowledge of patterns of background experiences and home language use helps teachers know which students have receptive vocabularies that are underdeveloped in their native languages.	Language/cognitive development (background knowledge) activities should be integrated with language acquisition activities. On the other hand, students with well-developed background knowledge can link the new language to developed concepts fairly quickly.
Language meaning	Languages classify things in different ways. English has a huge number of near-synonyms (shades of meaning). English has many different forms for the same concept depending on its "part of speech." Other languages may differ for gender and number as well. The number of different words for the same concept reveals something about its importance within the culture (for example the varieties of "dog" and "vehicle" in American English vs. the words for "rice" in Hmong or "snow" in Inuit languages).	Whenever possible take time to classify and reclassify objects and ideas. Teach opposites together. Spend time on similar words, using strategies like rank ordering words for "happy" from most happy to least happy, etc. Teach roots and affixes, grouping words together in families. Teach various forms of a word together (noun, verb, adjective, etc.). Teach common and proper variants (eg., "white house" and "White House."

Good readers read more	Achievement is correlated with the amount of reading, not the language in which the reading is done.	Ask parents or siblings to read or tell stories in the home language to build a strong conceptual base.
	LEP students with non-literate parents do not read enough (reading materials are not a high priority in limited budgets).	Find ways to send reading home. Use an old computer for home reading-writing. Ask parents to set up a reading/homework time for at least 20 minutes every day but Friday and Saturday, and sit with children during this time; TV, radio, phone turned off.
	Teachers teach specific comprehension strategies (including use of graphic organizers).	Teach strategies for finding main ideas. Provide "key idea" maps or graphic organizers for students to use and elaborate upon. Reduce the amount of less important text.
	LEP students' struggle with words' meanings does not leave time or energy for understanding main ideas, etc.	Identify key words, sentences, paragraphs (copy book and highlight). Ask aide to explain key words in native language. Use materials with reduced reading levels.
Re-reading is effective.	LEP students really benefit from this. Read less more.	Ask native English and more fluent students to read first, then the less fluent readers. (This provides additional input before output.)
Independent reading level is 95% known words.	This generalization does not apply to LEP students. LEP students may decode a word wrong but know its meaning, or decode a word correctly but not know its meaning. LEP students' texts will probably have higher percentages of misread (mispronounced) words. Contrastive analysis will enable teachers to determine which production errors are reading errors rather than pronunciation or usage errors.	Find ways other than oral production to determine comprehension. Expect LEP students to rehearse (re-read) material.
Predictable texts	These are predictable only for native speakers of English. LEP students may not predict meaning, but will be gaining input for understanding English.	Use predictable texts to allow LEP students to practice high-frequency words and strategies for understanding written messages.
Decodable texts	For LEP students, these are very similar predictable texts since they don't have the receptive vocabulary to recognize the meaning of decoded words. These texts do give LEP students practice in hearing the patterns of English.	Use decodable texts with taped cassettes to provide additional input, especially in hearing the final sounds of words, patterns of multisyllabic words, and intonation of a sentence vs. the tone of a word. LEP students benefit from explicit phonics instruction combined with minimal pairs practice, dictation, and prior aural/oral experience with words to be decoded.
Diagnostic tools	Running records are effective if the teacher understands the effects of the first language on English production and if comprehension is checked. Oral word reading tests are not valid because decoding does not mean reading with understanding, but they can be used to identify generalizations that are incompletely learned.	In tracking oral reading, teachers should be alert for "errors" that are 2nd language effects and provide aural/oral experience before expecting student to read with native fluency. Simple informal assessments include leveled reading passages that are read in English then explained in the primary language.
	LEP students' background influences reading achievement (parents' literacy, school experiences, etc.)	Information about the student's background should include arrival date, prior schooling, literacy, parents' literacy, and general knowledge of the language and cultural characteristics.

Background Knowledge for All: Equalizing Opportunities

*The Core Knowledge Series,
Resource Books for Grades One through Six*
E D Hirsch, Jr., editor Doubleday, 1993

E.D. Hirsch, Jr., publisher of *Cultural Literacy*, has edited a series of Core Knowledge resource books for parents and teachers: *What Your 1st Grader Need to Know*, *What Your 2nd Grader Need to Know*, and so on, through 6th grade. He and his group of writers and consultants are attempting to make the "background knowledge" of American culture explicit. His first book, a list of 5,000 items that comprised a core list of important American concepts and topics, was greeted by many as racist and Eurocentric. Certainly it is Eurocentric; American culture for the past 200 years has been European in nature, even though Amerindians, Africans, and Mexicans have been part of the population mix. It is true that their cultural contributions are a small proportion of the core list, but it is probably Hirsch's call to use the core list as the *definition* of our national culture that evokes strong reaction.

The issue is not whether schools should pass on a common culture; they do. It is, rather, whether the common (national) culture should reflect more of its constituent cultures (it should, it has, it does, it will even more so in the future), and whether people who live in one cultural world should have access to the unwritten assumptions of the other.

Listing the implicit

Despite the controversy, the core list is important because it is available. What the core list attempts to do is to identify items that are necessary background knowledge for comprehending American speech and text. I know that if I went to

live in Laos, my adaptation and acculturation would be immeasurably easier if I had a resource book that identified the essential elements of Laotian languages and cultures, whether the concepts originated with the indigenous peoples, the Lao immigrants, the French colonials, or their Chinese, Thai, Vietnamese, Khmer, or Burmese neighbors.

For newcomers to America, a core list of important concepts and words gives people a place to begin in understanding what they see, hear, and read. Making explicit a core of knowledge is akin to handing a rule book to a group of novice football players who suddenly find themselves playing in the most important game of their lives.

In societies that use education as a way to divide people into higher and lower social classes, having specialized knowledge available only to a few is important. However, American education, compulsory and free, is supposed to be a social equalizer. In America, it is not education, but achievement—seen as the result of taking advantage of opportunity and exerting effort—that creates social divisions. By keeping secret the background knowledge upon which school achievement is at least partially based, American education becomes more elitist and restrictive.

Teaching core knowledge

The Core Knowledge books contain the expanded core list, with portions of background knowledge assigned to various grade levels.

These books give teachers a great resource for newcomer pro-

grams. They could be especially important for newcomers who have little prior education and restricted access to American cultural antecedents.

Here is one possible scenario, using bilingual aides to teach background knowledge to newcomer students:

Divide bilingual aides into grade level teams of various languages.

Train each team on the book at their grade level(s). Train the aides in motivation, lesson pacing, and group dynamics.

Schedule the aides and students in extended day programs to cover the Core Knowledge book at their level(s), using the primary language to explain.

Ideally, students would work through the books from 1st grade to their assigned mainstream grade level. Junior high, senior high, and adult newcomer programs would cover books one to six.

Compensatory education programs are also concerned with providing disadvantaged students with the tools and resources necessary to compete on an equal footing with their more advantaged peers. Compensatory education aides and bilingual aides could be trained together, working on the same material in different languages.

As teachers, we know that children come to school with different exposure to nursery rhymes, fairy tales, and visits to zoos and museums, but we have only instinct to guide us in filling in the gaps for all

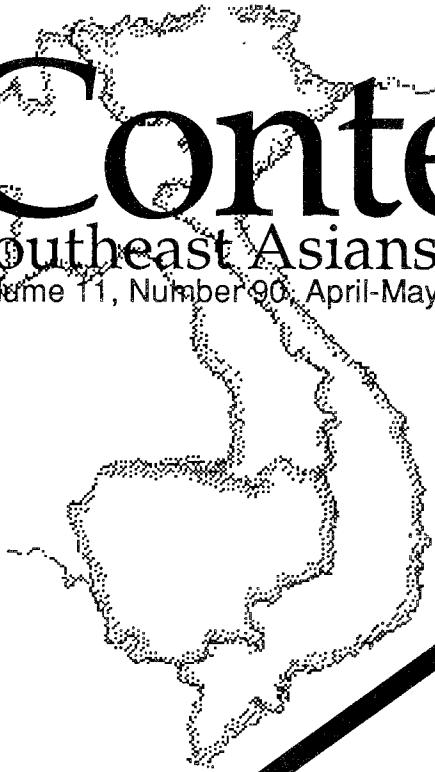
children. The Core Knowledge series, with all its flaws and controversy, is an available resource that can help us in our attempt to level the playing field for all comers.

Multimedia motivation

Computer-based multimedia encyclopedias for each of the different core knowledge books (enticing, self-pacing, and attention-riveting) would make a truly useful educational resource. Having translations into the major newcomer languages would be an obvious and valuable addition.

Finally, the Core Knowledge computer or print encyclopedias (arbitrarily divided into grade levels) provide a good model for similar programs that would make explicit the important elements of other cultures. Each classroom could choose among Hispanic cultures (including Mexican-American), Native American cultures, Asian cultures, Baltic cultures, Russian cultures, Middle-Eastern cultures, African cultures (including American black), and so on, depending on the school's population. Each would be available in English and various languages, so that newcomers can learn about their new peers.

For more information on the Core Knowledge series, or the non-profit Core Knowledge Foundation ("dedicated to the improvement of education for all children"), write to 2012-B Morton Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22901



Context:

Southeast Asians in California

Volume 11, Number 90, April-May 1991

Folsom Cordova Unified School District
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova CA 95670
(916) 635-6815
Judy Lewis, Editor

When text is a test

What follows is one paragraph from an old sixth grade history text. All of the Dolch words (the 220 most common English words, comprising 50-75% of text) have been left in place, but the other words have been replaced with "xxxx". This is how text appears to a very limited reader of English.

By the xxxx of the xxxx xxxx, xxxx
in the long, xxxx xxxx of xxxx had
xxxx to the xxxx of xxxx. When a
xxxx xxxx, the xxxx of that xxxx xxxx
into two xxxx, the xxxx and the xxxx.
The xxxx went to xxxx and the xxxx
had to xxxx on xxxx. It was the xxxx
of the xxxx to xxxx the xxxx and look
after it xxxx it xxxx xxxx to xxxx. If
the xxxx was not xxxx for, it xxxx
xxxx and could xxxx the xxxx.

Apparently,
something
has to be
"looked
after".

a-1
after-1
and-4
by-1
could-1
for-1
had-2
if-1
in-1
into-1
it-4
long-1
look-1
not-1
of-5
on-1
the-14
to-5
two-1
was-2
went-1
when-1

*Dolch words &
frequency of
occurrence—51 of the
total 89 words in the
paragraph. There are
only 22 different words.*

ancestors
cared
Chou
died
disturb
duty
dynasty
earth
faded
family
feed
heaven
history
hun
led
line
living
nothing
parts
person
po
pride
remained
restless
slowly
soul
split
stay
time
unbroken
until
worship

*Non-Dolch words—38 of
the 89. Some of these are
the "key words".*

Text presents the single greatest obstacle to school success for language minority students. Which words are the important ones? How can a student keep up with classmates when each paragraph requires extraordinary effort to decipher? There are various kinds of basic word lists—words that occur most frequently in speech, reading, or writing. If basic words are quickly recognized, the other words emerge as the ones that carry the main ideas of the passage.

Dolch words are the basic words learned in kindergarten, first and second grades. Learning Publications (PO Box 1326, Holmes Beach, FL 33509) publishes the Dolch lists in more than 25 languages, a starting point for non-English-speaking students literate in their own languages. However, the Dolch words alone don't provide many clues to understanding, as the paragraph on page 1 shows. Of the Dolch words in that passage—

- only three words convey a reasonably strong visual image: *long*, *look*, and *two*. However, *look* is deceptive; it is part of a two-word verb *look after*..

look after it (take care of it)

look after it (look after it goes by)

- *It* is used four times: 3 times it has the same antecedent, and one time it is part of the general "it was..."

- *To* is sometimes a preposition, sometimes part of an infinitive, and sometimes part of an idiom:

led *to* the worship

went *to* heaven

had *to* stay

to feed

faded *to* nothing

Here is the complete paragraph (key words are bold-face):

By the time of the Chou dynasty, pride in the long, unbroken line of history had led to the **worship** of **ancestors**. When a **person** **died**, the **soul** of that person **split** into two **parts**, the *hun* and the *po*. The *hun* went to **heaven** and the *po* had to stay on **earth**. It was the **duty** of the **family** to feed the *po* and **look after** it until it slowly faded to nothing. If the *po* was not **cared for**, it remained restless and could **disturb** the living.

(The Human Adventure, Addison-Wesley, p. 97)

The non-Dolch words are stronger in terms of concept and visual image. Looking over the list of non-Dolch words on page 1, the key ideas begin to emerge—

Someone *worships* *ancestors*.

Someone has a *long* *history*.

People *die*.

People have *souls*.

The *soul* *splits* into two *parts*.

The two *parts* are called *hun* and *po*.

One part *stays* on *earth*.

One part goes to *heaven*.

The *family* must *care* for the *soul*.

A *restless* *soul* *disturbs* the *family*.

The text presents other challenges. Familiarity with the notion of *heaven* and *earth* is assumed. The reader has to figure out that *look after* and *care for* are synonymous. The reader must be able to negotiate the time nuances and conditions of verbs:

had led to (had + led = info about time)

had to stay (had to = must)

could disturb

Of five sentences, three begin with dependent clauses, and one requires belief in the validity and relevance of *if-then* arguments.

By the time of the Chou dynasty,

When a person died,

If the *po* was not cared for,

Finally, the reader is faced with an adjective that appears to be a verb but is used as a noun—

could disturb the *living*.

Many teachers have students complete a study guide. The advantage for limited-English readers is that the questions help define the important concepts and simplify the text. What can be done with a limited-English reader who is in a mainstream class with no help? If the student is literate in his or her own language, I would take a highlighter and mark the key words in the paragraph, and alter the assignment to include defining the key words in the primary language.

A student with no prior literacy could not rely on a dictionary to help make the connection to established concepts. The only solutions for such students is to have a bilingual aide, parent, or peer explain the main ideas of the paragraph, or to explain the key words in simple English.

Dolch Words

Adjectives

a
all
an
any
best
better
big
black
blue
both
brown
clean
cold
eight
every
first
five
four
full
funny
good
green
hot
kind
light
little
long
many
much
new
one
only
pretty
red
right
round
seven
six
small
some
ten
that
the
these
this
those
three
too

two

warm
white
yellow

Adverbs

again
always
away
before
down
far
fast
here
just
never
now
once
out
soon
then
there
today
together
very
well

Prepositions

about
after
around
at
by
for
from
in
into
of
off
on
over
to
under
up
upon
with

Pronouns

he
her
him
his
I
it
its
me
my
myself
our
she
their
them
they
us
we
you
your

Verbs

am
are
ask
ate
be
been
bring
buy
call
came
can
carry
come
could
cut
did
do
does
done
don't
draw
drink
eat
fall
find
fly
found

gave
get
give
go
goes
going
got
grow
had
has
have
help
hold
hurt
is
jump
keep
know
laugh
let
like
live
look
made
make
may
must
open
own
pick
play
please
pull
put
ran
read
ride
run
said
saw
see
shall
show
sing
sit
sleep
start
stop
take

tell
thank
think
try
use
walk
want
was
wash
went
were
will
wish
work
would
write

Conjunctions

and
as
because
but
or
so

Question words

how
what
when
where
which
who
why

Misc

no
not
if
yes

95 Most Common Nouns

airplane
apple
baby
back
ball
barn
basket
bear
bed
bell
bird
birthday
boat
book
box
boy
bread
bus
cake
cap
car
cat
chair
chicken
children
coat
corn
cow
dog
doll
door
dress
duck
ear
eggs
elephant
eye
face
farm
father
feet
fire
fish
flower
garden
girl
grass
hair
hand
hat
head
hen
hill
horse
house
kitten
leg
letter
man
men
milk
money
monkey
mother
nest
nose
paper
party
picture
pig
pony
puppy
rabbit
rain
ring
road
school
sheep
shoe
show
squirrel
stick
store
street
sun
table
tail
toys
train
tree
wagon
watch
water
window
wood

1st 100 *The High-Utility 500 (Rebecca Sitton)—the most frequent words in students' writing*

the	of	and	a	to	in	is	you	that	it
he	for	was	on	are	as	with	his	they	at
be	this	from	I	have	or	by	one	had	not
but	what	all	were	when	we	there	can	an	your
which	their	said	if	do	will	each	about	how	up
out	them	then	she	many	some	so	these	would	other
into	has	more	her	two	like	him	see	time	could
no	make	than	first	been	its	who	now	people	my
made	over	did	down	only	way	find	use	may	water
long	little	very	after	words	called	just	where	most	know

2nd 100

get	through	back	much	go	good	new	write	our	me
man	too	any	day	same	right	look	think	also	around
another	came	come	work	three	must	because	does	part	even
place	well	such	here	take	why	help	put	different	away
again	off	went	old	number	great	tell	men	say	small
every	found	still	between	name	should	home	big	give	air
line	set	own	under	read	last	never	us	left	end
along	while	might	next	sound	below	saw	something	thought	both
few	those	always	show	large	often	together	asked	house	don't
world	going	want	school	important	until	form	food	keep	children

3rd 100

feet	land	side	without	boy	once	animals	life	enough	took
four	head	above	kind	began	almost	live	page	got	earth
need	far	hand	high	year	mother	light	country	father	let
night	picture	being	study	second	soon	story	since	white	ever
paper	hard	near	sentence	better	best	across	during	today	however
sure	knew	it's	try	told	young	sun	thing	whole	hear
example	heard	several	change	answer	room	sea	against	top	turned
learn	point	city	play	toward	five	himself	usually	money	seen
didn't	car	morning	I'm	body	upon	family	later	turn	move
face	door	cut	done	group	true	half	red	fish	plants

4th 100

living	black	eat	short	United States	run	book	gave	order	open
ground	cold	really	table	remember	tree	course	front	American	space
inside	ago	sad	early	I'll	learned	brought	close	nothing	though
idea	before	lived	became	add	become	grow	draw	yet	less
wind	behind	cannot	letter	among	able	dog	shown	mean	English
rest	perhaps	certain	six	feel	fire	ready	green	yes	built
special	ran	full	town	complete	oh	person	hot	anything	hold
state	list	stood	hundred	ten	fast	felt	kept	notice	can't
strong	voice	probably	area	horse	matter	stand	box	start	that's
class	piece	surface	river	common	stop	am	talk	whether	fine

5th 100

round	dark	past	ball	girl	road	blue	instead	either	held
already	warm	gone	finally	summer	understand	moon	animal	mind	outside
power	problem	longer	winter	deep	heavy	carefully	follow	beautiful	everyone
leave	everything	game	system	bring	watch	shall	dry	within	floor
ice	ship	themselves	begin	fact	third	quite	carry	distance	although
sat	possible	heart	real	simple	snow	rain	suddenly	leaves	easy
lay	size	wild	weather	miss	pattern	sky	walked	main	someone
center	field	stay	itself	boat	question	wide	least	tiny	hour
happened	foot	care	low	else	gold	build	glass	rock	tall
alone	bottom	walk	check	fall	poor	map	friend	language	job

Here's the paragraph again....this time the words that are not on the "High Utility 500" are replaced with "xxxx"....

By the time of the xxxx xxxx, xxxx in the long, xxxx line of xxxx had xxxx to the xxxx of xxxx. When a person xxxx, the xxxx of that person xxxx into two parts, the xxxx and the xxxx. The xxxx went to xxxx and the xxxx had to stay on earth. It was the xxxx of the family to feed the xxxx and look after it until it slowly xxxx to nothing. If the xxxx was not cared for, it xxxx xxxx and could xxxx the xxxx.

Now, we can tell that the family is involved, along with something that has two parts, something that stays on earth and has to be cared for. To a Chinese, these might be enough clues to tell that the passage is about ancestor worship.

Key words:

worship
ancestors
soul
split
hun
po
heaven
duty
restless
disturb

Prepositions show relationships between words—

in terms of space, direction, time.

Look at how Hmong accomplishes the same thing with verbs that incorporate the relationship:

nrog = to accompany, to be with
Nws nrog kuv tuaj.
 S/he—accompany—me—come.
 S/he comes with me.

nrog poj niam mus
 accompany—wife—go
 go with wife

txog = to arrive at
Nws tuaj txog lawm.
 S/he—come—arrive at—already.
 S/he has arrived.

Nws mus tsis txog lub zos.
 S/he—go—not—arrive—village
 S/he has not arrived at the village.

English prepositions are difficult for most language minority students. Do you live *on the street* or *in the street*? Are you sitting *in the chair* or *on the chair*?

The Boehm Basic Concepts is both a test of general knowledge for young children and teaching program for preschool. Yet even adult learners of English experience confusion because of prepositional concepts.

BOEHM BASIC CONCEPTS WITH SAMPLE SENTENCES

(A bilingual aide can use these sentences to teach these essential English spatial, quantitative, and qualitative concepts. They are basic to understanding classroom instructions!)

25 EASIER CONCEPTS

1. Put a pencil **on top of** your head.
2. Walk **through** the doorway.
When you're **through**, sit down.
Draw a line **through** the circle.

3. Put your hands together. Move your hands **away from** each other.
Draw a bird **away from** the tree.
4. Put your hand **next to** your ear.
Draw a circle **next to** a square.
5. What things are **inside** your mouth?
This is the outside of your arm (point to it). Show me the **inside** of your arm.
Draw a square **inside** a circle.
6. Show me one finger. Show me all your fingers. Show me **some but not all** your fingers.
Give me **some but not many** of these paper clips.
(*some is more than two*)
7. What is **in the middle of** your face?
...in the middle of your body?
Put this paper clip **in the middle of** your hand.
Make an X **in the middle of** this square.
8. Show me one finger. Show me all your fingers. Show me **a few of** your fingers. (*a few is more than two*)
Give me **a few** paper clips.
Which pile has **fewer** paper clips?
9. Which part of your body is **farthest from** your head?
Look at these shapes. Which one is **farthest from** you?
10. Draw a line **around** this square.
11. Put your hand **over** your head. (*over* means there is a space between your head and hand)
Draw a bird **over** the tree.
Go **over there**.
12. Open your mouth wide. ..wider.
...widest.
Which stick is the **widest**?
Draw three roads. Color the **widest** one blue.
13. Put **most** of you under the table. (*most* means *almost all*)
Which pile has **the most** paper clips?
(make 3 piles of clips)
14. Put your hand **between** your knees.
Stand **between** two friends.
Draw a flower **between** two trees.
15. Put your **whole** body under the table.

(*whole* means *all*)
Mark the **whole** shapes.

16. Which part of your leg is **nearest** your body?

Look at these paper clips. Pick up the one **nearest** to you.

Draw a tree and three birds flying.
Which one is **nearest** the tree?

17. Hold up 5 fingers. Your thumb is number one. Which finger is **second**?
Who is **second** in line?

Make five circles in a row. Color the **second** circle red.

18. Move this book to the **corner** of the table.
Draw a circle **in the corner of** the paper.
How many **corners** are there?

19. Hold up **several** fingers.
Put **several** paper clips in the box.
(*several* means *four or more*)

20. Put your hands **behind** your back.
Stand **behind** me.

21. Put these chairs **in a row**.
Walk **up the row**.
Draw **a row of** trees.

22. Draw 5 circles. Make one **different**.
How are you **different from** me?

23. Clap your hands **after** you sit down.
Sit down **after** you clap your hands.

24. Put your hands **almost** together.
Color in **almost** all of the circle.

25. Cut this circle **in half**. Are the two **halves** equal?
Give me **half** the paper clips.

25 HARDER CONCEPTS

26. Put this paper **in the center of** the table. (*in the middle of*)

27. Clap **as many** times **as** I do.
Take some paper clips. Give me **as many as** you have.

28. Where is your **side**?
Sit **beside** me. Sit next to me.
You two walk **side by side**.

29. **Begin** to clap your hands.
Look at this word. Point to the

beginning of the word.

30. Stand on one foot. Show me your **other** foot.

31. Make two shapes that are **alike**.
Make two shapes that are not **alike**.

32. Here are three children in a row. Who is **not the first or the last**?

33. Try to bend your elbow backward.
You can **never** do it.
Tell me something you can **never** eat.

34. Put one hand **below** the other.
(*under*)
Draw an X **below** the square.

35. Find two blocks that **match** in color.
...in size. (*alike*)
Look at this letter. Find another one that **matches** it.

36. Tell me something you can **always** eat.
What **always** happens when you sit down? (knees bend)

37. Which are your **medium-sized** fingers?
I draw three circles, all different sizes.
Which one is **medium-sized**?

38. Which is your **right** hand?
Make an X on the **right** of the paper.

39. Lean **forward**.
Here are three paper clips. Move one **forward**.

40. Show me **zero** fingers.

41. Put your hands **above** your head.
Draw a bird **above** the tree.

42. Touch **every** finger to your head.
Color **every** square.

43. Put your hands together. Take the apart. Now they are **separated**.
Draw three circles that are together.
Draw three circles that are **separated**.

44. Raise your **left** hand.
Make a circle on the **left** side of the paper.

45. Look at your shoes. That is a **pair**.
What parts of your body come in

(go to page 6)

pairs?

(from page 5)

46. Say your numbers from one to five. Now say them again, but **skip** one of them.
47. Look at my fingers. Hold up an **equal** number of fingers. Fill up these two glasses so they have an **equal** amount of water.
48. Look at these three blocks, red, blue, green. Mix them up. Now put them **in order**. Write your numbers **in order**.
49. Who is the **third** person in row? What letter is **third**?
50. Hold up the **least** number of fingers that you can. Which glass has the **least** water? (3 glasses)

What is all this talk about ghosts? Do the Hmong really believe in ghosts?

Certainly, the animists do. The word *dab* might be better translated as *spirit*, however, since *ghost* carries connotations of Halloween and haunting.

There are many kinds of spirits in the animists' world. Some are helpful and benevolent, and bring good things to the household (silver, livestock, crops, children, health). These spirits have special places in the house, and one of the major functions of the New Year is to make a new altar, chase away all the bad luck of the passing year, and entice the benevolent spirits to reside in the home.

There are also spirits who bring misfortune, accidents, sickness, etc. The shaman, who can enter the spirit world to deal with the spirits, often bargains with them, promising a chicken or a pig or a cow or a water buffalo if the outcome is favorable. Remember the little Mien girl who was kidnapped in Sacramento last year? The newspaper reporters were appalled by the sight of a freshly slaughtered cow at the house of the girl. Obviously, the shaman had promised a cow if the girl returned home safely. Once sacrificed in this way (fortunately, the local ranchers allow the killing and butchering of livestock by individuals as well as by meat packing plants), the animal is the basis of a huge communal feast, attended by family and friends from near and far.

(to page 13)

Christian Refugees from the Soviet Union

(taken from an information sheet prepared by World Relief)

Since the late 1970's, close to 30,000 Soviet Christians have expressed their desire to leave the Soviet Union. The majority of these are Pentacostals, or "Christians of Evangelical Faith", as they are called in the USSR. They feel it is God's will for them to leave a country where they are not permitted to worship freely and where they face immense pressure to compromise their faith and Christian principles. In the fall of 1987 the Soviet government allowed a few of these families to leave. During Gorbachev's visit to the U.S., he and Reagan signed an agreement that would ease restrictions on dissidents, both political and religious. What began as a trickle in the early months of 1988 turned into a substantial flow of Soviet Christians—more than 2,000—by the end of that year.

The ceiling for Soviet (and Eastern European) refugees during the federal fiscal year 1989 was more than 45,000, and the ceiling for FY 1990 is 56,500. The refugees are housed in Rome pending processing, and at the beginning of 1990 there were close to 40,000 still in transit. The majority were Soviet Jews, destined for Israel. The 3,000 Christians remaining in Rome in January were due to be processed by mid-April, with 1,500 headed for Sacramento as their place of resettlement, and the other 1,500 assigned to other U.S. locations. After November 5, Christians still in the Soviet Union were allowed to enter the refugee "pipeline" only if they had immediate relatives in the United States. Recent political changes are taken to mean less repression of religious groups.

The religious persecution of the Soviet Christian emigration movement makes it rather unique in the 20th century. Most refugees since World War II have fled their homelands because of political or ethnic persecution. Virtually all Christians leaving the Soviet Union today are doing so because of religious persecution.

Evangelical Christianity was introduced into Russia in the 19th century through Baptist and Plymouth Brethren

So—what about those two-word verbs? Why aren't they on the word lists if they are so common? Shouldn't students learn them as units, rather than as separate words? The ESL Miscellany (Pro Lingua Associates, 1981) lists both separable and non-separable two-word verbs.

Separable

—other words can come between the two parts—
for example: *called the game off*.

blow out (extinguish)
bring up (raise)
call off (cancel)
call up (telephone)
do over (redo)
fill out (complete)
find out (discover)
give back (return)
give up (abandon)
hand in (submit)
hang up (disconnect)
keep up (maintain)
leave out (omit)
let down (lower)
look over (review)
look up (research, find)
make out (distinguish)
make up (invent; reconcile)
pass out (distribute; faint)
pick out (choose)
put away (file, shelve)
put off (postpone)
put on (don)
put out (extinguish, anger)
take back (return)
take off (remove)
take up (initiate discussion)
talk over (discuss)
throw away (discard)
try on (test the fit)
try out (test)
turn down (reject; lower the volume)
turn in (submit)
turn off (stop power)
turn on (start power)
use up (deplete)

Non-Separable

call on (ask for an answer; visit)
come back (return)
come over (pay a casual visit)
come to (regain consciousness)
get along with (be friendly)
get by (succeed with little effort)
get over (recover)
get through (finish)
go away (leave)
go over (review)
get up (arise)
keep on (continue)
look for (search)
look into (investigate)
look like (resemble)
look out (beware)
look up to (respect)
pass out (faint, distribute)
put up with (tolerate)
run into (meet accidentally)
run across (meet accidentally)
run out of (exhaust a supply)
run over (hit by a car)
show up (appear)
take after (resemble)
take off (leave)
talk back to (answer rudely)
wait on (serve)

In the case of two-word verbs, the more unique synonym may be easier for the second-language student to differentiate and understand. Got it?

What about those other verbs that are not what they seem?

had to, need to, have to, got to (must, should)
supposed to (should)
going to (will)
be able to, know how to, used to be able to (could)
may be, might have, could have (may)
don't mind (will)
would like to (could, would)

Academic Language

In previous issues of *Context*, we've emphasized the practicality of using high frequency words as a corpus of "first-to-learn words" in English. Even in newcomers' classes, there are specific words, phrases, verbs, and terms that are necessary for learning and doing work. For example, metaphor is not a high frequency word, but a 5th grade newcomer class teacher will need to teach recognition of metaphors (made up of high frequency words) as part of adapting grade-level standards to the language levels of students. *Metaphor* is academic language. Other terms come to mind: compare, contrast, main idea, character, plot, diagram, conjugate, describe, substitute, so on.

The words and phrases listed on these pages came from the English Language Arts standards. While the standards are written for teachers, a look at the list reveals many words that would not be on a high frequency list, but are important for English learners to know from the beginning levels.

Can you identify the academic language for English Language Arts for your grade level and the preceding grade levels?

abbreviation	biased	contrast	days of the week
action	bibliography	compare-and-contrast pattern	declarative sentence
action word	biography	comparison	decode
active voice	biographical	complete sentence	define
add	blend sounds	compose	definition
adjectives	body of the letter	composition	delete
advance the plot	brackets	compound sentence	deletion
adverbs	broadcast media	compound words	delineated
affixes	business letter	compound-complex sentences	deliver presentations
alliteration	cadence	comprehend	demonstrate
alphabet	capital	comprehension	demonstration
alphabetic order	capitalization	concluding paragraph	denouement
alternative endings	capitalize	conclude	dependent clauses
analogy	card catalog	conclusion	derive
analogies	categories of words	concrete language	derivation
analysis	cause-and-effect pattern	confirm predictions	describe
analyze	central idea	conflict	description
answer questions	chapter heading	conjunction	descriptive phrases
anticipate reader concerns	character's traits	connect	descriptive words
antonym	characteristics	connect ideas	details
apostrophe	characterization	consolidate	develop
appendix	characters	consonant blend	diagram
appositive	charts	consumer materials	dialect
appropriate	chronological order	contraction	dialogue
archetypal patterns and symbols	citation	contrast	dictionary
article	cite	contrived	different
ask	clarify	controlling idea	differentiate
atlas	clarifying questions	controlling impression	diphthong
audience	clauses	convey	direct quotation
author	clear and well-supported conclusion	coordinating conjunction	directions
author's message	clear purpose	count	discern
author's intent	climax	counterargument	display
author's purpose	closing	couplet	distinguish
authoritative source	coherence	create	document
autobiography	coherent	critical detail	draft
autobiographical	coherent thesis	critique	drama
back cover	colon (:)	culture	draw from
ballad	combine sentences	cursive writing	draw inferences
beginning of the story	commas	dash (-)	edit
beginning sound	comma at end of dependent clauses	date	effective transitions
bias	compare		elegy

elements	foreshadowing clues	in detail	major character
emphasize	foreshadows	include	make inferences
employ	format	incomplete sentence	make predictions
encyclopedia	forming opinions	incorporate	manuscripts
end notes	forms of prose	indefinite pronoun	maps
ending sound	frame a central question	indent	match
engage	frame a key question	independent clause	meaning
English usage	friendly letter	index	mechanics of writing
epic	front cover	infinitive	medial sounds
essay	future perfect verb tense	inflectional forms	metaphor
establish	future verb tense	information	minor character
evaluate	general and specific language	information report	modifier
evaluation	generalization	initial sounds	modify
events	generate	insights	months
example	geographical names	instruction manual	mood
exclamatory sentence	gestures	interpret	most significant detail
exhibit	give credit for	interpretation	motivation
explain	glossary	interrogative sentence	motive
explanation	grammar	irony	move through
expository text	graphs	irregular plural	multiple meanings
extract	group related ideas together	irregular verb	multiple-paragraph expository composition
fable	hidden agendas	issues	multiple-paragraph narrative composition
facial expression	high-frequency words	italics	multiple-step instructions
fact and opinion	historical periods	judgement	multisyllabic words
fact	holidays	justify	musical composition
fairy tale	homograph	left to right	myths
fallacious reasoning	homophone	legends	names of magazines
false and misleading information	how question	legible handwriting	names of people
fantasies	hyperbole	letter to the editor	names of newspapers
fantasy	hyphen	letters	narrative
fiction	hypothesis	life experiences	narrative devices
figurative language	ideas	line length	narrative presentations
figurative meaning	identify	literal meaning	nonfiction
final sound	idiom	literary characters	nonsense words
find	illustrator	literary elements	note
first person	image	logic	noun
first word in quotations	imagery	logical fallacies	novel
first word of a sentence	imperative sentence	logical notes	novella
first-person narration	improve	long-vowel sound	objective
folktales		lowercase	ode
follow		lyric	
footnotes		main idea	

offer	portray	recount experiences	sequential order
omniscient	pose questions	recurring themes	setting
one-step written instructions	possessive case	reference source	shades of meaning
one-syllable word	precise	reflect	share
onomatopoeia	prefix	regular plurals	short story
oral presentation	premise	regular verb	short-vowel sound
order of importance	prepositional phrase	relate	show
organization by categories	preposition	relevance	show awareness
organizational structure	present perfect verb tense	relevant evidence	signature
organizations	present verb tense	repeated sounds	signpost words
organize	presentation on problems and solutions	repetition	simile
outlines	primary source	repetitive patterns	single-syllable words
paragraph	print	report	singular noun
parallel episodes	print media	research presentation	singular possessive pronouns
parallel structures	prior experience	research process	situation
parallelism	prior knowledge	research report	slanted
paraphrased information	probing questions	resolution	sonnet
parentheses	problem	resolve	sounds in syllables
participial phrase	product information	respond	spatial order
participles	pronoun I	response to literature	speak
parts of speech	pronoun reference	restate	speaker's attitude
passages	pronouns and antecedents	restatement	speaker's opinion
passive voice	propaganda	retell	special events
past perfect verb tense	proper noun	reveal	spell
past verb tense	proper salutation	review	stanza
personal letter	proposition and support patterns	revise	state
personification	provide	rhetorical device	state a clear position
perspective	punctuate	rhyme	stay on the topic
persuasion	punctuation	rhyming words	stereotype
persuasive presentation	purpose	rhythm	stereotyping
phonemes	quotation marks	rising action	story
phonogram	quoted information	root words	stories
phrase	r-controlled vowels	roots	story elements
physical description	read aloud	salutation	story grammar
plot line	realistic	secondary sources	structural differences
plot	realistic text	seek information	subject
plural noun	rearrange	segment	subjective
poem	reasons	select	subordination
poetry	recognize	semicolon (;)	subplot
point of view	record	sensory details	suffix
		sentence structure	summaries
		sentences	summarize

summary	unity
support	uppercase
support answers	use
support claims	verbal cues
support of the argument	verbs
support of the proposition	verbs agree
supported inferences	verify
supporting details	verifiable facts
supporting facts and details	vocabulary
syllabication rules	vowel digraphs
syllable	warranties
symbol	what question
symbolism	when question
synonyms	where question
table of contents	who question
tales	word choice
text	word families
textual evidence	word order
theme	word origins
theory	words at the beginning of sentences
theorize	words
thesaurus	works of art
third person	write
third-person narration	
title	
title page	
titles and initials of people	
tone	
top to bottom	
topic	
topic sentence	
trace the development of	
transitions between sentences	
two-step written instructions	
underline	
underlining	
understand	
understanding	

Academic Language: English Language Arts Standards, K-8

The list of words on these pages comprises vocabulary used in California's English Language Arts standards for grades K-8. English learners will need to understand these concepts if they are to succeed in performing at acceptable levels on state exams, including the California High School Exit Exam. Here are some activities for teachers of K-8 English learners in California:

- Highlight the concepts that apply to your grade level.
- Identify synonymous concepts and decide on one word or phrase to use consistently. For an English learner, it will be an extra burden to realize that, for example, to *give* a presentation is the same as to *deliver* one, or to *make* one. Likewise, a *controlling idea*, a *controlling impression*, a *central idea*, a *main idea*, a *thesis*, a *topic*, and a *theme* need to be used with some precision, or a general term needs to be used consistently.
- Look for terms that are precise, in that most people know their meanings: *verb*, *analogy*, *semicolon*. These words can be translated fairly well, and will likely have corresponding terms in the primary language (a student could look up the English word in a dictionary and find out what it means). Other the other hand, current vernacular, particularly when based on phrasal verbs, will be difficult to find in dictionaries, and will translate to imprecise approximations of the concepts. (Examples are *trace the development of*, *draw out*, *story grammar*, *logical notes*, *advance the plot*.)
- Look for unnecessary variety in usage: *discern*, *recognize*, *identify*.
- English learners who are educated and literate in their home countries can be given a list of the concepts the teacher has highlighted and can make up a personal glossary. Not only will they recognize terms when they're used, they will have a preview of what's expected.

Context:

Southeast Asians & other newcomers in California's classrooms
Volume 18, No. 128, October/November 1997

The Sounds of Literacy: Comparative Phonemes

Context is published five times during the academic year as a way to provide staff with information and ideas concerning their newcomer students and parents. While the focus is on Southeast Asians, most articles and resources apply to other newcomer groups as well. District staff with LEP students receive a free subscription (contact Nguyet Tham at the Transitional English office). Outside subscribers pay \$10 per year to cover mailing and handling costs.

Editor:

Judy Lewis

Transitional English
Folsom Cordova USD
2460 Cordova Lane
Rancho Cordova
CA 95670
Phone (916) 635-6815
Fax (916) 635-0174
SEACRC@ns.net

Last year Context (issue 124, November/December 1996) contained an article on adapting the recommendations of the California Reading Initiative to the needs of English learners. Louisa Moats, a consultant with Sacramento County Office of Education, provided inservice to teachers on phonemic awareness and spelling that included consonant and vowel charts. We have put the two events together to arrive at this issue: how would the charts look for other languages? Which phonemes exist in many languages? Which are peculiar to English? What are the implications for teachers of reading?

This issue contains lots of charts. The charts represent the phonemes of English, Spanish, Hmong, Vietnamese, Armenian, Russian, and Ukrainian—consonants on pages 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10, and vowels on page 11. In the center (pages 6 and 7) is a chart that provides the nearest equivalents in those languages for English phonemes.

How can these comparative charts be useful to teachers?

Teachers use dictated spelling as a way to assess how well students can separate words into component sounds (phonemes) and then encode the sounds with symbols (graphemes). Diagnosis of student needs must include the influence of the student's primary language on the comprehension and production of English sounds and words.

Students' writing may contain spelling errors which occur with regular patterns, indicating that the student has formed a "mis-generalization," because his understanding of the English sound system is framed by the categories of familiar sounds that exist in his head. By using the charts, a teacher can quickly see that the child's language does not contain the phoneme that is the target of the misspelling. Once the teacher has identified all the phonemes that are confusing to the student, she can use specific practice exercises to help the student first hear then produce the sounds (examples of "minimal pair" exercises are on page 13).

Comparing the languages included in this issue, a teacher will quickly see that the "short" vowel phoneme we teach first (/æ/) does not exist in any of the other languages, and the other four "short" vowels exist in some but not all of the languages. Thus English learners' first decoding experiences are with sounds they don't hear.

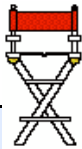
How might these charts be useful in differentiating language acquisition issues from speech/language or special education issues?

Because there are few assessments based on languages other than

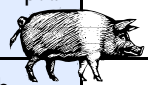
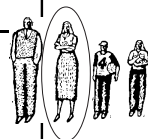
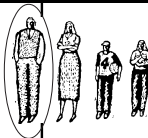
English Consonants

Two lips	Teeth & lip	Tongue & teeth	Tongue & ridge	Tongue tip & roof	Tongue mid & roof	Tongue curled	Tongue back & soft palate	Throat	FLOW OF AIR
									STOP
p spill			t still				k skill		Voiceless
p pill			t till				k kill		Voiceless and Aspirated (with puff of air)
b bill			d dill				g gill		Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
									Voiced and Aspirated
									CONTINUANT
wh when	f fan	th thigh	s sip		sh ship			h hip	Voiceless
w win	v van	th thy	z zip y yip l lip	r rip	zh azure				Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
									Aspirated (with puff of air)
m map			n nap				ng sing (mid or final only)		Nasal (air through the nose)
									AFFRICATE
					ch cheap				Voiceless
					j jeep				Voiced

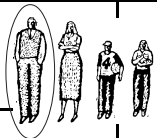
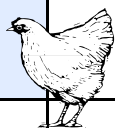
Spanish Consonants

Two lips	Teeth & lip	Tongue & teeth	Tongue & ridge	Tongue tip & roof	Tongue mid & roof	Tongue curled	Tongue back & soft palate	Throat	FLOW OF AIR
									STOP
p pata animal leg			t taza cup 				c casa house 		Voiceless
									Voiceless and Aspirated (with puff of air)
b bata robe			d dedo finger, toe 				g gato cat 		Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
									Voiced and Aspirated
									CONTINUANT
f fuego fire 			s silla chair 					j jícama sweet turnip	Voiceless
			l limón lemon 	r rio river					Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
									Aspirated (with puff of air)
m mano hand 			n nido nest 		ñ año year				Nasal (air through the nose)
									AFFRICATE
					y yo I, me				Voiceless
					ll lluvia rain 				Voiced

Hmong Consonants

Two lips	Teeth & lip	Tongue & teeth	Tongue & ridge	Tongue tip & roof	Tongue mid & roof	Tongue curled	Tongue back & soft palate	Throat	FLOW OF AIR	
									STOP	
p paj flower			t tiab skirt	d diav spoon			k kub hot	q qaib chicken	Voiceless	
ph phiab bowl			th thawb push	dh dhia jump			kh khub dirty	qh qhia teach	Voiceless and aspirated (with puff of air)	
np npua pig			nt ntawv paper				nk nkoj boat	nq nqaij meat	Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)	
nph nphob faded			nth nthuav open (book)				nkh nkhaus crooked	nqh nqhis thirsty	Voiced and aspirated	
									CONTINUANT	
	f fuab cloud		x xovtooj telephone		s sov warm			xy xyoob bamboo	h huab cloud	Voiceless
	v vaj garden		y yaj sheep		z zos village					Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
			l liab monkey							
hm Hmoob Hmong			hl hlis moon					hny hnyav heavy		Aspirated (with puff of air)
m me-me little			hn hnub star, sun					ny nyiaj money		Nasal (air through the nose)
										AFRICATE
			tx txiv father	c co shake	ts tsev house	r riam knife				Voiceless
			txh txhob don't	cho choj bridge	tsh tsheb car	rh rho pull out				Voiceless, aspirated
										
			ntx ntxiv add to	nc nceb mushroom	nts ntse fish	nr nruas drum				Voiced
			ntxh ntxhw elephant	nch ncho smoky	ntsh ntshav blood	nrh nrhiav look for				Voiced, aspirated

Vietnamese Consonants

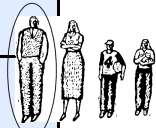
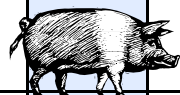
Two lips	Teeth & lip	Tongue & teeth	Tongue & ridge	Tongue tip & roof	Tongue mid & hard palate (roof)	Tongue curled	Tongue back & soft palate	Throat	FLOW OF AIR
									STOP
p final only			t to big				k kẻ draw (line)		Voiceless
			th thơ letter (a, b, c)	A.B.C.			kh khí air		Voiceless and Aspirated (with puff of air)
b ba father			đ đi go				g gà chicken		Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
									Voiced and Aspirated
									CONTINUANT
	ph phố city		x xong finish					h hai two	Voiceless
			s sao star					2	
	v vào enter		gi gia đình family						
			d da skin						Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
			r ra exit						
			l lá leaf						Aspirated (with puff of air)
m mẹ mother			n nấm mushroom		nh nhà house		ng ngày day		Nasal (air through the nose)
									AFFRICATE
					ch chải to comb				Voiceless
					tr trâu buffal				Voiced

English Consonant Phonemes & Near Equivalents

	English		Spanish			Hmong			Vietnamese	
Phoneme	Grapheme	Key word	Grapheme	Key word	Visual	Grapheme	Key word	Visual	Grapheme	Key word
p	p	spill	p	pata	animal leg	p	paj	flower		
ph	p	pill				ph	phiab	bowl		
b	b	bill	b	bata	robe	np	npua	pig	b	ba
t	t	still	t	taza	cup	t	tiab	skirt	t	to
th	t	till				th	thawb	push	th	thơ
d	d	dill	d	dedo	finger, toe	d, dl	diav	spoon	đ	đi
k	k, c	skill	c	casa	house	k	kub	hot	k	kẻ
kh	k, c	kill				kh	khub	dirty	kh	khí
g	g	gill	g	gato	cat	nk	nkoj	boat	g	gà
ks	x	ax								
kw	q	queen							qu	quà
m	m	man	m	mano	hand	m	me-me	little	m	mẹ
n	n	nan	n	nido	nest	n	niam	mother	n	nấm
ŋ	ng	sing on							ng	ngày
j	ny	can <u>y</u> on	ñ	año	year	ny	nyiaj	money	nh	nhà
f	f	fan	f	fuego	fire	f, h	fuab	clouds	ph	phố
v	v	van				v	vaj	garden	v	vào
s	s	sip	s	silla	chair	x	xov tooj	telephone	s, x	sao, xong
z	z	zip							d, gi, r	da, gia đình, ra
sh	sh	ship				s	sov	warm		
zh	zh	az <u>ure</u>				z	zos	village		
θ	th	thigh								
ð	th	thy								
j	j, g	jeep	y, ll	yo, lluvia	I, rain	ts	tsev	house	ch, tr	chải, trâu
ch	ch	cheap				tsh	tsheb	car		
h	h	hand	j	jícama	sweet turnip	h	huab	cloud	h	hai
wh	wh	when								
w	w	win								
l	l	lip	l	limón	lemon	l	liab	monkey	l	lá
r	r	rip	r	rio	river					
y	y	yen				y	yaj	sheep		

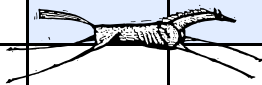
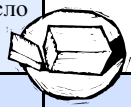
	Armenian			Russian			Ukrainian		
<i>Visual</i>	<i>Grapheme</i>	<i>Key word</i>	<i>Visual</i>	<i>Grapheme</i>	<i>Key word</i>	<i>Visual</i>	<i>Grapheme</i>	<i>Key word</i>	<i>Visual</i>
	ս	սաղսաղակ	ice cream	п	спорт	sport	п	півень	rooster
	փ	փիղ	elephant	п	упал	fall down			
father	բ	բառարան	dictionary	б	берег	coast	б	барабан	drum
big	տ	տանձ	pear	т	топор	ax	т	туман	fog
letter	թ	թագավոր	king						
go	դ	դպրոց	school	д	дорога	way	д	дерево	tree
draw (a line)	կ	կարմիր	red	к	кот	cat	к	кінь	horse
air	ք	քար	rock						
chicken	զ	զալ	wolf	г	город	city	г	ґанок	porch
gift									
mother	մ	մայր	mother	м	масло	butter	м	молоко	milk
mushroom	հ	հավ	ship	н	народ	people	н	небо	sky
day									
house									
city	ֆ	ֆուտբոլ	football	ф	фартук	apron	ф	фабрика	factory
enter	վ	վեց	six	в	велосипед	bike	в	вовк	wolf
star, finish	ս	սար	mountain	с	сад	garden	с	сосна	pine tree
skin, family, exit	զ	զանգ	bell	з	зима	winter	з	зебра	zebra
	չ	չուն	dog	ш	школа	school	ш	шість	six
	ժ	ժամացույց	clock	ж	журнал	magazine	ж	жаба	frog
to comb, buffalo	ջ	ջուր	water	дж	джем	jam	дж	джміль	bumble bee
	չ	չղջիկ	bat	ч	часы	clock	ч	чай	tea
two	հ	հայր	father	х	хлеб	bread	х	хата	house
leaf	լ	լամպ	lamp	л	лошадь	horse	л	літо	summer
	ր	րոպե	minute	р	ребёнок	baby	р	річка	river
	յ	յասաման	lilac	й	район	country	й	Йосип	Yosif

Armenian Consonants

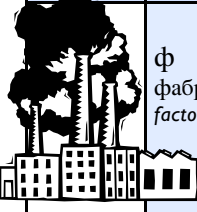
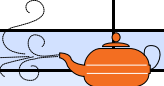
Two lips	Teeth & lip	Tongue & teeth	Tongue & ridge	Tongue tip & roof	Tongue mid & roof	Tongue curled	Tongue back & soft palate	Throat	FLOW OF AIR
									STOP
պ պաղպաղակ ice cream			տ տանձ pear				կ կարմիր red		Voiceless
փ փիղ elephant			թ թագավոր king				ք քար rock		Voiceless and Aspirated (with puff of air)
Բ բառարան dictionary			դ դպրոց school				զ զալ wolf		Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
									Voiced and Aspirated
									CONTINUANT
	Ֆ ֆուտբոլ football		ս սար mountain		շ շուն dog		հ հայր father		Voiceless
	վ վեց six		զ զանգ bell	ր րոպե minute	ժ ժամացույց clock		խ խոզ pig		Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
			յ յասաման lilac	ո ուեղի eraser			գ գալ geese		Aspirated (with puff of air)
մ մայր mother			ն նավ ship						Nasal (air through the nose)
									AFFRICATE
					հ հանձ fly				Voiceless
					չ չղջիկ bat				Voiced
					ջ ջուր water				

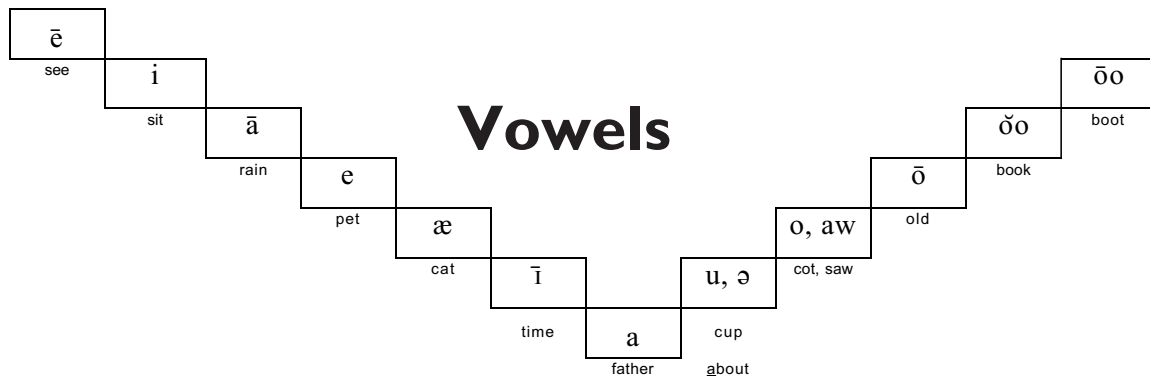


Russian Consonants

Two lips	Teeth & lip	Tongue & teeth	Tongue tip & ridge	Tongue tip & roof	Tongue mid & roof	Tongue curled	Tongue back & soft palate	Throat	FLOW OF AIR
									STOP
П спорт <i>sport</i>			Т топор <i>ax</i>				К кот <i>cat</i>		Voiceless
П упал <i>fall down</i>									Voiceless and Aspirated (with puff of air)
Б берег <i>coast</i>			Д дорога <i>way</i>				Г город <i>city</i>		Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
									Voiced and Aspirated
									CONTINUANT
	Ф фартук <i>apron</i>		 С сад <i>garden</i>		Ш школа <i>school</i>			Х хлеб <i>bread</i>	Voiceless
	В велосипед <i>bike</i>		З зима <i>winter</i> Й район <i>country</i> Л лошадь <i>horse</i>	Р ребёнок <i>baby</i>	Ж журнал <i>magazine</i>				Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
									Aspirated (with puff of air)
М масло <i>butter</i>			Н народ <i>people</i>						Nasal (air through the nose)
									AFFRICATE
					Ч часы <i>clock</i> Щ щука <i>pike (fish)</i>				
			Ц царь <i>tsar (king)</i>		ДЖ джем <i>jam</i>				

Ukrainian Consonants

Two lips	Teeth & lip	Tongue & teeth	Tongue & ridge	Tongue tip & roof	Tongue mid & roof	Tongue curled	Tongue back & soft palate	Throat	FLOW OF AIR
									STOP
П півень rooster			Т туман fog				К кінь horse		Voiceless
									Voiceless and Aspirated (with puff of air)
Б барабан drum			Д дерево tree				Г ганок porch		Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
									Voiced and Aspirated
									CONTINUANT
	Ф фабрика factory		С сосна pine tree		Ш шість six	6		Х хата house	Voiceless
	В вовк wolf		З зебра zebra		Ж жаба frog			Г газета newspaper	Voiced (vocal cords vibrate)
			Й Йосип Yosif (Joseph)	Р річка river					Aspirated (with puff of air)
			Л літо summer						
М МОЛОКО milk			Н небо sky						Nasal (air through the nose)
									AFFRICATE
					Ч чай tea				
					Щ шур rat				
			Ц царівна princess		ДЖ джміль bumble bee				



Spanish	i, y		ey, ei	e	ai	a		o		u		
	mi, y		el rey	pez	maíz	mamá		oso		uva		
	mine, and		king	fish	corn	mother		bear		grapes		
Hmong	i		e		ai	a		o		u		w
	ib		me-me		qaib	vaj		nkoj		hnub		wb
	one		little		chicken	garden		boat		sun		we two
Vietnamese	i	i	ê	e	ai	a, ă	ơ, â	o	ô, âu	u	ư	
	đi	vịt	lê	xe đạp	hai	ma, ăn	dơ, cần	to	lông, trâu	xu	dư	
	go	duck	pear	bike	2	ghost, eat	dirty, weigh	big	feather, buffalo	coin	extra	
Armenian	ի			է	ա		ը	օ		ու		
	ի՛նք, քանթիլոն			էղ	արև		ընկեր	օճառ		ուրախ		
	plane			female	sun		friend	soap		camel		
Russian	и		ы	э	а		о		у			
	иней		сын	эхо	абрикос		овца		бугор			
	frost		son	echo	apricot		sheep		hill			
Ukrainian	і		и		е		а		о		у	
	сіно		син		ешелон		абетка		огірок		буряки	
	hay		son		train		ABCs		cucumber		beets	

Vowel blends/diphthongs (mouth changes position)

English			oi, oy	ow, ou				
	boy			cow				
Spanish		eu	oy	au		ue	ua	
	Eunice a name		soy am, is, are	aula classroom	huevo egg		Juan a name	
Hmong	ia			au		ua		aw
	siab tall	haus drink			huab cloud			dawb white
Vietnamese	ia, iê	êu, eo	ôi, oi	ao, au		ua	oa	uy, ui
	tia, tiên rays, angel	kêu, leo ant, climb	môi, coi lip, look	ao, rau pond, vegetable		cua crab	hoa flower	Huy, vui a name, happy
Armenian		ի		ու				
	կի՛նիկ deer			դ՛նիկ hedgehog				
Russian	я	е			ё			
	яблоко apple	енот raccoon	ёж hedgehog					
Ukrainian	я	є						
	ялинка Christmas tree	єнот raccoon						

Tones (pitch, duration, contour)

		Falling	Rising	Level	Abrupt	Changes	Breathy
Vietnamese	High		má	pab		mã	
Hmong	High	paj					
Vietnamese	Mid			ma		mả	
Hmong	Mid		pav	pa			
Vietnamese	Low	mà			mạ		
Hmong	Low			pas	pam	pad	pag

English and Spanish, students may be tested with available English instruments. Once speech errors are identified, the assessment team can look to see if the errors are explainable by the student's primary language; the errors may all be substitutions of familiar sounds for unfamiliar sounds or lack of recognition of sounds that occur in unexpected locations in words. An example for English speakers is the difficulty in identifying the /ŋ/ phoneme when it occurs at the beginnings of words, as in "Nguyen."

An excellent guide book for differentiating issues of second language acquisition, deprivation of experience, and learning handicaps is *Multicultural Students with Special Education Needs: Practical Strategies for Assessment and Intervention*, by Celeste Roseberry-McKibbin, published by Academic Communication Associates (PO Box 586249, Oceanside CA 92058-6249) in 1995.

How can bilingual instructional assistants use these charts?

People who speak the language but who have never taught reading or studied linguistics may have trouble thinking of equivalents in the primary language for the English sounds that children are learning to read and spell. The charts on pages 6-7 and page 11 provide quick reference to key words with target phonemes. (The key words are written in the primary language, with no English pronunciation guide; it will take a person who can read the language to say the word. In this way, the sounds will be accurately said for the student to hear.)

Why are there pictures?

Students themselves can "read" the icons to produce the key words themselves. Notice that not all key words have pictures. (Couldn't find them all in clip art files.) This could be an activity for students and bilingual assistants. The chart can be enlarged on the copy machine to allow small pictures to be drawn or "cut and pasted" onto the chart. (The *IDEA Kit* by Ballard and Tighe has small line-drawing stickers for 800 con-

cepts, including comparatives and verbs. The speech/language therapist probably has picture cards as well.) The chart could then be posted in the room for ready reference, particularly when several bilingual assistants interact with the same students.

Comparing the phonemes

The phonemes on the consonant charts are all arranged in the same sequence (based on Nilsen and Nilsen, Prentice Hall, 1973). The cells that are shaded contain phonemes. Copy each of the consonant charts on pages 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10 onto overhead transparencies. Use overhead pens of different colors to fill in the shaded boxes. Stack the overheads on top of one another and hold them up to the window to quickly see which boxes are filled in for different languages. If only for English, these are sounds that students will need to learn to discriminate from sounds on the same row or in the same column. Look to see which boxes are filled in for both English and another language; these will be the sounds that are easiest to hear and manipulate. If there are several words in the box for the other language, but only one for English, then students will need to learn that in English all these sounds are considered the same.

To compare vowel phonemes, look at page 11. The vowels of English are arranged by mouth position (after work done by Louisa Moats), and the equivalents for other languages are listed in columns below.

Students (age 8 to adult) who enter the country after learning to read and write their home language can quickly convert to the English "code" by using these comparisons. They will need to learn the commonly used graphemes for the English phonemes, and learn to visually recognize which ones are used in particular words.

For young students (ages 4-8), phonemic awareness activities that are used for learning to read and write English can be replicated with the primary language by bilingual staff. Once a child can take words apart and put them together again in the

home language, the analyzing English words and sounds is quicker and less frustrating. The awareness of phonemes is learned only once, then that awareness can be used to process any other language.

Minimal Pair Exercises

Recognition (/r/, /l/)

Look at the pictures on the board. Listen and do:

- Point to the lock.
- Point to the rock.
- Point to the rock.
- Point to the lock.
- Point to the rake.
- Point to the rake.
- Point to the lake.
- Point to the rake.

Recognition

Number your paper from 1 to 6. I am going to say groups of three words. Two of the words in each group will be the same. Write down the number of the word which is different. (As an alternative, do this together on the overhead or board, with students choosing the picture that represents the different sound. Then say words, and have students hold up one, two, or three fingers.)

1. lash lash rash
2. locker rocker locker
3. wrist list list
4. miles mires miles
5. clue clue crew
6. sear seal seal

Recognition

Number your paper from 1 to 8. Listen to the following words. When a word ends with /l/ write "l", when it ends with /r/ write "r."

1. toll
2. tore
3. toll
4. toll
5. tile

6. tile
7. tire
8. tire

Production

Listen carefully, then repeat the pairs of words after me. Listen for the /l/ and /r/ sounds. Each time the /l/ word comes first.

- lace race
- lag rag
- lane rain
- law raw
- leap reap
- lamp ramp

This time, the /l/ and /r/ sounds are in the middle of the words.

- glean green
- filing firing
- belated berated
- shield sheared
- collect correct

Now, the listen for sounds at the ends of words.

- mole more
- pole pore
- feel fear
- peal peer
- file fire
- toll tore

Production

Listen to these sentences which contain contrasts. Repeat after me.

- There is a LIGHT on the RIGHT.
- The LEAF is on the REEF.
- He doesn't FEEL any FEAR.
- Are they FREE to FLEE?
- The FILE was on FIRE.

(These generic exercises can be used with any sets of minimal pairs.)

These examples are taken from a good reference book for minimal pairs: *Pronunciation Contrasts in English* by Nilsen and Nilsen, published by Prentice-Hall Regents in 1971/73, still available in a reprint edition.

	SHORT VOWELS with final "n"				
	am	egg	it	off/on	up
	a	*e	*i	o, aw	u
m	man	men	min	mon	mun
n, kn	Nan	nen	nin	non	nun
p	pan	pen	pin	pawn	pun
b	ban	Ben	bin	bon	bun
t	tan	ten	tin	tawn	tun
d	Dan	den	din	Don	dun
k, c	can	Ken	kin	con	cun
g	gan				gun
s	san	sen	sin	son	sun
*z	zan	Zen	zin	zon	zun
*sh	shan	Shen	shin	Shawn	shun
*ch	Chan	Chen	chin	chon	chun
*j	Jan	Jen, gen	jin, gin	Jon	jun
f, ph	fan	fen	fin	fawn	fun
v	van	ven	vin	von	vun
*w		wen	win	<u>wan</u>	<u>won</u>
*wh	whan	when	whin	whon	whun
y	yan	yen	yin	yawn	yun
h	han	hen	hin	hon	hun
*l	Lan	Len	lin	lawn	lun
*r, wr	ran	wren	rin	Ron	run
*th (ank)	than	then	thin	thon	thun
*th (an)	than	then	thin	thon	thun

	LONG VOWELS with final "t"				
	8	me	l	no	boot
	a, ai, ay	e, ea, ee	i, igh	o, oa	u, oo, ew
m	mate	meet	might	moat	moot
n, kn	Nate	neat	night	note	newt
p	pate	Pete	pite	pote	pute
b	bait	beat	bite	boat	boot
t	tate	teat	tight	tote	toot
d	date	dete	dite	dote	dute
k, c	Kate	kete	kite	coat	coot
g	gate				gute
s	sate	seat	sight	sote	suit
*z	zate	zete	zite	zote	zute
*sh	shate	sheet	shite	shote	shoot
*ch	chate	cheat	chite	chote	chute
*j	jate	jeat, geat	jite, gite	jote	jute
f, ph	fate	feet	fight	fote	fute
*v	vate	vete	vite	vote	vute
*w	wait	wete	wite	wote	wute
*wh	whate	wheat	white	whote	whoot
y	yate	yete	yite	yote	yute
h	hate	heat	hite	hote	hoot
*l	late	lete	light	lote	lute
*r, wr	rate	rete	right	wrote	root
*th (ank)	thate	thete	thite	thote	thute
*th (an)	thate	thete	thite	thote	thute

The sound charts combine sounds that are not distinguished in by California speakers, for example the vowel in “cot” vs. the vowel in “caught.” Various spellings for the same sound are combined. The spellings that represent actual words are bold-faced.

A teacher might use a pocket chart to make these charts. This would allow the changing of sounds and words, building the complete chart as time goes by (several cards, each with different endings can go in pockets, for example: can, cap, cast, cats on the short vowel chart). A problem is that “dangerous” words also show up, and a teacher will have to deal with that issue.

The English sounds that are troublesome for most English learners are marked with an asterick. To hear these sounds, students will need to hear them in comparison to other similar sounds until they can discriminate a difference. A teacher could then expect the student to to decode, pronounce and spell the sounds.

Speech therapists often have materials and lists for minimal pair practice. Regents used to publish a resource book, “Pronunciation Contrasts in English” by Nilsen and Nilsen. New language learning software (for example, Transparent Language, Triple Play Plus) include the capacity for recording words and comparing them to native speakers' pronunciations.

For English learners, the key is understanding what they learn to decode, pronounce, spell. A simple strategy would be to write the native language equivalent or illustration on the backs of cards.

Special vowels			
	book	cow	boy
	*oo	ow, ou	oy, oi
m	moo	mou	moi
n, kn	noo	now	noi
p	poo	pow	poi
b	boo	bow	boy
t	too	tou	toy
d	doo	dou	doi
k, c	coo	kou	koi
g	goo	gow	goi
s	soo	sow	soy
*z	zoo	zow	zoy
*sh	shoo	shou	shoi
*ch	choo	chow	choi
*j	joo	jow	joy
f, ph	foo	fow	foy
*v	voo	vow	voy
*w	woo	wow	woy
*wh	whoo	whow	whoy
y	yoo	yow	yoy
h	hoo	how	hoy
*l	loo	lou	loi
*r, wr	roo	rou	roy
*th (ank)	thoo	thou	thoy
*th (an)	thoo	thou	thoy

r-controlled vowels					
	her	arm	or	ear	care
	*er, ir, ur	*ar	*ore, oar, oor	*ear, ere, eer	*are, air, ear, ere
m	mur	mar	more	mere	mare
n, kn	nur	nar	nor	near	nair
p	per	par	pore	peer	pear
b	bur	bar	bore	beer	bear
t	ter	tar	tore	tear	tare
d	der	dar	door	dear	dare
k, c	ker	car	core	keer	care
g	gir	gar	gore	gear	gare
s	sir	sar	sore	seer	sare
*z	zur	zar	zore	zeer	zare
*sh	shur	shar	shore	shear	share
*ch	chur	char	chore	cheer	chair
*j	jur	jar	jore	jeer	jair
f, ph	fur	far	fore	fear	fare
*v	vir	var	vore	vear	vare
*w, wh	whir	war	wore	we're	wear, where
y	yur	yar	yore	year	yare
h	her	har	hore	here	hair
*l	lur	lar	lore	leer	lair
*r, wr	rur	rar	roar	rear	rare
*th (ank)	thir	thar	thore	thear	there
*th (an)	thur	thar	thore	thear	there

MINIMAL PAIR LISTS

“bit” vs. “beat”	“bit” vs. “bet”	“bat” vs. “bet”
bead bid lead lid deed did skied skid leave live each itch peak pick deal dill green grin sheep ship he's his eat it	disc desk did dead big beg pig peg trick trek spill spell will well him hem pin pen tin ten sit set	bed bad led lad messed mast end and send sand beg bag less lass ten tan pest past pet pat set sat
Please SIT in the SEAT. These shoes FIT my FEET. Does he STILL STEAL? Those BINS are for BEANS.	He HID his HEAD. He SLID on the SLED. Please CHECK the CHICK. A sore WRIST needs REST.	This BED is BAD. The GEM fell in the JAM. Don't PAT the PET. BRAD ate BREAD.
He lost the LEAD / LID. This WEEK / WICK is long. FEEL / FILL this bag. Don't SLEEP / SLIP on the deck.	Hand me the PEN / PIN. He showed me the LETTER / LITTER. Look at the DISC / DESK. That's BITTER / BETTER.	SEND / SAND it carefully. The MAN / MEN will come. The PEN / PAN leaks. Don't talk about the PEST / PAST.

MULTIPLE CONTRASTS (VOWELS)**FRONT VOWELS**

bead	bid	bayed	bed	bad
lead	lid	laid	led	lad
peal	pill	pail	--	pal

LAX VOWELS

pinned	penned	panned	punned	pond*	--	pawnd*
kid	Ked	cad	cud	cod*	could	cawed*
stick	--	stack	stuck	stock*	--	stalk*

DIPHTHONGS

plea	play	--	--	ply	plow	ploy
see	say	sue	so	sigh	sow	soy
bee	bay	boo	bow	buy	bow	boy

BACK VOWELS

shoed	should	--	showed
cooed	could	cud	code
Luke	look	luck	--



Context:

Southeast Asians in California

Volume 12, Number 94, January, 1992

Folsom Cordova Unified School District
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova CA 95670
(916) 635-6815
Judy Lewis, Editor

Ta' one an' pass de res' bag

The Sacramento Bee (1/18/92) reported that for the first time the federal government has charged a company with discriminating against an employee because he speaks English with an accent.

The suit, filed in US District Court in Los Angeles Friday by the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission against Eiki International, Inc., charged that the company violated the civil rights of an Indian-born employee by dismissing him because of his accented English. Rambhai Patel worked as credit manager for Eiki International, and the company maintained that his accent was not good for the company's image.

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of national origin, and the commission said that to deny a person a job or a promotion because of a foreign accent would be a violation of that statute.

The EEOC said that such lawsuits will be increasing because of the changing demographics in the United States.

What happens when a bilingual teacher—speaking accented English—applies for a job in a school district? The personnel department directors are understandably concerned about the kind of language model a teacher will provide for students.

“What will happen when the teacher dictates spelling sentences?”

“How can young children learn to sound out words when the teacher pronounces the sounds incorrectly?”

“Will the children learn to speak with the

teacher's accent?”

On the other hand, why should foreign-born persons be encouraged to enter credential programs if they are judged unsuitable because of the way in which they speak English? Is it even possible for an immigrant who arrives as a teen-ager or adult to learn to speak English “accent-free”—or with a California or New York or Alabama or Kansas accent? On the other hand, is a person who speaks unaccented English fully fluent in the other language?

What about the parents of newcomers whose children are assigned to classes taught by bilingual teachers who have distinctive accents of other language backgrounds? More than once I have had (non-Hispanic) parents say to me, “My child is learning to speak English with a Spanish accent.” How much of this is a case of “us vs. them” and how much is a justifiable concern?

Recently my college son phoned to tell me about his new classes. His math teacher is Chinese, and speaks with a strong accent. On the first day of class, a girl sitting next to him leaned over and whispered, “What did he say?!”

My son replied, “He said, ‘Take one and pass the rest back.’”

A second grade Chinese student wrote:

I have ten bugs.

The teacher asked, “Oh, do you keep your bugs in a jar?”

The student explained: “No, **bugs!** Like I go to the store and buy something with ten bugs!”

Why *bugs* and not *bucks*? Do you know why this error occurs? Do you know how to help?

Read on.

I chuckled and said that he was lucky that he had had so much practice understanding my Asian friends. Children entering a global, cosmopolitan world are helped—rather than hindered—by an opportunity to listen *through* accents to understand what the other person intends to communicate. It establishes a listener’s equal responsibility for understanding.

Non-native speakers are desperate to have direct teaching in reducing accent. We glibly tell them that language acquisition is natural, or not to worry about it, that they’ll probably always speak with an accent. How comforting to those who understand that accent closes doors of opportunity!

Is accent learnable? It must be, otherwise Meryl Streep would not be able to so convincingly play a Dutch woman, an Australian woman, and a southerner. The techniques she uses to learn accent could be part of a teacher’s bag of tricks.

Recent research on infants’ language acquisition (Kuhl, University of Washington, *Science*, February, 1992) suggests that by the age of six months humans have already begun to develop sound prototypes that are characteristic of their own language. Sounds of other languages are squeezed to fit into these prototypes. For example, Japanese has a sound prototype that is neither ‘l’ nor ‘r’ but something midway between. The English ‘lake’ and ‘rake’ are not heard as different—the two consonant sounds are interpreted as fitting into the same l-r prototype.

Faced with the current theoretical emphasis on natural language approaches, a person who suggests direct instruction or deliberate learning of language production invites charges of heresy and idiocy. Yet research suggests that after a very young age, the human brain does not form new prototypes without some very specific compare-and-contrast input, along with explanations of where to put the tongue and teeth, etc.

Teachers are not taught how to present material in such a way that learners can compare and contrast similar sounding words or phrases, perceive the differences between similar sounds, learn to distinguish unfamiliar sounds, and produce the critical differences. Current training programs for teachers don’t provide teachers with practice in hearing the sounds we take for granted in our own speech—recognizing our own prototypes.

Consider how we teach students to differentiate ‘can’ and ‘can’t’: “say those *end* sounds clearly!” Actually, it’s not the end sounds that are critical; it’s the vowel, which is quite different in sound and duration when saying “I can go” vs. “I can’t go.” It is actually the vowel—kən not kæn—that differentiates the two, not the final consonant. How confusing it must be to a non-native speaker to carefully pronounce the final ‘t’, just to have the listener look confused. Wouldn’t it be effective to have him listen to pairs of sentences, listening for the shortened reduced vowel in “I c’n go” vs. the clear, slightly lengthened vowel in “I can’t go”? To know that when ‘can’ appears in the middle of sentences this happens makes sense. To understand that ‘can’t’ never has the change in vowel also helps the non-native speaker produce unambiguous messages. An explanation might be appropriate for older learners, whereas simply presenting plenty of examples—carefully paired for target sounds—makes input more comprehensible for younger learners.

Speech therapists are the school personnel who receive the kind of training that is crucial to presenting language input in a way that confident, communicating non-native speakers can move towards native accents. However, speech therapists are allowed to work only with students who have language problems in their native languages.

Problem sounds

What follows are groups of target sounds, along with language groups in which native speakers are most likely to have prototypes that put both sounds into one category:

[iy] beat	vs.	[ɪ] bit
bead		bid
lead		lid
reed		rid
eel		ill
we’ll		will
eat		it

Feel this bag. Fill this bag.
Don’t sleep on deck. Don’t slip on deck.
(Chinese, Korean, Persian, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese)

[ey] bait	vs.	[e] bet
raced		rest
aid		Ed
rake		wreck
late		let

Can you taste it? Can you test it?

Put it in the shade. Put it in the shed.

(Arabic, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese)

[ɛ] bet	vs.	[æ] bat
bed		bad
said		sad
Beth		bath
better		batter
left		laughed
X		axe

Send it carefully. Sand it carefully.

The pen leaks. The pan leaks.

(Chinese, Korean, Persian, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese)

[æ] cat	vs.	[ɑ] cot
cab		cob
add		odd
axe		ox
hag		hog
rack		rock
cap		cop
hat		hot
racket		rocket

My sack is torn. My sock is torn.

Too many cats. Too many cots.

(almost all ESL students)

[ɑ] cot	vs.	[ɔ] caught
clod		clawed
hock		hawk
tock		talk
nod		gnawed
Don		dawn
tot		taught

Is it Don? Is it dawn?

I see the collar. I see the caller.

(Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Persian, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Californians)

Generic Exercises

Pick two sounds. Find or draw pictures to illustrate two example words. Call one "sound 1" and the other "sound 2."

Put the pictures on the board. Say the words in a random sequence. Students say "1" or "2" to indicate which sound they hear. After the example words are "burned in," try other word and sentence pairs that differ *only* in the target sound. (Try not to change the

tone—Chinese, Vietnamese, Lao, Hmong, Mien speakers will hear this as a difference.)

Keep the pace brisk and let the students receive immediate feedback on correct answers.

Same and different

T: Sheep. Ship.

S: Different

T: Seat. Seat.

S: Same

Right or wrong

T: (points to picture of cot): Cat.

S: Wrong.

T: (points to picture of hat): Hat.

S: Right.

Pick the different one

T: 1-cot 2-cot 3-caught

S: 3

T: 1-odd 2-awed 3-odd

S: 2

Which one?

T: point to the X

S: (point to the picture of the X)

T: point to the axe

S: (point to the picture of the axe)

T: (continues, mixing them up)

T: The pan leaks.

S: (point to picture of leaky pan)

T: The pen leaks.

S: (point to picture of the leaky pen)

T: (continues, mixing them up)

Obviously, for these to be fast-paced, the teacher needs lists of minimal pairs close at hand. The speech therapist is probably a gold mine of resources. Two books are useful:

Pronunciation Contrasts in English (Nilsen, Regents Publishing Co.)

Pronunciation Pairs (Baker & Goldstein, Cambridge University Press, 1990). Comes with a cassette.

The problem sounds listed above are only a few of the vowel contrasts; the language lists are not complete, either.

I wonder if a speech therapist could go into each classroom for 10 minutes a day to conduct targeted input—a routine of "a sound pair a day"? They'd be training teachers in the techniques at the same time.



Context:

Southeast Asians & other newcomers in California's classrooms

September 1993, Volume 14, No. 105

Missing p. 6-7,
stamps for messages
in different
languages. Outdated
fonts used.

So you have a non-English speaking student in your class—

15 Easy & Effective Efforts

Context is published eight times during the academic year as a way to provide staff with information and ideas concerning their newcomer students and parents. While the focus is on Southeast Asians, most articles and resources apply to other newcomer groups as well. This newsletter is developed with Economic Impact Aid funds, and district staff with English learners receive an automatic subscription. Other district staff may request a subscription, at no cost. Outside subscribers pay \$10.00 per year to cover mailing and handling costs.

Editor:
Judy Lewis

Transitional English Programs,
Folsom Cordova Unified School District,
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
Phone (916) 635-6815
Fax (916) 635-0174

Refugee Educators Network

This group of educators meets at the above address 5 times per year to share information and plan an annual conference, the Southeast Asian Education Faire—9:00-11:30, 3rd Thursdays.

Join us!

September 16, 1993
November 18, 1993
January 20, 1994
February 17, 1994
May 19, 1994

1 Smile. For most of us, 75% of a message is non-verbal; for a non-English speaker, it's likely to be 95% or more. Newcomers have an uncanny ability to understand what's in your heart. Even though it's frustrating not to be able to communicate, don't let the newcomer sense your feelings, or let other students in the class see your exasperation. Ask another student to be a "buddy," to demonstrate what needs to be done. Kids don't seem to be daunted by the lack of a common verbal language.

2 Guess a lot. When a limited-English speaker tries to communicate with you, use all your intuitive skills to understand what he means to say. Remember how well we attribute meaning to the babbling of babies; it's not so much different with older learners of English. Expect misunderstanding, and keep on trying.

3 Find out if the student knows how to **read the home language.** If so, you can expect the student to use that language to learn new words, especially in grades 3 to 12. Fortunately, kindergarten is a natural English-as-a-Second-Language environ-

ment; the most difficult and slowest progress will be seen in 2nd and 3rd grades, where teachers assume minimal ability to write letters and associate symbols, sounds, and meanings, but students often have not received beginning literacy skills in their home language. Students without prior schooling have to learn to read a language they do not speak, so it takes much longer and requires different strategies.

4 Begin with the Dolch List—the 200 **most frequently encountered English words.** •Assign a student to help the newcomer learn to read (pronounce) and write 3 to 10 words a day. Have the non-English speaker write the meaning of the word in her home language (ask a bilingual aide, an older more fluent student, or send the list home for the parents to translate). Use standard rote memory strategies (copying, flash cards), realizing that for some children it is simply memorizing a collection of line strokes. •Have the "buddy team" make flash cards, with the English on one side, and the home language on the reverse. •Have them make picture flash cards for the concepts that can be represented visually. •Get a

These ideas are *coping strategies* for teachers faced with newcomer students in mainstream classes. While routine and rote, these activities provide a place to begin ... do-able tasks that create enough pattern to allow the brain to derive generalizations about the new language in relation to the old. Most work best with students who can already read and write another language.

If a teacher is lucky enough to have a class full of newcomers, different kinds of activities come to mind—for example, Jan McGorry takes her high school ESL class through *Moby Dick* ... providing the extra instruction and experience to understand the vocabulary, concepts, and themes. Linda Dickenson and her 5th and 6th grade newcomers (of 6 languages) dive right into *Cinderella* and other core stories. The regular materials are made understandable by teaching them differently.



Ten most useful words:

a and be for have in
of that the to

Fifty most frequent in reading:

the	he	at	we	there
and	you	on	ask	this
a	for	have	all	as
to	had	but	one	out
of	is	me	from	said
I	with	my	are	would
in	her	not	were	what
was	she	be	or	their
that	his	him	when	no
it	as	they	up	if

100 words account for 60% of all the words in reading & writing.

copy of *1,000's of Pictures*, a collection of stick figure drawings of common nouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositions, and so on. Soon everyone will be involved in representing ideas in simple pictures.

5 Jump into **easy-to-read books** (limited vocabulary) or student-made books, as soon as 20 or 30 words are learned. Have a student record the book on tape (or on the Macintosh computer). Let the newcomer listen and follow the words many times. Have him read the book aloud, and record the readings often. If the student can write his own language, have him write translations on each page.

6 Use **newspapers (or magazines) and highlighters**. Have the student highlight the 10 or 20 or 30 words she has learned so far (visual recognition of words). Once she has learned the 200 most frequent words, continue until the most frequent 500 words are recognized quickly. At this point, 50-75% of any text is recognizable.

7 Copy the **chapter summary** on the copy machine. Ask an aide, older student, or parent to translate and explain the summary to the student. Do this for science, social studies, and literature. Take a high-lighter and mark the key words; these are the new words for the week. The student's assignment is to learn to pronounce, write, and understand the meanings of these key words. For example, in 6th grade, a student

who can read his home language is expected to write the key words, translate them, and write a sentence in English and the home language. Or, when appropriate, illustrate the word.

7 Buy up old **comic books**. Let the non-English speaker look at the comic books when the rest of the class is doing something beyond her language ability. (Stephen Krashen recommends *Archie*.)

8 Get a supply of **books on tape**. Make sure they are unabridged—that the student can follow the words as he listens to the tape. Have them listen to favorite stories over and over, until the text is practically memorized. If you have a high-tech classroom, use *Discus* books on CD. The student can click on various parts of the pictures and hear the vocabulary item, can listen to the text slow or fast, or can hear the word broken into syllables.

9 Use the **Mona Lisa method**. (Artists often learned technical skills by copying the old masters.) When the class is reading and answering questions on a study guide, have the student copy a few key paragraphs of text. Expect perfect spelling, punctuation, capitalization, spacing, format, and so on. This is not simple task for students who have learned to read and write non-Roman alphabets. As the student's skill develops, photocopy the text to be copied, with every 7th or 9th word blanked out. Presto! a cloze activity. Have students trans-

late the paragraphs into the home language, or take them home to be translated.

10 Make **outlines or maps** of the chapter. Any kind of summarizing strategy will help limited-English speaker, and will teach valuable coping strategies. In addition, selecting key words that “telegraph” the main ideas cuts down on the volume of text a student has to negotiate.

11 Don’t expect less, but do **change assignments**. Remember that in American schools the curriculum spirals. A 5th grader who gets only a few key words and concepts from American history will encounter it again in 8th and 11th grades, and if college-bound, again in college. The same applies to almost every subject area.

12 For students literate in alphabetic systems, use **sound charts** to quickly teach a new code. Arrange all the initial consonants, blends, and digraphs along the left side of the chart. In the first column, blend each sound with one of the 14 vowel sounds. (“ba, ka, da, fa, ...” and so on.) As boring as this sounds, it is a method used in many other countries, and may be familiar to the student. In addition, it presents the complexities of English sounds in a patterned, predictable way, allowing the student’s brain to form generalizations about decoding English, and to decipher the similarities and differences between

the sounds of the home language and English.

13 Buy a **current map** the world, and hang it up in the room. A paper map at a stationery store or college bookstore is \$3 to \$6, and is worth the investment, given the annual changes in the names and boundaries of countries in today’s world. Activities will spring from the map—“Where did you live?” “How did you travel here?”

(Avoid using flags as way to welcome new students, especially if they have come to the United States from communist countries or dictatorships.) But do take the time to **learn the students’ names**; soon you will be able to associate countries, languages, and names. (This helps locate the right interpreter, and establishes a quicker bond of trust with the parents.)

14 Have a bilingual aide or older student translate and explain **background knowledge**. Hirsch’s Core Knowledge series (*What your 1st grader needs to know*, etc.) is a good resource.

15 Get a **bilingual dictionary and picture dictionaries**. The *New Oxford Picture Dictionary* presents 2,000 items in context, with English and home language identifying labels. Buy up old copies of the *Dr. Seuss’ Cat in the Hat* dictionary at garage sales and flea markets. Facts on File, Oxford-Duden, and Visual Dictionary are all useful.



Sounds Ch

	a	e
b	ba	be
d	da	de
f	fa	fe
g	ga	ge
h	ha	he
j	ja	je
k	ka	ke
l	la	le
m	ma	me
n	na	ne
p	pa	pe
qu	qua	que
r	ra	re
s	sa	se
t	ta	te
v	va	ve
w	wa	we
y	ya	ye
z	za	ze
ch	cha	che
sh	sha	she
th	tha	the
wh	wha	who



Context:

Southeast Asians & other newcomers in California's classrooms
October 1993, Volume 14, No. 106

Context is published eight times during the academic year as a way to provide staff with information and ideas concerning their newcomer students and parents. While the focus is on Southeast Asians, most articles and resources apply to other newcomer groups as well. This newsletter is developed with Economic Impact Aid funds, and district staff with English learners receive an automatic subscription. Other district staff may request a subscription, at no cost. Outside subscribers pay \$10.00 per year to cover mailing and handling costs.

Editor:
Judy Lewis

Transitional English Programs,
Folsom Cordova Unified School District,
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
Phone (916) 635-6815
Fax (916) 635-0174

Refugee Educators Network

This group of educators meets at the above address 5 times per year to share information and plan an annual conference, the Southeast Asian Education Faire—9:00-11:30, 3rd Thursdays

Join us!

September 16, 1993
November 18, 1993
January 20, 1994
February 17, 1994
May 19, 1994

“Read with your child” What does it mean?

Reading fluency comes from reading. To read better, read more. To write better, read more. These simple prescriptions come from Stephen Krashen, guru of second language acquisition theory and methods.

The neural process by which the human brain processes information from the senses to produce generalizations, that then drive output—speech or writing—is the basis of both reading acquisition and second language acquisition.

For second language learners the task is to read in both English and the home language. Reading in Vietnamese, for example, improves reading performance in English. This is not so strange when one considers how much of comprehension consists of tying new information to old information, understanding the way in which ideas are presented in text, showing persistence, and so on. The act of reading (preferably, self-selected free reading, says Krashen) increases reading proficiency. The act of reading aloud with a parent or older sibling does not do the same thing for a child, but it does provide an opportunity for a parent or older sibling to coach the child in reading aloud, and adds valuable minutes of eye-brain activity with print text as the focus.

The assumption that parents are child-centered in their daily lives leans heavily towards the middle-class American ideal. In Hmong culture, for example, and for a variety of reasons, there is much less adult-child interaction centered around print text. Holding an expectation that a child sits with the parent, listening to a story and looking at the pictures, or reading the story out loud to someone, passively waiting for direction to answer teacher-like questions (“What is this?” “Who did that?” “What do you think happens next?”) is out of sync with many home cultures.

When teachers urge parents to read with their children, many parents think, “Fine, but what do you mean, ‘Read with my child’.” Making the procedures of reading aloud explicit can only help parents—especially newcomer parents—better understand what should be done. On the next two pages are simple hints for “read with your child” in several languages. Feel free to duplicate them. (Thanks to Gayle Heslop, who developed these hints for parents at Williamson Elementary.)

Students need to read on their own at home, but first, an expectation for reading, and a habit of daily reading needs to be established.

Copy these pages and send home Could be cut apart for book marks

Parents as Teachers: Helping Your Child Read Aloud Provide a suitable place and time. - Choose a quiet and peaceful place - Choose a time when your child is not tired, hungry, or really eager to do something else - Provide 10-15 minutes of at-home reading 4 or 5 times each week Provide suitable material. - Stories should interest your child - Stories should not be too difficult (no more than 5 mistakes in 50 words) - The librarians at your local library can will help you select good books for children at any age Provide encouragement. - Talk together about the story and pictures This will help your child gain interest, and to get more meaning from the story - Accept your child's efforts - Avoid criticism, threats, and comparisons with other children - Try to be relaxed Stop if you feel yourself or your child becoming frustrated Read to your child instead Provide praise - When your child tries, even if it's wrong - When your child reads for meaning - When your child finds the right word after making a mistake - When your child reads a word correctly, after you have provided help Provide opportunities for the child to figure out words independently. - WAIT! Give the child a chance to think about the word and the meaning of the story - But, if your child still doesn't respond, tell the word Don't ask him/her to sound it out When the story is too hard: - Read it to your child, and talk about it or leave it, and try another, easier story When your child is not very interested in the story: - Read the first few pages aloud, and talk about the story together, or help to find a more interesting story When the story is too long: - Read every second page (or chapter) to your child, then s/he reads one, and so on, or help to find a shorter story Enjoy this time together ENGLISH	CHA ME CUNG NHU THAY CO: GIUP DO CON EM TAP DOC Tạo Chỗ và Thời Gian Thích Hợp - Chọn một chỗ mà thật yên tĩnh và bình thản nếu có thể - Chọn một thời gian mà con em không cảm thấy mệt mỏi, đói bụng, hoặc rất háng hái để làm việc - Tạo khoảng 10-15 phút để đọc sách tại nhà bốn hoặc năm lần một tuần Tạo Những Học Liệu Thích Hợp - Những câu chuyện mà làm cho con em thích thú - Những quyển truyện không khó quá (không sai nhiều hơn năm lần trong năm mươi chữ) - Nhân viên thư-viện trong địa phương có thể giúp quý vị lựa chọn những quyển sách nhi đồng hứng thú cho mọi lứa tuổi Tạo Điều Kiện Khuyến Khích - Cùng nhau bàn về một quyển truyện và hình ảnh Việc này sẽ giúp cho con em quý vị này nở sự hứng thú, và để hiểu biết thêm ý nghĩa của câu chuyện - Đón nhận kết quả của con em - Tránh tình trạng phê bình, hăm dọa, và so sánh với trẻ em khác - Cần phải giải trí Ngừng lại nếu như quý vị và con em cảm thấy thất vọng Thay thế vào đó nên đọc cho con em Khen Ngợi Con Em - Khi mà con em cố gắng, mặc dù nếu thấy là không đúng - Khi mà con em đọc nghĩa - Khi mà con em tìm đúng chữ sau khi làm sai một lần - Khi mà con em đọc chữ đó đúng, sau khi có sự giúp đỡ của quý vị Tạo Cơ Hội cho Con Em Tự Mình Tìm Ra Những Chữ - ĐỢI! Để cho con em có thời gian suy nghĩ về chữ và ý nghĩa của câu chuyện - Nhưng, nếu như con em không có phản ứng gì, nói chữ đó Không cần hỏi con em đọc ra Khi mà Quyển Truyện Rất Khó Đọc (con em đọc sai nhiều hơn năm chữ trong năm mươi chữ): - Đọc sách <u>cho</u> con em, và thảo luận về sách đó <u>hoặc</u> bỏ đi, và thử quyển khác, tìm quyển truyện dễ hơn Khi Mà Con Em Không Có Hứng Thú Về Quyển Truyện - Đọc mấy trang đầu thật lớn tiếng, và cùng nhau nói về câu chuyện, hoặc giúp tìm cốt truyện làm cho con em hứng thú Khi Mà Quyển Truyện Quá Dài - Đọc mỗi trang thứ hai (hoặc một chương) cho con em sau đó con em đọc một trang (một chương) cho quý vị, rồi quý vị đọc một trang, và cứ như vậy, <u>hoặc</u> giúp để tìm những cốt truyện ngắn hơn Hướng Thụ Thời Gian Cùng Nhau Đọc Sách - Những người ham đọc sách thường tìm thấy hứng thú khi họ đọc VIETNAMESE	Նախապատրաստել գրասեղանը, տեղը և ժամանակը: - Ընտրել լուռ և հնարավորին չափ հաղադ տեղ: - Ընտրել այն ժամանակը երբ ձեր երեխան հոգմած չէ, սոված չէ և պատրաստ է որևէ բան անելու: - Հատկացնել 10-15 րոպե տանը կարդալու համար, շաբաթը 4 կամ 5 անգամ: Նախապատրաստել գրասեղանի նյութերը: - Պատմվածք որը հետաքրքիր կլինի երեխային: - Պատմվածք չլինի շատ դժվար (15 բառի մեջ 5 սխալից ավել չլինի): - Գրադարանավարը կոզմի ձեզ ընտրել գրքեր, ձեր երեխայի տարիքին համեմատ: Նախապատրաստել բաշակերտքյան: - Խոսեք միասին եեխայի և մկարմերի մասին: Դա երեխայի մեջ կարթմացնի հետաքրքրություն և մոդր գաղափարներ հեխայի վերաբերյալ: - Ընդունիր երեխայիդ ջանքը: - Զգուշանալ բնադատելուց, սպառնալուց և ուրիշ երեխաների հետ համեմատելուց: - Աշխատել լինել հանգիստ: զադարացրեք աշխատանքը երբ զգում եք անարդյունք վիճակ: Կարդացեք ձեր երեխայի փոխարեն: Գնահատել արդյունքը - Եթե ԲՆ երեխան փորձում է, թեկուզ սխալ: - Բայց եթե ձեր երեխան չի կարող պատասխանել, ասել խոսքը, մի ասել իրեն գոռալով - ասա! - Երբ պատմվածքը շատ դժվար է (երեխան անում է 5 սխալից ավել 15 բառի մեջ): - Դու կարդա այդ երեխայի համար և քացատրի որ ընտրի ավելի հեշտ պատմվածք: Երբ երեխային չի հետաքրքրում պատմվածքը: - Կարդա մի քանի էջ քարձրածայն և խոսեք միասին պատմվածքի մասին Երբ պատմվածքը շատ երկար է: - Կարդա մեկ էջ (կամ մեկ գլուխ) երեխայի համար, հետո թող երեխան կարդա կեզ համար և հետո շարունակեք այդպիսի կամ օգնիր երեխային գտնելու ավելի կարճ պատմություն: Ուրախացեք միասին կարդալու ժամանակ: - Երբ կարդում ես կյանքը լցվում է ուրախությամբ: ARMENIAN
--	---	--

Предоставьте подходящее место и время - Найдите тихое и удобное место - Выберите время для вашего ребёнка, когда он не устал, не голодный и готов делать что нибудь другое - Дайте ему 10-15 минут для чтения дома 4 или 5 раз в не делю Подберите подходящий материал - Истории должны быть интересными ребёнку - Истории не должны быть очень трудными [не более чем 5 ошибок в 50 словах] - Библиотекари в вашей местной библиотеке помогут вам выбрать хорошую книжку для возраста вашего ребёнка Ободряйте ребёнка - Говорите об истории и об рисунках Это поможет вашему ребёнку интересоваться в историях и больше знать об этом - Принимайте старание вашего ребёнка - Избегайте критики, угроз и сравнения с другими детьми - Пытайтесь быть мягкими Не расстраивайтесь и не допускайте расстройства ребёнка Читайте вместо него Поощряйте ребёнка. - Когда ваш ребёнок делает даже неправильно - Когда ваш ребёнок читает для значения - Когда ваш ребёнок находит правильное слово после ошибки - Когда ваш ребёнок прочитает правильно, после того как вы поможете ему Дайте удобное время ребёнку чтобы он мог решить значение слова самостоятельно. ПОДОЖДИТЕ! Дайте вашему ребёнку время подумать о слове и значении истории - Но, если ваш ребёнок не говорит, скажите слово сами и спросите чтобы он повторил его Когда история очень трудная и ребёнок делает 5 ошибок в 50 словах - Почитайте эту историю ребёнку, поговорите о ней или оставьте её и выберите историю полегче Когда история не интересная - Почитайте несколько страниц ему и порассуждайте об истории вместе или помогите ему найти более интересную Когда история длинная - Пусть ребёнок читает страницу и вы страницу, если эта история покажется очень длинной, помогите ему найти более короткую Наслаждайтесь этим временем вместе - Люди, которые читают всю жизнь имеют интерес в чтении	Provea Un Tiempo Y Lugar Apropiado - Escoja un lugar que es tranquilo y pacifico cuanto sea posible - Escoja el tiempo cuando su hijo no este cansado, con hambre o inquieto para hacer algo diferente - Provea 10-15 minutos de lectura en la casa 4 o 5 veces a la semana Provea Materiales Adequados - Las historias que se leen deben ser interesantes para el niño - Las historias no deben ser demasiado defficles (no mas de 5 errores in 50 palabras) - La bibliotecaria en su libreria le puede ayudar a hacer una seleccion buena de libros para sus niños de acuerdo a sus edades Provea Mucho Estimulo - Hablen juntos acerca de los dibujos y la historia leidas Esto ayudará a su hijo a tomar interest y encontrar mas sentido en la lectura - Acepte el esfuerzo de su hijo/a - Evite criticas, amenazas y comparaciones con otros niños - Trate de relajarse Pare su usted y su hijo/a empiezan a sentir frustracion Lee a su hijo/a en lugar Provea Elogios A Sus Hijos/as - Cuando su hijo/a hace el esfuerzo qun si hace un error - Cuando su hijo/a lee para encontrar significado - Cuando su hijo/a se da cuenta de un error y trata de arreglarlo - Cuando su hijo/a lee una palabra correctamente despues que usted le ha dado ayuda Provea Oportunidades Para Que Su Hijo/a Desifre Palabras Indedientemente Deténgase! De a su hijo/a la oportunidad de pensar acerca de la palabra y el contenido de la historia - Pero si su hijo/a todavia no responde dígale la palabra No le pregunte que lo delectree Cuando Una Historia Es Demasiado Difcil (el niño hace mas de 5 errores in 50 palabras) - Léalo a su hijo/a, hable acerca de la historia, o abandónelo, pero trate otra historia mas fácil Cuando Su Hijo/a No Tiene Mucho Interes En La Historia - Lean las primeras páginas en alta voz y discutan la historia juntos o encuentre otra historia que sea mas interesante Cuando La Historia Es Demasiada Larga - Lea cada segunda página (o capítulo) a su hijo/a enseguida el o ella lee una página (o capítulo) a usted, despues usted lee otra vez y asi se continua Otra alteruatira es ayudar a su hijo/a a seleccionar una historia mas corta Disfruten Juntos De Este Tiempo De Lectura - Las personas que leen para la vida tienen mas alegria cuando leen	Nrhiav kom muaj lub chaw thiab sijhawm - Xaiv lub chaw uas nriag tos tsis muaj suab sab dabtsi rau nws - Nrhiav lub sijhawm uas koj tus menyuum tsis nkees, tsis tshaibplab, lossis tsis xav mus ua lwmyam - Muab li uas 10-15 feeb kom nws yuavtsum nyeeem ntawv, ua li no mus li plaub tsib zaug hauv ib limtiam Kom muaj tej ntaubntawv nyeeem txawmpeem - Cov phantawv ntawv uas muaj zaj zoo rau nws nyiam nyeeem - Cov zaj uas nws nyeeem yuav tsum txhob yog nyuaj heev rau nws - Cov neeg pab nyob rau tom tsev cecvntawv lawv yuav paub pab koj xaiv cov phantawv zoo rau koj tus menyuum rawv cov hnoobnyoog Npaj kev txhawbnga pub rau menyuum - Nrog menyuum sib tham saib nws nyeeem txog zaj dabtsi, kom nws piav rau koj mloog Yog koj ua li no nws yuav pab tau koj tus menyuum, vim nws paub tias koj nyiam nws kev nyeeemntawv thiab yuav ua rau nws nco zaj ntawd ntev mus - Lees paub tias koj tus menyuum yeej muab siab rau nyeeem ntawv - Txhob lam tau lam hais menyuum plig, lossis hem thiab muab nws piv rau tus ub tus no - Yog koj pom tias tus menyuum nkees tsawv lawm ces yuav tau so mentsis lossis koj ho nyeeem rau nws mloog, txhob yuam nws nyeeem Qhuab menyuum lawm ces yuavtsum qhuas thiab - Thaum koj pom tias menyuum xyaum ua, txawm tias yog tsis tshua heev los koj yuav tau qhuas nws - Yog koj tus menyuum nyeeem tau zaj ua nws nyiam thiab totaub, koj yuav tsum qhuas nws - Thaum koj tus menyuum paub tias nws sau lossis nyeeem tsis tshua yog los koj pab qhia thiab qhuas nws - Yog koj pab koj tus menyuum nyeeem kom raug thiab hais kom yog mas neb yeej yuav zoo siab ib yam nkaus Pub lub sijhawm rau menyuum tau xav - Ua siabntev! Cia sijhawm rau menyuum tau xav saib yog yuav nyeeem licas lossis zaj ntawd yog hais txog dabtsis - Txawm yog tias menyuum tseem teb tsis tau tau los tsis txhob maj cia nws majmam ua suab ntawm nws tus kheej Yog tias zaj ntawd nyuaj nyeeem heev - Koj nyeeem pub rau nws mloog thiab nrog nws hais lus thiab nws saib nws puas totaub lossis xaiv dua lwm zaj los nyeeem Thaum menyuum tsis nyiam nyeeem ntawv - Koj nyeeem ob pab nplooj rau nws ces neb los tham txog zaj ntawd tias yog hais txog dabtsis,
---	---	--

РОДИТЕЛИ КАК УЧИТЕЛЯ: ПОМОГАЮЩИЕ ЧИТАТЬ СВОИМ ДЕТАМ

PADRES DE FAMILIA COMO MAESTROS. AYUDANDO A SU HIJO/A A LEER

Niamtxiv kuj yog xibfwb: Xyaum pab koj tus menyuum nyeeem ntawv

RUSSIAN

SPANISH

HMONG

Literacy tutors' checklists

Excerpted from **Teach Someone to Read: A Step-by-Step Guide for Literacy Tutors** (Rosenthal, 1987). Available from Fearon/Quercus/Janus.

Selecting Something to Read

- Choose a topic (see below).
- Find out what compels the student's attention.
- Locate reading materials at the appropriate instructional level on that topic, or rewrite materials to the student's level.
- Use brainstorming and flowcharts to expand the topic.

Questioning Patterns

- **LITERAL RECALL QUESTIONS**
Describe the content (recall)
Restate the content (summarize)
- **INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS**
Analyze ideas (compare, infer)
Generalize to broader issues (evaluate, conclude, form opinions).
- **ACTIVE QUESTIONS**
React emotionally to the reading (make value judgements).
Act on thoughts and feelings (change, do, make).

SQ3R Study Skills Technique

- **Survey** the reading by section.
- **Question**—change each heading and subheading into a question.
- **Reading**—read the material in each section to answer the question.
- **Recite**—restate the information and ideas under each heading and subheading.
- **Review**—restate the reading as a whole.

Sight words:

Students need to recognize and know the meaning of 200-300 sight words; the Dolch list (the *Transcultural Word List*, volumes 1 and 2, provide translations into 30 languages; Learning Publications, PO Box 1326, Holmes Beach, FL 34128, (800) 222-1525)) or other high-frequency word lists provide a place to begin.

Activities include:

- personal dictionary
- flash card drill
- highlighting sight words in the reading
- categorizing sight words
- pairing words in opposites
- dictation using sight words.

Phonics Sequence

- single consonants
- short vowels
- beginning blends
- ending blends
- beginning and ending digraphs
- long vowels with silent 'e'
- other vowel combinations
- vowels controlled by 'r', 'l', and 'w'
- contractions

Use word families and minimal pairs whenever possible.

Syllabication Rules

- compound words
- VC/CV (pen/cil)
- V/CV & VC/V (ho/tel; lem/on)
- words ending in 'le' (sam/ple)
- prefixes & suffixes (un/sure; sure/ly)
- blends & digraphs (con/trol; fash/ion)

Topics for adults & adolescents

- Addictions**
alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, food, work, love, self-help programs, biographies of addicts, personalities of addicts, alcoholic family structures.
- Animals**
pets, zoos, wild animals, circuses, evolution, biology, wildlife preservation, animals from other regions of the world, animal rights, hunting, furs, vegetarianism, stories about Dian Fossey and other animal activists.
- Arts & Crafts**
art and culture, art and religion, art history, specific crafts, how-to books on crafts, biographies of struggling artists.
- Community Services**
libraries, schools, driving instruction, police protection, clinics, citizenship.
- Crime**
crimes against people, crimes against property, prisons, white-collar crime, blue-collar crime, gangs, law enforcement, true crime stories, legal stories, gun control, self-defense, personalities of criminals, antisocial behavior.
- Emotions**
joy, pain, anger, love, hate, sorrow, grief, acculturative stress.
- Everyday reading**
phone book, catalogs, price lists, menus, advertisements, newspapers, magazines, TV guides, warnings, warranties, labels, signs, posters, instructions, bus/plane schedules, maps/charts/graphs, record jackets, contracts/leases, applications/forms, letters/junk mail, voter registration forms, ballots.
- Food**
cooking, recipes, diets, natural foods, nutrition, growing food, food stamps, food & religion, food & culture.

experience teaches... the teacher arranges experiences

Language Experience Technique

- Choose a topic with the student.
- Student dictates a story.
- You print the dictation.
- Student reads back the story; you help.
- Student reads the story alone.
- You ask questions about the story.
- You point out characteristics of words in the story: sight words, word families, meaning of punctuation, etc.)
- Student copies the story in a notebook.
- Student corrects the story and reads it.
- You (or student) types the story to review next session.

Process Writing Technique

- *Prewriting.*
 - Present a stimulus.
 - Gather ideas.
 - Cluster ideas.
 - Write words in a word bank.
- *Writing.*
 - Topic sentence.
 - Supporting sentences.
- *Revising.*
 - Develop and organize paragraphs.
 - Improve sentence structure.
 - Edit for grammar.
 - Edit for punctuation & capitalization.
 - Edit for spelling.
- *Final writing.*
- *Publishing.*

Health care

diseases, medications, first aid, nursing, CPR, fitness, exercise, medical discoveries, medical technology, medical care, medical malpractice, medicare, HMOs, mental health, health insurance, childhood health problems, folk medicine, food as medicine, pregnancy, family planning, right-to-life issues, right-to-die issues, after-death issues.

History

history of a country, of a culture, of an era, of a city, of a language, of an ethnic group, immigration, social movements, biographies of famous historical figures, historical fiction.

Injustices

social, political, racial, economic, religious, physical, equal rights, renters' rights, getting help.

Interpersonal relations

family dynamics, sibling rivalry, effective problem-solving, personal growth, managing anger, emotional stability, abusive relationships, assertiveness training, personality conflicts, loneliness, cultural adjustments, role conflicts, handling children, divorce.

Life cycle

childbirth, childhood, parenthood, raising children, aging, middle age, old age, death and dying.

Media

current events, newspaper, TV, radio, magazines, movies, advertisements, media and culture, media and youth, cable TV, rock TV, videos, VCRs, laser disks, biographies of media stars, gossip.

Money

spending, saving, banking, credit, taxes, investments, income tax forms, renters' credit, budgeting, shopping for bargains, garage sales, inflation, buying a car and insurance, small claims' court.

Music

classical, rock, folk, jazz, gospel, country, blues, new wave, electronic, other cultures, reading music, performing artists, musical instruments, dance, singing.

Pleasure reading

novels (mystery, adventure, science fiction, romance, history, war), short stories, plays, poetry, nonfiction (biographies, how-to, science, travel).

Religion

Bible/Bible stories, comparative religions, cults, meditation, world view, conflicts.

Science

plants and animals, space exploration, underwater exploration, discoveries, astronomy, evolution, UFOs, mind-body relationship.

Sports & recreation

current events, sports heroes, teams, sports medicine, competition, martial arts, camping, hiking, backpacking, skiing, games, gardening, travel.

Technology

communications, computer technology, inventions, transportation, electronics, specific computer applications.

War

World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Desert Storm, nuclear war threat, capitalism, socialism, terrorists.

Work

job search skills, interviews, applications, jobs for the future, matching aptitude to job categories, unions, job training, unemployment, welfare.

Youth

youth culture rebellion, peer pressure, sex, drugs, cars, motorcycles, racing, gangs, juvenile delinquency, superstars, fads, family dynamics, developmental cycles during adolescence.



Strategies & Skills

James Beal, a member of the California bar and experienced attorney, has chosen to teach elementary school instead.

He teaches anywhere from 20 to 34 newcomer students in grades 4 and 5, who have been in the US less than a year and who have no prior English experience. Currently, his site has Russian, Moldovan, Belarus, Ukrainian, Armenian, Korean, Chinese, Spanish, Hindi, and Punjabi newcomers, most of whom have some literacy in another language. However, these languages represent seven scripts in addition to the Roman alphabet.

Because no ELD program available during the past adoption was designed for a one-year quick transition to English and integration of English language development with mainstream content, James and the other teachers of newcomers at his site (Tricia Appel, Trish Maughan, Phouang Phagnasay Le, and Sina Chau-Pech) chose from the grade-level curriculum and adapted the language of lessons to drive English language development.

Contact James and the other newcomer teachers at Rancho Cordova Elementary, 2562 Chassella Way, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670, (916) 363-4874.

Strategies and Lesson Ideas for Newcomer Students

James Beal, Rancho Cordova Elementary

One of the many aspects of teaching an intermediate-level newcomers' class that I enjoy is creating lessons and materials geared to the unique needs of my classroom. There are few programs that are tailored to the specific needs of a one-year structured English immersion program with a multilingual student population. Accordingly, it can be both challenging and rewarding to develop strategies and lesson ideas that successfully foster English language development while simultaneously exposing students to grade-level content and learning expectations. I have been fortunate to work with veteran teacher Linda Dickenson, who has generously shared her insights and expertise with me.

For teachers new to newcomers' programs, I thought I might share some simple, usable strategies and lesson ideas that I have found effective to engage and challenge my students.

Word Study Skills

Verb Conjugation and Verb Tense Grid

My students' writing contained incorrect usage of verb tense and subject-verb agreement. I realized the problem derived from the absence of a systematic and simple teaching tool that could be used with any target verb and that would help organize input for beginning English speakers. This tool proved particularly effective with intermediate students who have had prior schooling and whose languages express tenses in very different ways.

In order to provide a consistent, simple framework within which to present new information, I created a simple pronoun conjugation grid for each verb tense. Students generate sample sentences for each pronoun, using a whole-class shared writing approach. Students are then tested at the end of the week on both correct conjugation and correct usage within a sentence context employing each pronoun for each verb tense.

The benefit of the grid is fourfold. First, the students begin to see patterns in our language (e.g. the ending of present tense for the pronouns "he," "she," and "it" typically end in the letter "s"). The patterns help students to anticipate the correct form of verbs they have not pre-

viously encountered. Secondly, the grid provides a conceptual framework of how verbs are constructed (i.e., form is dependent on pronoun and tense). Third, the practice of writing with verbs gives the students a basic frame with which to begin sentences of their own. Finally, the sentences provide students with an additional opportunity to practice English using the new word in all its forms; thus, learners receive sufficient repetition to commit new information to memory.

I ask students to maintain a separate folder that includes the verb conjugation and verb tense grids presented in class. These folders are then utilized as a reference resource by students during writing assignments. When proofreading any writing, I will indicate verbs that they have studied and have them check their own verb conjugation folders for self-correction of errors.

Reading Comprehension

Main Idea and Details

To teach students to search for main ideas and supporting details in their reading, I make sure that I provide an opportunity weekly to teach these same concepts in their writing. I have chosen to use a paragraph format to teach students how to organize and express their own ideas clearly and how to ascertain meaning in the writing of others.

Using the week's verb from the conjugation/tense grid, I ask students to share ideas about what type of paragraph we might write that features that verb. I then create a paragraph frame based on student dialogue and input. The frame is essentially a traditional paragraph outline: introductory sentence; supporting sentences; concluding sentence. I model the paragraph frame on the overhead projector. I leave out select portions in the sentence frames to provide each student with an opportunity to independently complete their ideas. In the initial draft, students are encouraged to complete the frames in their primary language. Then they can use primary language and English-learner dictionaries or utilize a word bank developed with the interpreter to translate their independently developed ideas. Their first drafts have moved from the language of thought to unfamiliar English. I do frame the supporting sentences with transitional markers (e.g. first, second, then, next). I do not typically model a concluding sentence or title in writing on the overhead; rather, I encourage students to develop their own.

Students can deconstruct their own or another student's paragraph in many ways. I have occasionally asked students to underline each component of a paragraph with a different color (e.g. underline the introductory sentence with blue pencil). Students might also reduce a completed paragraph to its outline form.

Functional Reading

A fifth grade mainstream teacher, Amy Handley, and I devised a way to teach functional reading to our students while encouraging our newcomer and mainstream students to work together and have an authentic opportunity for the newcomers to practice their oral English skills. We translated an eight-step set of craft directions into the various primary languages represented in my classroom. Then we divided the steps; half were written in English, the other half in each of the newcomers' primary languages. Each of my students was then paired with a mainstream partner. Each student was given only half the directions, those in their primary language. By necessity each student became the teacher for his or her partner; if language limitations arose, students simply modeled the step in order to teach their partner.

This lesson can provide a springboard for various extensions, including having students rewrite the non-primary language steps entirely in their primary language, deconstructing the meaning from the modeling. Students might also write directions for an everyday procedure or simple craft emphasizing the importance of sequence and direction words.

Retelling Extension

In addition to having students retell the featured weekly language arts story, I will occasionally ask students to use the story format of the original story as a basis for the student's own creative writing. Students parallel the structure of the original story while investing their stories with characters, dialogue, and minor plot points of their own design. I can then assess their sequencing, summarization, and comprehension skills while giving the students some flexibility to incorporate original ideas in the project. The original contribution usually prompts student inquiries for new vocabulary and creates eager anticipation in students to share their re-tellings orally with the class. The read-aloud-share provides an opportunity to compare and contrast student stories with the original and with one another.

Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking

Student-Written Plays

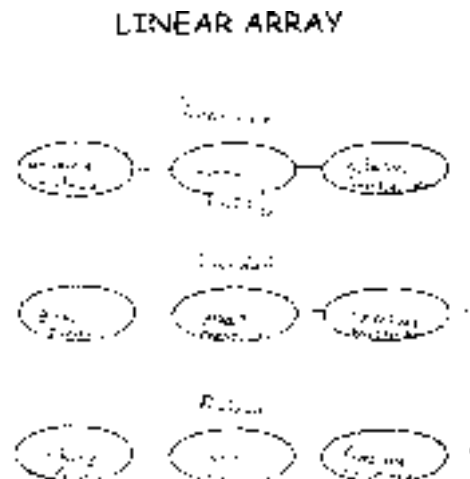
As another form of writing extension, I have had students use their original creative retelling extensions to serve as the basis for student-written plays. Students work in small cooperative groups to choose which student's work they will turn into a play. They also decide which students will play which character's parts. Each student is responsible for translating their character's part into a written dialogue that conveys sufficient meaning for the audience. Students also design their own costumes and sets. Finally, I ask that my students commit their scripts to memory for the performance. I have videotaped each performance and thrown a "wrap party" afterwards, allowing students to view their work and discuss their experiences.

The play integrates all aspects of English language development in an entertaining authentic assessment opportunity which students truly enjoy.

Reading Vocabulary

Synonyms

I attended a conference by Kate Kinsella in which she recommended using a linear array for teaching synonyms. The array offers an opportunity to teach words that represent varying degrees of the same concept and to isolate with precision the expression desired (e.g. satisfied, content, glad, happy, elated). I modified Ms. Kinsella's ideas slightly for my students' needs, adding a positive and negative symbol at either end of the array, adding a space above the array to identify the concept shared by each of the words, and shortening the array to a total of three words. The positive symbol at the right end of the array conveys the strongest expression of the concept, the minus symbol at the left end of the array identifies the weakest expression. In order to have students process the information I require that they write a sentence for each word using the word "because" after the synonym to show their understanding.



Strategies continued

Staff Development Activity

- Obtain a copy of the newly-adopted English Language Development Standards and take out all the pieces labeled "Beginning."
- Go through each of the standards in *Listening & Speaking*, *Reading, Writing, Conventions*, and *Literary Analysis* for grades 3-5; mark the ones that are addressed by the activities for newcomers on these pages.
- Discuss & identify the high frequency words, stories, and social studies concepts that might be chosen as the raw material for learning English in a grades 4-5 newcomers' class.

Strategies continued

Vocabulary Development (theme approach)

I think it is important for students to apply critical thinking skills whenever possible to discover meanings, connections, or patterns themselves. If they make the connection independently I believe they will be more likely to retain the information. One way I have introduced new concepts is to give my students a set of word cards for study. One side of the card features a word in English, the other side features the same word in the student's primary language. The words all share a common trait (e.g. five pairs of antonyms, ten adverbs, and so on). I mix the cards so that no order is readily apparent and have the students take home the cards for study as vocabulary and spelling words. Additionally, I ask them to try to identify what common element links all the words. Once they have discovered the pattern for themselves and have a series of example words, I have a wonderful introductory tool to introduce a new language concept.

Math Words Vocabulary

Teaching computational skills present few substantial language hurdles. However, most newcomer students experience difficulty applying those skills in solving word problems, due to the use of grade-level and unfamiliar vocabulary in the word problems. Accordingly, it is important to teach those words or phrases which signify operations (e.g. "all together" and "in all" for addition).

In order to really ensure students have adequate exposure to math language concepts I have begun to assign nightly homework requiring students to write a simple word problem for a featured operation. I select five exemplary problems and create a worksheet of them, crediting my student authors. These worksheets serve as additional independent practice. The word problems can be visually diagrammed the following day to ensure understanding and to teach graphic strategies for understanding rela-

tionships among elements in written English.

Vocabulary Development & Note-Taking Skills

I like to introduce the skill of note-taking through a critical thinking activity that fosters vocabulary development. Using a picture file, I select an object that I believe my students are familiar with but for which they do not know the English word (e.g. lightning, lettuce). I try to preview vocabulary that may appear in an upcoming story this way whenever possible. Each student is required to take notes as we play a whole class game of 20 Questions.

Students can eliminate inaccurate guesses by referring to the notes they take about previously asked questions and answers. I encourage students to take time to study their notes before asking a question. At the close of the game, I allow students to use their primary language and English-learner dictionaries to identify the object in English and write it on a paper. Notes and guesses are turned in for teacher review.

Writing

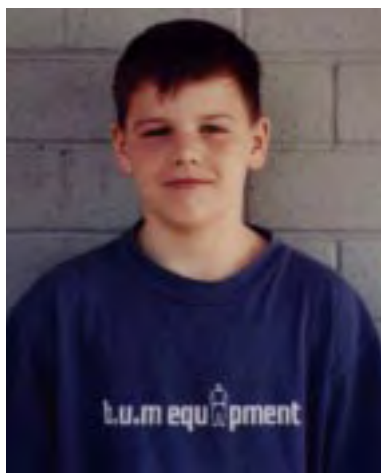
Letter Writing to Pen Pals

I believe having an authentic audience and objective for writing engages student interest and results in quality work. Consequently, my students exchange "pen pal" letters twice monthly with a class of students in Texas. The letters serve multiple objectives (e.g. how to respond to questions in complete sentences, proper letter form, and so on). The letters also serve to foster interest in people and customs in other parts of our country which can tie neatly into the study of United States geography and history.

Interviews and Biographies

Though class discussion students develop several key questions for an interview of a classmate. Then students work in pairs to interview one another, using the questions developed. The interviewer then turns the responses into complete sentences and writes a biography. Student

subject and biographer pairs then present one another to the class, orally reading their biographies. I give each student a photograph of their subject to add to their biography and then we create a student "biography wall" in the classroom.



His name is Pavel.
He is ten years old.
He is in fifth grade.
He is from Russia.
His favorite subject is math.



Strategies & Skills

Normal processes

Interference of the home language in English pronunciation, syntax, morphology.

Silent period of 3-6 months.

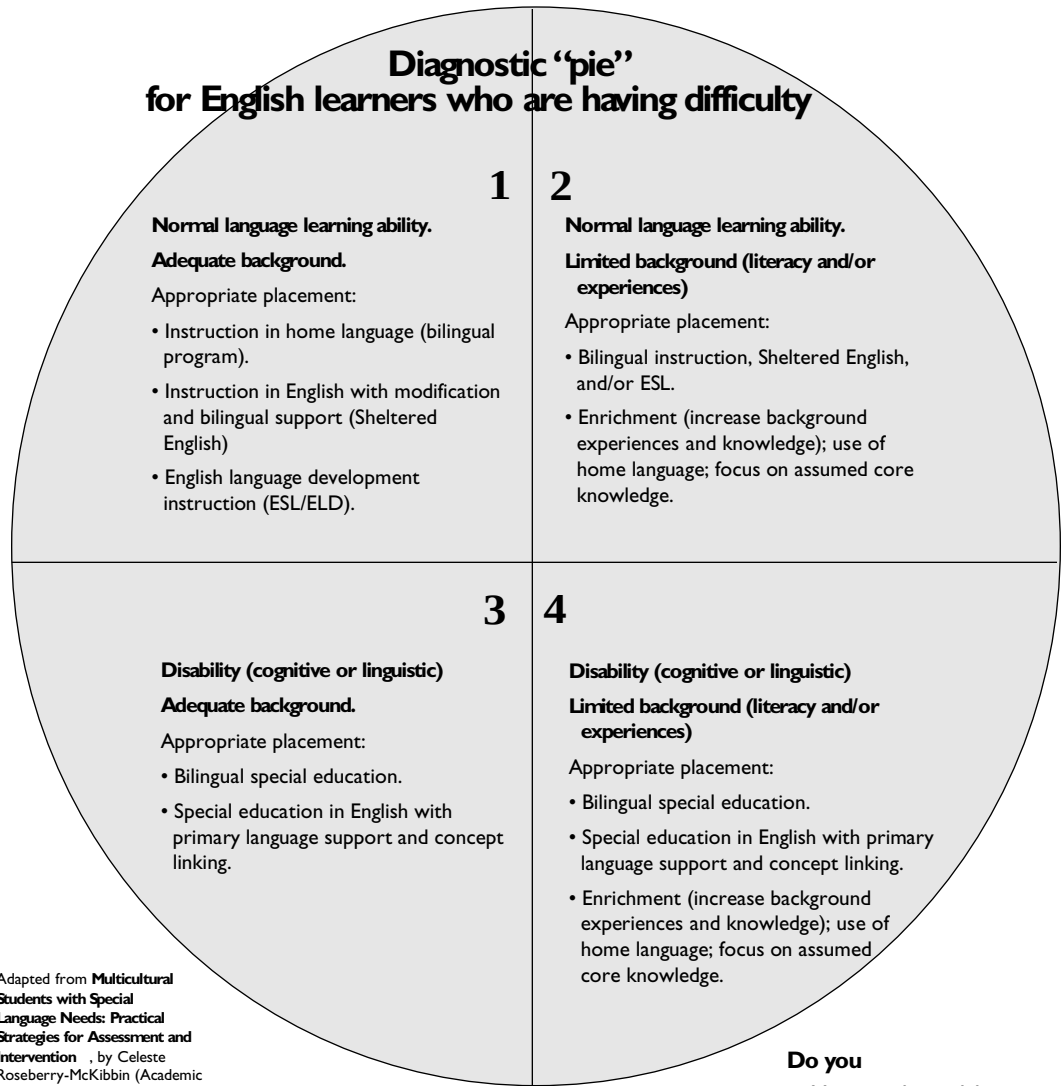
Codeswitching between languages.

Language loss (when the home language is not developed, English will eventually replace it; during the period of shift, a learner appears to be limited in both languages).

Is it a cognitive or language learning disability?

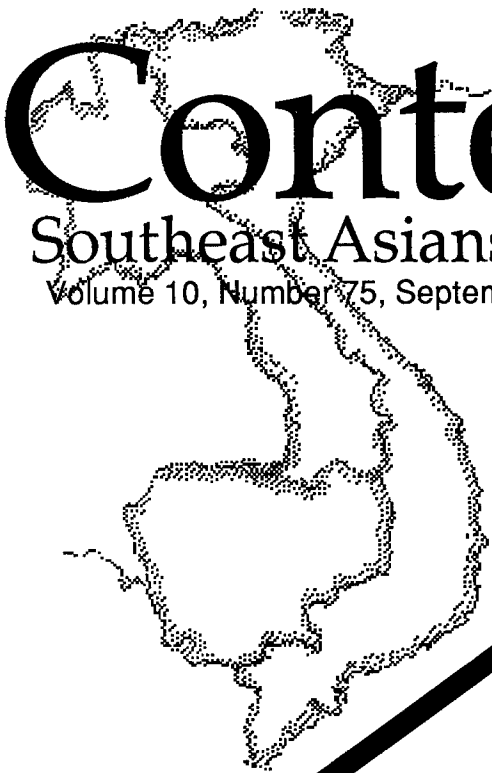
- ☐ Learns language at a slow rate, even with assistance in both languages.
- ☐ Takes a long time to learn a new or concept skill, even when not language-based.
- ☐ Lacks vocabulary in the home language, compared to others from a similar background.
- ☐ Has communication difficulties in the home language, at home.
- ☐ Has communication difficulties when interacting with peers from a similar background.
- ☐ Has auditory processing problems in the home language (understanding, following directions).
- ☐ Has poor sequencing skills in the home language.
- ☐ Family has history of disability.
- ☐ Parent reports slower development than siblings.
- ☐ Gestures excessively in place of speech, in the home language.
- ☐ Inordinately slow in responding to questions in the home language.
- ☐ Generally disorganized and confused.
- ☐ Needs frequent repeats and prompts in the home language, even for desirable activities.

Adapted from **Multicultural Students with Special Language Needs: Practical Strategies for Assessment and Intervention**, by Celeste Roseberry-McKibbin (Academic Communication Associates, 1995).
<http://www.acadcom.com>, (888) 758-9558.



Do you

- ☐ Use a multimodal approach to teaching?
- ☐ Review previous material?
- ☐ Make input comprehensible by slowing down, pausing, speaking clearly?
- ☐ Rephrase information?
- ☐ Check for comprehension?
- ☐ Focus on meaning?
- ☐ Recognize the silent period?
- ☐ Give extra time for response?
- ☐ Reduce student's anxiety?
- ☐ Find ways for students to use home language?
- ☐ Make cultural inclusion a feature of school setting and activities?



Context:

Southeast Asians in California

Volume 10, Number 75, September, 1989

(formerly "Refugee Update")

Folsom Cordova Unified School District
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova CA 95670
(916) 635-6815
Judy Lewis, Editor

John W. Berry

The Acculturation Process and Refugee Behavior

There are several modes of acculturation to a new society, and the group and individual characteristics of the people have an impact on which mode is chosen as well as how successfully the person deals with the stresses that accompany the process.

Acculturation has various definitions, but the important components of all of them are: 1) its basic nature; 2) its characteristic course; 3) the levels at which it takes place.

Basic nature

Acculturation requires that two autonomous cultures come into contact. One of the two groups changes as a result of the contact. In practice, one group becomes dominant and less dominant culture takes culture elements from the dominant one. Because of the domination, it appears that the transition is reactive and conflict-ridden, rather than smooth. Eventually changes take place to reduce the conflict between the two groups. The change is *accommodation*, and assimilation may or may not be a major part of the change. Refugee groups, in addition to dealing with the conflicts of acculturation also deal with the grief over leaving their homes under duress.

Course of acculturation

Three phases are characteristic of acculturation: *contact*, *conflict*, and *adaptation*. The first is necessary, the second is probable, and the third is inevitable. The nature of the contact has an impact on acculturation. The contact may be an actual physical movement of groups of people, or it may be accomplished through trade, missionary activity, or television and radio. Conflict takes place when there is some degree of resistance to change. Situations in which there is mutual benefit from trade may result in little conflict, and at the other end, invasion or enslavement may result in high levels of conflict. Adaptation refers to the variety of ways in which the conflict is reduced or stabilized.

Excerpts taken from *The Acculturation Process and Refugee Behavior*
John W. Berry, Queen's University, Kingston, Canada. (In REFUGEE MENTAL HEALTH IN RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES, Williams and Westermeyer, Hemisphere Publ Co, Washington DC, 1986), pages 25-37.

(go to page 2)

Level

Acculturation takes place at the group level and at the individual level. Within any group, some individuals are in greater contact with the other culture, and may experience greater conflict. In addition, individual personality characteristics have an impact on the process of adaptation. For refugees as a special category of people (those who left their homes unwillingly and without preparation), it is the pre-contact phase which is important. The precontact period has some element of disaster in it, and it is this disaster which causes the contact with another culture. Therefore, there are some psychological and social characteristics which are particular to refugees. In addition, there is an initial period of relief which may delay the "psychological" entry of the refugee into the host society for six months or so.

Varieties of acculturation

There are three modes of adaptation, or three ways in which to reduce the conflict that comes from contact: *adjustment*, *reaction*, and *withdrawal*. Homogenization (the "melting pot" method) and assimilation of one group into another are two types of adjustment. Reaction includes campaigning or retaliating against the source of the conflict, as in ethnic political organization and aggression. Withdrawal involves changes that reduce or

Valuable to maintain positive relations with dominant group?	Valuable to maintain identity & culture?		
	Reply	YES	NO
	YES	Integration	Assimilation
NO		Separation (Rejection)	Marginality (Deculturation)

FIGURE 1: ADAPTIVE OPTIONS...(P. 28)

remove the contact; returning home, moving back to the reservation are examples of withdrawal.

Figure 1 shows the options open to non-dominant groups during acculturation.

If positive social relations with the dominant group are desirable, then the options are *assimilation* and *integration*. *Assimilation* means giving up cultural identity (throwing off all the old clothes). Assimilation takes place when one group disappears into another (mainstream), or when many groups form a new group ("melting pot"). Assimilation can be accomplished by intermarriage, ethnic identification with the dominant group, and involvement in civic affairs.

Integration implies that cultural identity is retained, but the non-dominant group moves to become part of the larger society. This involves cooperation and tolerance, and is often called the "mosaic". In this option, there is assimilation at the public level, but little assimilation at the cultural and behavioral level.

When it is not important to maintain positive relations with the dominant group, *rejection* and *deculturation* are the options.

Rejection means that one group withdraws from the larger society. When the dominant group imposes this option, segregation occurs. When the non-dominant group chooses this option, separatist movements occur, but when the dominant group acts to "keep people in their place", slavery or an apartheid situation results.

Deculturation involves being part of neither culture. It is accompanied by feelings of alienation, identity loss, and acculturative stress. When imposed by the dominant group, it is ethnocide. When stabilized in a non-dominant group, it results in marginality, in which individuals are in psychological uncertainty between two cultures.

Context of acculturation

Clearly, non-dominant groups do not idly choose one option or another. The nature of the dominant society is a major factor in the choice, as well as the nature of the non-dominant group and their precontact experiences and psychological characteristics. Groups who were minorities before becoming refugees will have different acculturation

experiences than groups who used to be the dominant group in their societies before emigration.

Free or voluntary contact (as with immigrants choosing to move) is more likely to result in assimilation or integration than forced movement, as with refugees. On the other hand, refugees may have fewer cultural resources to avoid assimilation. For ethnic groups within a society (native peoples for example), there is the possibility of establishing protective barriers that increase the likelihood for either integration (keeping the language, culture, and identity) or rejection.

Another factor in the choice of adaptation is the degree to which the host society tolerates cultural diversity. Some societies seek to reduce the differences between groups, while others take a position that multiculturalism is a resource rather than a problem. Simply having many cultural groups does not of itself reveal multiculturalism; there has to be a multicultural ideology that is present in public policy and attitudes. The U.S. and Australia are examples of societies that are culturally plural, but pursue a unicultural ideology. Canada, on the other hand, is culturally

plural and also pursues a multicultural policy. (There are two national languages, but no national culture.) In societies that attempt to reduce diversity, assimilation or deculturation is likely to result. In those more tolerant of diversity, integration or rejection are more likely. When the attitude of the host society is hostile, rejection (in the form of segregation) and deculturation are more likely.

Responses to acculturation

There are six basic areas of psychological functioning relevant to acculturation: language, cognitive style, personality, identity, attitudes, and acculturative stress. Berry looks at the studies that have investigated behavioral changes during acculturation.

Language

Language shift takes place in the non-dominant group. In assimilation, there is a complete shift to the new language. Bilingualism or the development of a creole language are common adaptations that involve deliberate steps to protect, purify and institutionalize the traditional language. Obviously, to promote integra-

tion, it is important to value the retention of the native language.

Cognitive style

Cognitive style refers to the ways in which an individual deals with his or her environment. Studies have shown that the perception, intellectual functioning, and cognitive styles of acculturating newcomers approach the norms of the dominant group. This is accomplished primarily through formal education. In some cases, individuals adopt a bicultural style, switching styles depending on the group in which s/he is operating at the time.

Personality

In most cases, members of the non-dominant group adopt personality styles that are characteristic of the host society, although some people are able to switch styles appropriate to the context.

Identity

Studies show that there is often a clear preference for identity with the dominant group. However, more recent studies suggest there may be problems in the research design of the older studies (primarily, the ethnicity of the researchers). An indicator of identification with one's ethnic group is seen with the usage of the "hyphenated" national identity.

Attitudes

Recent research shows that assimilation is favored when there is greater initial cultural and psychological

		MOBILITY	
		Mobile	Sedentary
FREEDOM OF CONTACT	Voluntary	Immigrants	Ethnic Groups
	Forced	Refugees	Native Peoples

FIGURE 2: FOUR TYPES OF ACCULTURATING GROUPS... (P. 30)

(go to page 4)

similarity between the two groups. When the two groups are quite different, rejection is favored. (This became more apparent with the higher proportions of Asian and Latin immigration during the period following the 1965 immigration reform; the differences are more pronounced than between the various European and Canadian cultures).

Acculturative stress

These are the behaviors that are caused by the conflict phase of acculturation, and are disruptive and even pathological. Not surprisingly, migrant groups experience less stress in multicultural societies than in unicultural ones. In unicultural societies there is a single dominant culture with clear national attitudes and values that all immigrants must either adjust to or oppose; this causes greater conflict, more stress and more disruptive mental health problems. Studies in Canada with native people ("indigenous refugees") have shown that the greatest stress results when there is little similarity between the groups, when the acculturation process is at a midpoint, and when the group favors the rejection mode. The least stress occurs when the groups are more similar, when the contact is at a maximum (in terms of time), and when the groups favor the integration mode.

Stress for refugees, like that for native peoples, is perhaps due to the lack of choice in contact with the dominant culture.

The overall implication of the studies is that acculturative stress is the most severe when the cultural distance is the greatest, when contact is involuntary, and when the host society is insistent that one path to acculturation be followed.

(For more complete information on the studies cited, see the original article.)

Language Development Specialist

Examination Dates

November 18, 1989

(register by October 13, 1989)

April 28, 1990

(register by March 30, 1990)

July 21, 1990

(register by June 22, 1990)

November 17, 1990

(register by October 12, 1990)

April 27, 1991

(register by March 29, 1991)

Test Centers

San Francisco Bay area

Central San Joaquin Valley area

Los Angeles Basin

Requirements

- basic California teaching credential
- education or experience as follows:
 - completed a CTC approved LDS Certificate Program, or
 - 2 years full time teaching experience during which a major portion of the time is teaching limited English proficient students; or
 - possession of an ESL certificate plus one year experience teaching LEP students; or
 - Master's Degree in ESOL or related field.

Fee

\$100 for the entire test

Exam characteristics

Objective (115 multiple choice questions) and Essay (one 30 minute, one 50 minute).

The test covers the following competencies:

1. Knowledge of first and second language acquisition theories and teaching strategies, including knowledge of the elements of linguistics applied to second language learning and content teaching for LEP pupils.



Context:

Southeast Asians in California

Volume 13, Number 99, October, 1992

Folsom Cordova Unified School District
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova CA 95670
(916) 635-6815
Judy Lewis, Editor

Competence:

The Teacher's Role in the Acquisition of Language, Reading and Culture

Refugee Educators' Network meetings:

September 17
November 19
January 21
February 18
May 20

9:00 to 11:30
*Southeast Asia
Community
Resource Center,
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova
635-6815*

9th annual
***Southeast Asia
Education Faire***
March 20, 1993
\$40.00

Henry Ho arrived in 1980 as an eleven-year old, a refugee from the rural fishing islands off the coast of Vietnam, unable to write his name and unfamiliar with the school setting. We plunked him into a fifth grade class, with one or two others who spoke his language, and waited a couple of years for him to absorb the language. By the time he reached eighth grade, he could read and write at about a second grade level, could understand and speak fairly well, and fought regularly with other students. His parents hoped for the best, but gave him very little direction and few restrictions on his activity. Henry became very good at being very bad; this was his chosen area of competence.

His parents moved the family to Oakland, where there was a large Chinese community. After a year the family returned to our area because Henry and his brothers had begun to run around with thugs. Henry was very likely recruited by older gang members, and continued his association with the Oakland roving gangs while in Sacramento. Henry ended up shooting a waiter in a Chinese restaurant during a robbery, and went to the Youth Authority for six years.

Causes

Henry's outcome was not caused solely by his impoverished rural background, nor the fact that his parents had never been to school, and could not read or write Chinese, Vietnamese or English. It was not because his parents had been raised under a communist system that removed personal initiative, nor because major cultural values in Asia reflect the fatalism of Buddhism. It was not because of the gap between the children and parents, nor because there was a lack of reading material in the home. Henry's first cousin, son of his father's brother, a couple of years younger than Henry, went on to graduate with a 4.0 GPA, one of the first rural Sino-Vietnamese to accomplish that remarkable goal.

Henry's tragic outcome was likely the result of a number of factors in combination, including very poor choices on his part. I know that we did not give Henry the best start in school, although his cousin had the same sort of start. For whatever reason, Henry never found an area within the school setting in which he could see himself as competent, or even with the hope of becoming competent.

We didn't know enough at that time to pair him up with an adult mentor or a well-respected peer buddy, to structure his learning tasks so he could see his own progress; or even to know him well enough to know what his interests and (socially acceptable) strengths were. We benevolently ignored him, expecting little but compliance. Much to our surprise, while he was acquiring oral language he was also acquiring a second culture—the unwritten rules that govern interaction with others in American society. He learned about confrontation, competition, and peer recognition; he developed areas of competence in fighting, intimidation, and survival.

Because of Henry, we have come to believe that a newcomer arrives here with an expectation of success, but that experience teaches powerful lessons about the available choices. If better choices are available—if there is a person who knows the student and has realistic, progressive expectations of him (or her), one who can help him see the goal and work towards it, one who helps him understand and surmount obstacles—few will make choices that turn them into outcasts. Apparently some are more “disadvantaged” than others: Henry required more from us than did his cousin.

Model for Acquisition of Language— Oral, Textual, Cultural

In California, over the past ten years, the theoretical model for second language acquisition has been driven by Chomsky's “language acquisition device,” a label for the neural activity that turns input into generalizations that structure output. The theory is interpreted and applied to the classroom by researchers like Jim Cummins and Stephen Krashen, and the outcome is an emphasis on methods that call for understanding and communicating ideas rather than rote output drill.

Rule-driven production

Linguistic research refines and validates the basic mechanism of language acquisi-

tion—that neural processes of some sort equip the brain to sort out input, decipher regular patterns, form generalizations about how the pieces are put together, and then produce output that conforms to the generalizations. Feedback then becomes additional input that allows a shifting of the patterns and revising of generalizations. The classic evidence of rule-driven production, rather than memorization and recitation of patterns, is the way in which children overgeneralize when first acquiring English (one car/two cars; one cat/two cats; one man/two mans), and the way in which pieces can be produced in novel arrangements.

Reading & writing is acquired, not learned

Krashen most recently has been publishing and lecturing on the way in which reading and writing skills are acquired, not learned. Not surprisingly, reading—a receptive skill like the comprehension of oral language—is acquired when there is comprehensible input; we learn to read by reading. Writing—an expressive skill like speaking—is output that represents the end result of the textual language acquisition process. To write well requires sufficient reading input.

Virtually everyone learns to understand and speak a language (or in the case of the deaf, to understand and sign a language), but not everyone learns to read and write. There is some front-end direct teaching required before the language acquisition device can operate in reading acquisition: recognizing two-dimensional shapes, association of written symbol with a unit of sound (or a unit of concept, in the case of Chinese), left-to-right organizational rules (in the case of English), breaking apart words into component sounds and blending them back together. Once the fundamental skills are in place, reading well is the result of reading enough, and writing well is the result of reading enough. Direct learning of writing generalizations is also necessary, but it helps the editing process rather than the initial writing process.

LAD underlies culture acquisition

Why should the neural language acquisition device be limited to generalizations derived from input through only the ears and eyes? Why not assume for the moment that it also operates on other kinds of input: touch, space, smell, heat, pupil size, duration of eye contact, gesture, facial expression, and so on. If we can assume that the language acquisition device is a construct for the neural process of deriving generalizations from input, no matter what kind of input, then it makes sense that second cultures are acquired in much the same way second languages are acquired. (See the chart.)

While great attention is paid to skill in second or third languages, little attention is paid to skill in second or third cultures (the unwritten rules by which we behave and interact). There is very little educational research on acquisition of culture, yet hundreds if not thousands of studies focus on the most minute details of the acquisition of language and spell out the rules that underlie various

languages. We accept that "culture" is all that is learned, the knowledge that passed from one generation to another, all that portion of ourselves that we are not born knowing, but we don't know exactly how such knowledge is acquired, nor how our cultural maps are changed by contact with others. We understand what we need to do to speak or write a second language, but not what we need to do to operate "fluently" in a second culture. However, we do now know that newcomers are actively acquiring second cultures from the moment they first encounter the new culture. In Henry's case, I can only assume that the kind of input he received resulted in generalizations that led to generally combative and anti-social output (behavior).

IBM: Macintosh = learning; acquisition

I had brief experience with IBM-like computers, and found myself frustrated by not knowing the rules for input; a misplaced space, a capital letter in the wrong

Using Krashen's Model for Language Acquisition for Acquisition of Culture

Krashen's Hypotheses	Implications for Language Acquisition	Implications for Acquisition of Culture
Input Hypothesis	• Provide exposure to English. • Make input comprehensible. • Oral Language: listening produces speaking. • Textual Language: reading produces writing.	• Interact with persons from other cultures. • Use information or analysis of conflicts to bring implicit rules of culture to awareness. • Non-verbal input produces generalizations about how people interact. Use discrepant events to force change in generalizations.
Natural Order Hypothesis	• Language is acquired in stages; rich language input provides the necessary structures. • Avoid teaching grammar without plenty of English input.	• Universal human categories of behavior. Differences exist in ways behavior is expressed in different cultures. Hall's ten areas of human activity: interaction; association; subsistence; reproduction; territoriality; temporality; adaptation; recreation; protection; exploitation. • Avoid teaching cultural facts without interaction.
Monitor Hypothesis	• Receptive before expressive. Expect a "silent period." • Editor hampers expressive process.	• Use interaction to drive "need to know" then provide information that helps understand how each way of doing things makes sense. • Teach, model process for becoming aware of underlying cultural "rules"; else tendency is to either ignore or destroy differences.
Affective Filter Hypothesis	• Anxiety blocks input. • Focus on message; provide interesting input.	• Respect and non-judgemental curiosity allow interaction, input. • Arrange interaction in pursuit of mutually desirable non-threatening goal.

place, or a colon used “illegally” resulted in a message that basically said, “I don’t understand.” Compare this to interaction with a Macintosh computer, in which input is given directly by moving an arrow, clicking on icons, or double-clicking on key verbs. When an “illegal” operation occurs, it’s because the process is wrong, not the format of the input. Some people unpack a new computer, plug it in, then sit down and read the manual—this is the grammar-translation method of learning a new language. Others plug in the computer, turn it on, and begin clicking on various icons until something happens. There is a basic belief that the computer operates according to a logical set of rules, and that it is possible to figure out what to do. Trial and error revises generalizations until they are confirmed and internalized; actions then become automatic, and the generalizations interconnect and build upon one another, pushing the level of communication with the computer to a new level.

Teacher’s role: scaffold and coach

What, then is the teacher’s role in the acquisition of language, literacy, and culture? Put very simply, the first is to make input comprehensible. The second, which is closely related to the first, is to arrange events so that a student realizes competence. The first role is sometimes called *scaffolding* in the process of acquiring a first language; the second role is that of *coaching*.

Scaffolding

In first language acquisition, scaffolding refers to simplification of language, repetition of key elements, responding in predictable ways, altering the input so that it just a bit more difficult than the current level of output, and so on. It also refers to pulling meaning from what output is produced. “Oh, ‘di-di’...you mean ‘kitty’. Yes, there’s the kitty.”

Teachers who use what are called “sheltered English” methods are scaffolding aural and textual input. They provide simplified text, drawings, models, real objects; they tell stories that have a sequence and can be located in space; they demonstrate actions. They make input more compre-

hensible in a variety of ways.

Persons who act as cultural interpreters or cultural brokers make the unwritten rules of culture more comprehensible. Sometimes this takes the form of explaining why, of making the implicit explicit, of pointing out the connections between things. At other times, it means accompanying people into unfamiliar cultural situations and letting experience itself provide the input. Scaffolding, then, is making input—aural, textual, cultural—more comprehensible. The teacher’s role—like a parent’s role in first language and culture acquisition—is to provide scaffolding.

Coaching

The other major part of a teacher’s role is arranging conditions so that the student is successful. Good parents do this with children: they understand, they follow directions, they respond to requests. They give choices that are consistent with the child’s level: do you want cereal or oatmeal? do you want your egg scrambled or fried? will you put your toys away now or after dinner? do you want to do your homework in the kitchen or in the den? Parents encourage toddlers to test out their walking skills, then step back just out of range, but not too far. Teachers, ideally, would know their students as well as good parents do, although this is very difficult when there are 35 or 150 students for each teacher, changing every semester or every year.

I used to think that football was an over-rated expense in the school district’s budget, but after watching coaches and players’ responses to the them over the past two seasons, I have changed my mind. When my son comes home exhausted and demoralized, I ask him why he continues. He says that he likes the camaraderie of the team, the admiration of peers, and the fact that he has tackled something difficult and overcome the seemingly impossible.

The coaches can be foul-mouthed, rough, hostile, quick to criticize, and they single out favorites; all the things a teacher is cautioned not to do. On the other hand—and this seems to be the key—they devote tremendous time and energy to the pursuit of football, associating with thirty-some

adolescent boys rather than doing something else from June to December every year. The players understand that the adults' sacrifice requires sacrifice on their parts.

The coaches are very clear in their expectations, and they have inspiring slogans they repeat every day, in every huddle, at every practice. There's no need for empty compliments, only to recognize correct play. When a boy does make a mistake, the coaches analyze the wrong moves in very clear terms. They draw mistaken plays on boards and then draw in the correct plays; they videotape the plays and go over the mistakes (and the correct plays) frame by frame. Once a mistake is clearly identified, they show the boys how to do it right; then the players try it again and again until they have it right. Clear goal; point out mistakes; clear instruction; try it again.

There are a variety of situations in which a child can enter into a coaching relationship with an adult. The key elements appear to be: 1) choosing to participate; 2) seeing clearly the goal and the steps leading up to it; 3) valuing the goal and the rewards that success will bring; 4) shared sacrifice and reciprocal obligation between the coach and child; 5) willingness to try; 6) not "lowering the bar" but finding a way to get over it. Various summer camp self-esteem programs that have children walking tightropes are an example of this: accomplishment, not praise, engenders self-esteem.

Scaffolding, coaching and computerese acquisition

Let's look at the Macintosh again, in terms of scaffolding and coaching to competence. We have Macintosh computers in the office for people to use, with fonts for Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese, Lao, Armenian, Russian, and so on. When a person first begins, I have to start the computer, open the document, choose the font and type size, and click the cursor on the page where the typing will begin. After the person is finished, I have to save the document and print it. In this way, the very first time, the person produces a page of wonderful type, in various sizes and styles.

As time goes by, I don't have to turn on the computer or open the document any more, but I have to set up the footer so a

page number is automatically printed, break the document in various places, or place a graphic in the document. "Teacher Sam", our Chinese aide, began this way, but since I couldn't read the Chinese operating system, he had to experiment on his own. It took hours of perseverance. He took the computer home on weekends and over vacations; eventually he learned three completely different Chinese word-processors (which required learning Pinyin encoding as well as figuring out three different keyboard input methods). He now faxes messages to Taiwan for technical advice, and has worn out the reference manual to Pagemaker, looking for solutions to problems and seeking out new things to do. He has become competent, and has acquired Macintoshese (in Chinese).

Implications

In summary then, what are some practical implications of the proposition that oral skills, reading and writing skills, and cultural interaction skills are all the result of the "language acquisition device" (perhaps better renamed a "generalization-formulating device")? The following are specific practices that have had promising results in our district.

Gatekeeper & Transition Specialist

A Gatekeeper has experience with other languages and cultures. A Transition Specialist is selected from the group least likely to succeed in the district. They serve as co-workers (sharing power, making budget and program decisions) whose responsibilities include:

1. Learning the names and backgrounds of each student.
2. Establishing connections with parents.
3. Providing access to information.
4. Resolving problems and conflicts.

Teachers

Teachers provide scaffolding and coach to competence in any one area.

Scaffolding

1. Choose any interesting materials (this requires knowing the student well enough to know what is interesting).

2. Mix and match methods, selected to fit with background of students. (For example, audiolingual methods work well with Hmong, and grammar-translation works well with Russians, Armenians, and Ukrainians. Realize that these methods provide a level of “security” consistent with beliefs about learning English; acquisition takes place during the communication that surrounds the activity at hand.)
3. Provide impetus to interact with text (minimum of 30 minutes per day). Anything interesting with English words will do: comic books, magazines, Nintendo hints, newspapers, encyclopedias, Hirsch’s *Cultural Literacy* book(s), computer-based libraries on CD-rom, question-and-answer books; fashion magazines.
4. Teach the most frequently occurring words directly; teach basic analysis and blending techniques directly. (Dolch words or any other frequency-based sight reading word lists; explicit phonics methods; word families; sound blending charts and recitation, dictation; IBM-based *Discover Intensive Phonics* courseware for students in 4th grade and above who have some experience with literacy.)
5. Arrange learning situations that require interaction: computer work, cultural journalism teams. Teach and model the process of making implicit rules of culture explicit. (Use materials from *A World of Difference*, conflict resolution resource books, Simon’s *Values Clarification*, and so on. Teach psychology at secondary levels.)

Coach to competence

1. Choose any progression of skills (Barnell-Loft, SRA reading or math, computer-based hierarchical programs like WICAT) and make the steps clear. Let students know where they stand on the progression (tell them their scores on reading tests for example), and ensure that they accomplish the next step.
2. Point out mistakes; show how to correct mistakes, keeping in mind differences in background and cross-cultural cognitive differences.
3. Know who the students are, and have expectations of them.
Begin by recognizing ethnicity of names and knowing sibling and other familial connections.

Bilingual aides

1. Hire aides from the same backgrounds as students. Make selection criteria group-specific.
2. Have aides explain key vocabulary and summarize lessons’ main ideas in the native language (“preview-review”, not concurrent translation).
3. Have aides help students deal with the grief-like stages that precede acculturation.
4. Realize that aides help parents understand American schools’ expectations.
5. Aides provide role models, especially if they share a perceived common background with students and parents.

Rhythms to Reading (Hmong)

6 small books, teachers’ notes, cassette, storage bag—\$38

6 different titles, complete set—\$215

With Pellon characters—\$290

Together Time (Hmong)

Set for parents and children, 3 of the *Rhythms to Reading* titles per set—\$35

Set A / Set B, Each: 3 small books, cassette (music/read along; parent guide), parent guide booklet, storage bag.

Contact Jan Bednarz for information, JMB Communication Services, Ltd., PO Box 748, Lake Zurich IL 60047.
(708) 438-4249, fax (709) 726-7626.

Characteristics

Strategies

	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
	Isolation. •No personal experience with “different others.”	Contact & destroy. •Culturally different are killed (Indians, for example; many other examples in the world). •Culturally different are isolated (segregation). •Culturally different are avoided (self-segregation). •Cultural majority demands change. •Helpfulness takes the form of paternalism. •Solution to conflict: control or destroy.	Contact & ignore. •“Different others” assimilate to cultural norms of group with power and/or in numerical majority. •Cultural majority encourages conformity. •Cultural minorities cast off traditions, literacy, accent, beliefs, customs. •Americanization. “Melting pot.” •Monocultural policy: “People are all alike.” •Solution to conflict: non-engagement; avoidance.
	Cognition develops in stages. Morality develops in stages. Language emerges in stages. Culture (the unwritten rules that drive “normal” behavior within groups) is acquired like language, and most likely tolerance of other cultures also develops in stages. There’s no reason to think that tolerance for “different others” is an all-or-nothing process; we need to look for stages of development. Complex systems of generalizations (rules) are formulated by the brain through repeated experience. Languages are acquired informally, but they are also taught formally in school; cultures are not. Just as reading and writing fluency is increased with the new-old formalized-informal methodology called the “whole language” approach, cultural fluency and tolerance can be increased by arranging experiences and interpreting the meaning of those experiences. As with language and other generalization-based systems, meaning begins with contrast.		
	Continuum		
	EXPOSE children to differences •Arrange groups so that students of different backgrounds work together. •Bring different people together in non-threatening activities. •Show movies, videos, read books about people who are different. •Play music from different languages and cultures, quietly in the background. •Make different languages part of the auditory and visual environment.	ALLOW differences •Develop empathy in children. •Involve children in activities that require categorization and re-categorization. •Involve children in simulation stereotyping activities like “brown eyes, blue eyes”. •Create “zero tolerance” for name-calling or taunting based on cultural, racial, or personal differences. •Read / watch / listen to personal stories of the affects and effects of intolerance.	CELEBRATE differences •Play “hot seat,” make “me” books, and involve groups of children from different backgrounds in personal awareness activities. Watch for and encourage culturally significant responses. •Consciously develop non-judgemental environment for acceptance of diversity. •Be aware of stages of cognitive development; adjust activities to levels of abstract thought. •Get involved in festivals, food fests, music, dance, art...

STAGE 4

Contact & curiosity

- Experience with “different others” creates new neural connections, breaks down rigid generalizations (stereotypes).
- People are open to new information about others.
- Comparison. Trial adoption of characteristics of “different others.” Rejection of own group’s less-desirable characteristics.
- Heightened awareness of own group’s “unwritten rules.”
- Tendency to ask others about reasons for different behaviors; listen to and think about answers.

STAGE 5

Co-existence.

- Relativity. Realization that others’ actions make sense from their point of view.
- Realization that all groups have unwritten rules that drive behavior, but that the rules themselves differ.
- Cultural majority advises when asked (unasked for advice is really criticism).
- Tolerance of differences.
- Multicultural policy: “People are all different.”
- Solution to conflict: compromise, parallel rather than joint activities.

STAGE 6

Respect.

- Appreciation of differences.
- Incorporation of others’ characteristics into personal repertoire (adopt some of “their” unwritten rules as your own).
- People exchange information about themselves.
- Cultural minority trusts that the cultural majority will not reject them because of their cultural backgrounds.
- Diversity = synergy.

of Tolerance

Where are you—as a teacher—on this continuum? Where are your students? How can you move from where you—and they—are towards “respect”?

EXPLORE differences

- Compare lifeways in different cultures. (Use a target culture that is very different.) Consider categories of human behavior: relationships; work; education; recreation; food; protection from danger. Make charts.
- Use proverbs to explore different ways of expressing similar concepts/values.
- Identify unwritten rules of “American” culture.
- Get involved as a “cultural interpreter” to newcomers to America.

TOLERATE differences

- Learn about stereotyping and prejudice.
- Identify personal stereotypes and prejudices. Seek out personal contact with members of identified groups.
- Learn and practice ways to resolve conflicts—“win-win.”
- Identify personal beliefs about others; seek out factual information; explain from “other” point of view.
- Learn to use points of inter-cultural conflict to identify unwritten rules.

RESPECT differences

(This is the goal.)

- It means not trying to change someone else into you.
- It is the cognitive product of social interaction with the “culturally different.”

Comparison of Ethnocultural* Groups: Looking for Patterns

	Euro-American	American Black African-American	North American Indian	Mexican Mexican-American	Central American Cuban	Puerto Rican
Homeland	Europe	Africa	Canada, US, Mexico	Mexico	Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Cuba	Puerto Rico
Shared history	Immigrant for safe haven (refugee) or opportunity, pioneer, revolution and victory. Wrote the history, curriculum, etc.	Conquered Slavery Discrimination	Conquered Displaced Discrimination	Conquered Displaced in Calif, other SW areas of US, Immigrant to US Discrimination	Refugee (Cuba) Immigrant. Central Americans— warfare, revolution, anti-communist. Not considered refugees by US. Cubans—refugees from communism (50s on) Discrimination.	Migrant. Imposed US citizenship. Discrimination.
Arrival in US	1600s to 1920's	1600s-1700s	Original inhabitants (20,000 years?)	In Alta California before Europeans.	El Salvador- Honduras- Guatemala- Nicaragua- Cubans—refugees in 50s and 60s, 80s, 90s	
Minority relations	Majority Monolingual Use own background as the standard for all.	Involuntary minority. Education and norms imposed by the majority. First schooling in standard English.	Involuntary minority. Education and norms imposed by majority. In US, first schooling in English. In Mexico, schooling in Spanish.	Voluntary, involuntary minority. Immigrant and sojourner. Education and norms imposed by majority. In US, first schooling in English or Spanish.	Involuntary minority (refugees) and voluntary minority (immigrants) Education and norms imposed by majority. First schooling in English or Spanish.	Voluntary minority. Education and norms imposed by majority. First schooling in English or Spanish.
Languages	Many languages. National language is English.	African languages + English + oral style creates dialect of English.	Many languages, most unwritten	Many languages. National language is Spanish (roman)	Spanish (roman)	Spanish (roman)
Naming	Reflects individual. Wife takes husband's family name. Use of titles conveys respect, nicknames convey friendliness.	Some drawn from African or Muslim sources.		Child uses two family names (mother's and father's).	Child uses two family names (mother's and father's).	Child uses two family names (mother's and father's).
Family	Nuclear (25%), single parent (30%), unmarried. Patrilineal in theory. Mobile. Shallow ancestor tree. Children leave home at 18-22 yrs. Negotiable roles.	Extended. Single parent or grandmother. Matrilineal? (if so, important male is mother's brother).		Extended, patrilineal, hierarchical by age and gender.	Extended, patrilineal, hierarchical by age and gender.	Extended, patrilineal, hierarchical by age and gender.
Literacy experience	Verbal behavior mimics written text.. Emphasizes logic, sequence. Long tradition of literacy (2-3000 yr.?)	In Africa, and US, oral culture. In US, denied literacy. Oral culture remained strong, developed into gospel, blues, jazz, rap.		Oral culture. Aztec culture used writing. Spanish conquerors brought Spanish literacy.		

*“Ethnocultural” is JW Berry’s term. “Ethnic”= culture + history (ancestry and territory)+ self-perception of difference from others. “Cultural group”=people who share

Filipino	Chinese, Taiwanese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese	Cambodian, Lao, Hmong, Mien	East Indian (Hindu) Punjabi (Sikh) Fiji Islands	Pentecostal, Baptist Russian and Ukrainian	Pentecostal Armenian
Philippines	China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Vietnam	Cambodia, Laos, Laos/China, Laos/China	India Punjab state (India)	Russia Ukraine	Armenia
Immigrant US bases in Philippines, influence from both Spanish and American. Discrimination.	Immigrant. Refugee (VN) China—Dominant culture in region for 4000 years. Vietnam—Seeking safe haven. Political refugees. Chinese and French influences. French colony. Discrimination	Refugee. Cambodia—Angkor culture predates Thai, Lao. French colony. Laos—80+ ethnicities, Lao dominant, French colony, secret war in 70s. Hmong and Mien emigrated from China after 1830s. Discrimination	Immigrant. India—Dominant culture British colony. Punjab—partitioned off part of the country after 1947 war. Homeland to Sikhs. Fiji—Indians have been there 200 years. Discrimination	Refugee. Communist persecution for 70 years. Some discrimination	Refugee. Communist persecution for 70 years. Armenian & Biblical history intertwined. Armenian massacre by Turks in early 1900s resulted in first wave of Armenians to US. Discrimination
	Chinese, Japanese-1850-1900 After 1965 immigration reform. Vietnamese—1975-96	Cambodian—1980-84 Lao—1976-82 Chinese/VN—1979-82 Hmong—1979-96 Mien—1980-86	After 1965 immigration reform.	After 1988 glasnost Russian—1989-96 Ukrainian—1989-96 Belorus—1993-96 Moldovan—1993-96	After 1988 glasnost Armenian—1990-96
Voluntary minority. Education and norms imposed by majority. In US and Philippines, first schooling in English.	C-T-K-J: Voluntary minority. V: Involuntary minority (refugee fleeing political persecution). Education and norms imposed by majority. 1st schooling in English.	Involuntary minority (refugee fleeing political or ethnic persecution). Education and norms imposed by majority. First schooling in English.	Voluntary minority. Education and norms imposed by majority. First schooling in India and US in English.	Voluntary minority (refugee fleeing religious persecution) Education and norms imposed by majority. First schooling in English	Voluntary minority. (refugee, fleeing religious persecution). Education and norms imposed by majority. First schooling in English
Many languages. National language is Tagalog (roman). English is 2nd national language (taught in schools).	Chinese (written) Idiographic script. Taiwanese—traditional Chinese characters (idiographic) Korean (alphabetic) Japanese (alphabetic) Vietnamese (roman with diacritic marks)	Khmer—alphabetic (Sanskrit base) Lao—alphabetic (Sanskrit base) Hmong—roman Mien—Chinese characters and roman	200+ languages. Hindi (Sanskrit based) and English are national languages.	Cyrillic (alphabetic) Ukrainians were denied literacy; Russian imposed.	Armenian (alphabetic) Some Armenians denied literacy, but most maintained access to it through resistance or church.
	"100" family names. Have meanings. Family names first.. Generation names. Use of role names. Wife keeps name.	Family names first. (except Lao). Clan incest for Hmong Use of role names Wife keeps name.	Singh (male), Kaur (female): baptized Sikh.	Male/female names end differently: "ov" and "ova" for Russian, "skiy," "skaya" for Ukrainian. Patronymics as middle names.	Names end in "yan" or "ian." Letter "g" stands for an "h" sound. Many Biblical given names. Family names first.
Extended, patrilineal, hierarchical by age and gender.	Extended, patrilineal, hierarchical by age and gender. Ancestor tree at least 5 generations. Mother-in-law is important figure.	Extended, patrilineal (Lao: bilateral), hierarchical by age and gender. Mother-in-law is important figure.	Extended, patrilineal, hierarchical by age and gender.	Extended, patrilineal, patriarchal Hierarchical by age and gender. Grandmother "baba" important figure.	Extended, patrilineal, patriarchal. Hierarchical by age and gender.
	Culture ranks scholar very high, literacy results in family honor. Long tradition of written materials (3-4000 yrs)	Literacy in Angkor (Cambodia, 1000 yrs?), Lao more recent. Mien—Chinese literacy a mark of status. Roman orthography linked to missionary, destruction of traditions. Hmong literacy 40 yrs.	Ancient tradition of literacy (Pali language), Hindi-like script used by Thai, Lao, Khmer, etc. and for languages in India. English literacy imposed.	Russian language was imposed for 70 years. Ukrainians' written history and literature was destroyed. In US, Ukrainian parents highly motivated for kids to read Ukrainian.	Literacy in Armenian script is central part of culture and history.

are a very similar set of learned "unwritten rules" about life.

Continues next issue...

Context:

Southeast Asians & other newcomers in California's classrooms
December 1995–January 1996, Volume 16, No. 119



Context is published six times during the academic year as a way to provide staff with information and ideas concerning their newcomer students and parents (compliance item LEP.8). While the focus is on Southeast Asians, most articles and resources apply to other newcomer groups as well. This newsletter is developed with Economic Impact Aid funds, and district staff with English learners receive an automatic subscription (contact Nguyet Tham at the Transitional English office). Other district staff may request a subscription, at no cost. Outside subscribers pay \$10.00 per year to cover mailing and handling costs.

Editor:
Judy Lewis

Transitional English Programs,
Folsom Cordova Unified School District,
2460 Cordova Lane,
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
Phone (916) 635-6815
Fax (916) 635-0174

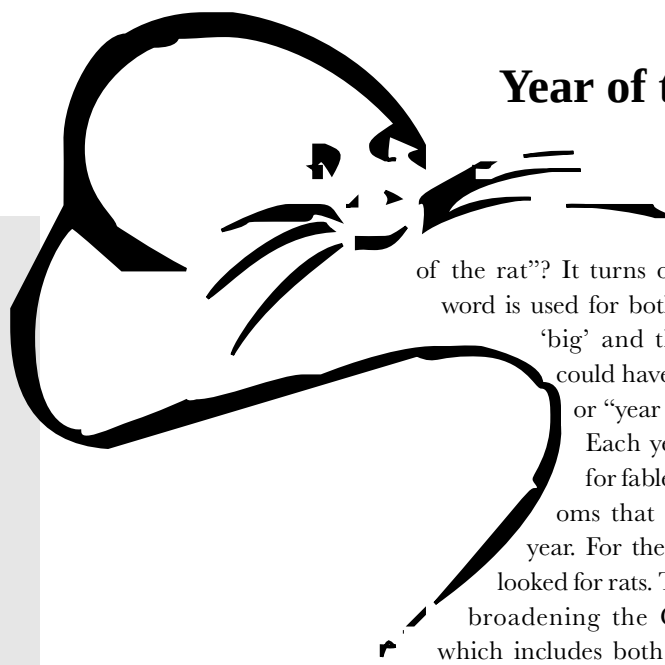
Refugee Educators' Network

This group of educators meets at the above address 5 times per year to share information and plan an annual conference, the Southeast Asian Education Faire—9:00-11:30, 3rd Thursdays.

Join us!

September 21, 1995
November 16, 1995
January 18, 1996
February 15, 1996
May 16, 1996

Year of the Big Mouse



Who first translated “year of the rat”? It turns out that the same Chinese word is used for both ‘rat’ and ‘mouse;’ one is ‘big’ and the other is ‘small.’ So, it could have been “year of the mouse” or “year of the rodent.”

Each year for this issue we search for fables, stories, proverbs, and idioms that feature the animal of the year. For the past month or two, we’ve looked for rats. They aren’t that popular. By broadening the Chinese category to that which includes both rats and mice, it became much easier to find material for this issue.

I wonder why the rat is so poorly represented in folklore. Could it be that for Europeans the black rat, responsible for carrying the plague-bearing flea into millions of homes in the 1500s, is associated primarily with filth and disease? Are rats symbols of squalor and decay? What about their more admirable characteristics: adaptability, hardiness, aggressiveness, curiosity.

The Chinese describe people born in the year of the rat this way:

- Rats are noted for their charm and attraction to the opposite sex. They work hard to achieve their goals and are likely to be driving perfectionists. They are thrifty, but can maintain an outward show of control. Rats are very ambitious and can be very successful, rats make good businessmen.
- If you were born in the year of the rat (1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996), you are ambitious yet honest. You are prone to spend freely. You seldom make lasting friendships. You are charming, aggressive and a great joiner and party-goer. However opportunistic you can be generous to loved ones.

The ancient Egyptians also had a great respect for rats—both fear and admiration—first because rats were the symbol of utter destruction, and second because they were always wise in their judgements. A rat would always choose the best bread to gnaw, find the best grain, and sense coming disaster. They would also desert a

doomed ship, and leave a house or barn scheduled for burning or destruction.

Look at the way in which definitions carry the attitude of the writer. *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia* tells us that the black rat, *R. rattus*, has profoundly affected human history. It is the primary host for bubonic plague, which is transmitted to humans by direct contact or through the bites of fleas that have fed on infected rats.

The *New York Times Everyday Dictionary* tells us that a rat is "a destructive rodent larger than a mouse," and as slang, is "a person considered low or mean, as an informer." As a verb, "**rat**" is to act in a low way, to "**rat on**" someone is to be an informer, a "**ratfink**." One can also "**smell a rat**" or suspect something tricky.

What about the mouse? According to the *NYTimes Dictionary*, a mouse is "a small gnawing animal with soft fur and a pointed snout, esp. the house mouse found worldwide and used in laboratories." "**Mousy**" is "like a mouse; timid, stealthy." Still, one wonders if the mouse that carries the hantavirus will be described having "soft fur," or rather, as "destructive."

Idioms reveal peoples' view of rats and mice. In Cantonese, if one's lineage is characterized by "**snake head mouse eye**," beware the thieves and other unsavory characters. In Vietnamese, to "**show a rat the way to run**" is to aid a wrongdoer; a project with the "**head of an elephant and the tail of a mouse**" is one with a grand beginning and a small ending; to act "**like a rat in daylight**" is to move in a stealthy, self-conscious, even guilty fashion; and to be soaking wet is to be "**wet as a skinned rat**." Finally, Cagney's "**you dirty rat**" has achieved an idiom's popular recognition.

Proverbs

The rat is not a frequent character in proverbs, but there are a few...

- *An old rat is a brave rat.* (France)
- *He who hunts two rats catches none.* (Buganda)
- *A rat cannot call the cat to account.* (Niger)
- *When a house is on fire, the rats show their faces.* (Vietnamese)
- *When a muskrat squeaks, the family will get rich; when the gutter rat squeaks, the family will have trouble.* (Vietnamese)
- *The rat has fallen into a crock of rice.* (Vietnamese, Malay)
- *When you throw something at a rat, beware the cupboard.* (Vietnamese)

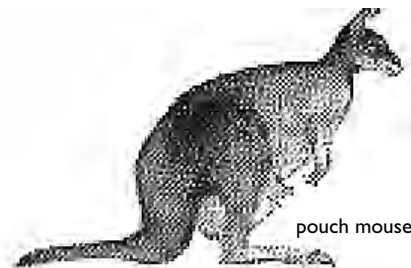
The mouse is a more frequent character in proverbs:

- *It is a bold mouse that nestles in the cat's ear.* (England)
- *When the mouse laughs at the cat, there is a hole nearby.* (Nigeria)
- *The mouse that has but one hole is soon caught.* (Arabic)
- *When the cat's away, the mice will play.*
- *When a house is on fire, the mice's burrows are uncovered.* (Vietnamese)
- *The mouse has run and reached the end of the pole.* (Vietnamese)

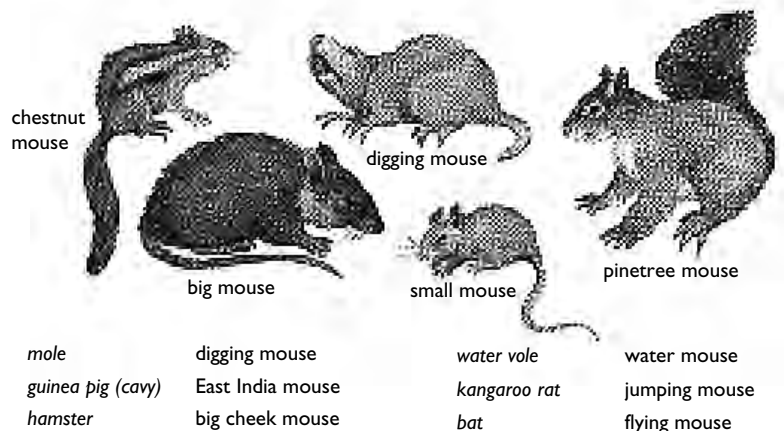
Tales, fables, stories, poem

Other than Templeton, the sage rat in *Charlotte's Web*, and the rats who

Oh, rats!



A mouse in Chinese?



people the world of Mrs. Nimh, rats are most often cast as villains or comic relief.

On the next couple of pages are several stories, that feature rats or mice. Below is a poem (from the *Heritage of Vietnamese Poetry* by Huynh Sanh Thong, Yale University Press, 1979) that might have been penned by a man really sick of rats:

A Hatred for Rats

Nguyễn Bình Khiêm

Heaven creates all men on earth—
shelter and nurture they all need.
The sages of long long ago
taught them the way to grow five grains.
Old parents' wants must be supplied.
Children and wives must be sustained.
O rats, why don't you take pity men?
From them you filch and steal their food.
In fields, you only spare dried stalks.
In garners, you miss not one grain.
The toiling farmers groan and moan.
The suffering plowmen cry and weep.
The people's livelihood is all—
Such harm and havoc you have wrought!
You've burrowed into walls and roofs,
and there you hatch your evil schemes.
Men's bosoms burst with hate for you;
you have incurred the people's wrath,
and someday they will slaughter you.
Displayed at court and in all towns,
your bodies will feed crows and hawks.
The plundered folk will then, at last,
enjoy the blessings of true peace.

Why the rat is first

Long long ago the King of Heaven called a meeting of all the animals in the world. The purpose of the meeting was to choose animals, one to represent each year. You see, the King had decided to name the years, and since there were only twelve years in the zodiac, only twelve animals could be chosen.

The King decided that a race would determine his choices. The first twelve animals to reach the gates of heaven the very next day would each have

a year named in his honor, and the order would be the order in which they finished the race.

Amongst the many animals that hoped to win the race was the rat and the cat. The two animals were inseparable and the closest of friends. The cat slept at night and worked during the day while the rat slept during the day and worked during the night. Whoever was awake watched over the one who was asleep.

The night before the big race, the cat asked the rat to wake him from his slumber early in the morning so that he could get a head start. The rat agreed and the cat happily went to sleep. The rat, however, later reconsidered his decision to help the cat. He concluded that he would never win the race if he were to race against the much more agile cat. So on the morning of the race, the rat's sense of loyalty to his friend was overcome by his ambition to become the mightiest and quickest animal on the earth. He set out before dawn without waking the cat.

As the rat raced along the road to heaven, he came across the cow. Since the cow as such an industrious animal, it had started earlier than the rat. The rat walked alongside the cow and said, "Brother Cow, please, may I hitch a ride upon your forehead? I have walked so far and I am so tired."

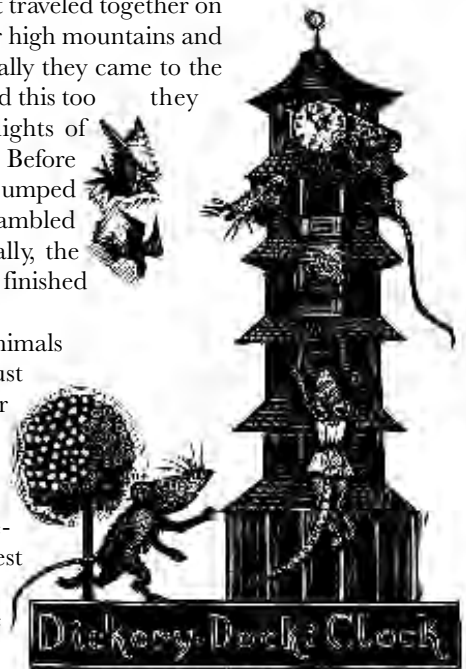
The cow was an amiable animal, and seeing that the rat was so small, he agreed to give him a ride. Thus the cow and the rat traveled together on the long road to heaven. Over high mountains and deep rivers they traveled. Finally they came to the highest mountain on earth and this too they climbed until they saw the lights of heaven through the thick mist. Before the cow could react, the rat jumped off the cow's forehead and scrambled across the finish line. Naturally, the rat came in first and the cow finished second.

When all the remaining animals arrived and the King was just about to announce the order of the years, the cow spoke out and said that he was unfairly tricked by the rat and it should be the cow who deserved the title of the quickest animal on earth.

The King couldn't decide

(continues on next page)

London Cockney
rhyming slang:
a good way to confuse
eavesdroppers.



which animal should be first so he came up with an idea to decide who should be the first. He said, "The two of you, go back to earth and walk across the plains so that people will see you. The one that people say is the biggest will become the first animal in the world."

The rat cried foul and begged the King to enlarge his size to that of a cat. The cow, smugly thinking he could win anyway, even against a rat the size of a cat, agreed. The two returned to earth the same way they came, with the rat resting on the cow's forehead.

The many people they met stared and exclaimed, "My, what a big rat!" That's the biggest one I have ever seen." They totally ignored the cow.

Realizing that the clever rat had tricked him, the cow admitted defeat. Thus, the first year in the Chinese Zodiac was named after the rat. From then on, the rat was known as the sneakiest animal on earth.

The cat, on the other hand, missed the race completely. By the time he woke up, the places had been decided. The cat became the enemy of the rat, and changed his habits so that he slept during the day and hunted during the night for the sneaky rat that caused him to miss out on the most important race in the history of time.

Predictions from a Chinese astrologist on the internet

This is externally a Fire Rat Year, ruled by the stem/branch combination Ping Tzu. It is the thirteenth year in the seventy-eighth cycle of sixty. The stem Ping is fire. The branch Tzu is water. The combination's containing note is described as the "water of the brook," or the "water which nurtures." Thus, we may say that although this is nominally a fire year, the actual results will be seen with reference to the element water. In general we may say that the year augurs well for tradesmen and artisans. We may say the interesting seasons will be autumn and winter and the interesting direction will be north. The sixth lunar month may present problems, the summer may present obstacles, and there will be little activity in the spring. We may foretell rains, and urge the quiet progress of government on public works. We need pay special attention to the workings of the moon and the planet Mercury. The trigram in which we may have interest is K'an (Tibetan primary, Kham; Tibetan popular, Chhu; Vietnamese, Kham). The effects of which we speak will be subtle, and not at all profound.

1996 can be of great affinity to those born in the following years:

1912 | 1913 | 1920 | 1921 | 1928 | 1929 | 1942 | 1943 | 1950 | 1951 | 1958 | 1959 | 1972 | 1973 | 1980 | 1981 | 1988 | 1989

1996 can present obstacles to those born in the following years:

1904 | 1905 | 1918 | 1919 | 1926 | 1927 | 1934 | 1935 | 1948 | 1949 | 1956 | 1957 | 1964 | 1965 | 1978 | 1979 | 1986 | 1987 | 1994 | 1995

Detailed Remarks

The year 1996 may witness an increase in crimes perpetrated by young men 16 to 22 years of age. We will definitely see an increase in street crime, gangs, and robbery at night. The year may also endure a notable incident caused by a person suffering from mental illness. The AIDS problem will continue to occupy increasing attention. There will be much activity in printing, publishing and writing. There will be strides in chemistry and in fishing and aquaculture. The music industry will thrive. This is also a good year for brewers. There will be growing interest in the processes of aging and death. Funeral homes will reap rich profits, as will homes for the elderly. There will be interest and advances in therapeutic drugs and medicine. There will be increasing emphasis on hearing problems, and the year may witness breakthroughs in

hearing loss. Governments would be wise to concentrate on public works relating to flood control, watercourses and roadways. Flooding will create extreme problems in some areas of the world.

Asian Astrology Home Page
(William Cassidy)



Context:

Southeast Asians & other newcomers in California's classrooms
January/February 1997, Volume 17, No. 125

Context is published five times during the academic year as a way to provide staff with information and ideas concerning their newcomer students and parents. While the focus is on Southeast Asians, most articles and resources apply to other newcomer groups as well. District staff with LEP students receive a free subscription (contact Nguyet Tham at the Transitional English office). Compliance file clerks should place a copy in CON24. EIEP coordinators receive a free subscription. Other outside subscribers pay \$10 per year to cover mailing and handling costs.

Editor:

Judy Lewis

Transitional English
Folsom Cordova USD
2460 Cordova Lane
Rancho Cordova
CA 95670
Phone (916) 635-6815
Fax (916) 635-0174
SEACRC@ns.net

Ox people were born:

6 Feb 1913 – 25 Jan 1914

24 Jan 1925 – 12 Feb 1926

11 Feb 1937 – 30 Jan 1938

29 Jan 1949 – 16 Feb 1950

15 Feb 1961 – 4 Feb 1962

3 Feb 1973 – 22 Jan 1974

20 Feb 1985 – 8 Feb 1986

7 Feb 1997 – 27 Feb 1998

Year of the Bovine

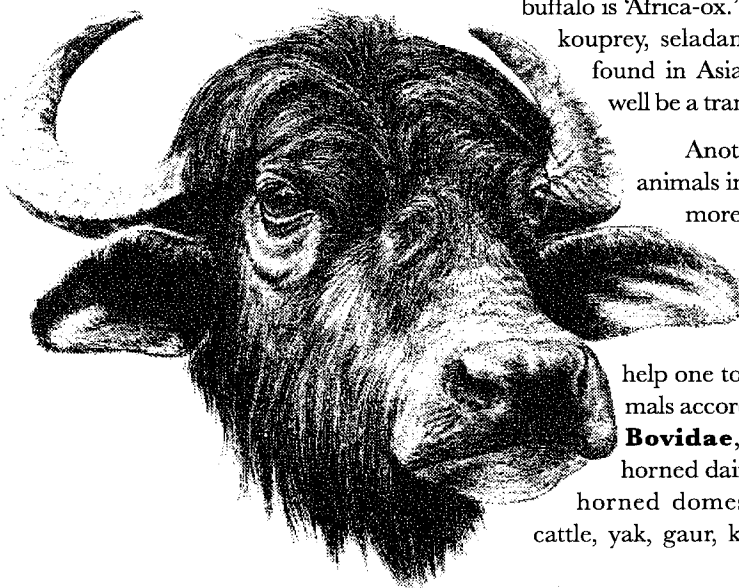
A recent caller asked us: "Is this the *year of the water buffalo* or year of the *ox*?" We found out that Vietnamese call the upcoming year "Year of the Water Buffalo" while the Chinese call it "Year of the Ox." Why? The answer lies in the fact that the Chinese use a general term for "ox" (niú in Mandarin), and think of the water buffalo as a 'water-ox' (shui niú). The Vietnamese, on the other hand, have different words for "ox" (bò) and "water buffalo" (trâu). The Hmong also separate "nyuj" ('ox') from "twm" ('water buffalo'). Our attempt to "line up" conceptual groups across languages illustrated the relationship between language, culture, and perception of reality. It also highlighted issues that are central to developing reading comprehension among English learners while not overly disrupting communication between parents and children.

One problem in translation between languages is that no one region is home to all kinds of oxen, so names for animals were never developed. Terms were created from native words once the language groups intermingled, or words were borrowed from another language and pronounced with native sounds. For example, the Chinese word for musk ox is "fragrant-ox," and the Vietnamese term simply spells the Chinese words in Vietnamese, "xạ hương ngưu," rather than using a Vietnamese term for "fragrant" and their native word for 'ox,' "bò." The bison, found only in North America and Europe, is named 'America-ox' by the Chinese, and the Cape buffalo is 'Africa-ox.' English borrows native words—

kouprey, seladang, and banteng—for wild oxen found in Asia. In fact, "water buffalo" could well be a translation of the Chinese 'water-ox.'

Another issue is that of classification of animals into semantic groups. Which is the more general term in English—cattle, oxen, buffalo, bovine? Dictionary entries are not especially helpful in clarifying the issue. Scientific classification does

help one to understand the grouping of animals according to Latin: the general group is **Bovidae**, which comprises **Bos** (short-horned dairy and beef domestic cattle, long-horned domestic cattle, Brahman domestic cattle, yak, gaur, kouprey, and banteng), **Bubalis**



(go to page 6)

Cave painting from France, showing the ox ancestor, the **aurochs**.



Short-horned cow



Brahman ox (zebu)



Musk ox



Gaur



Bison



Kouprey

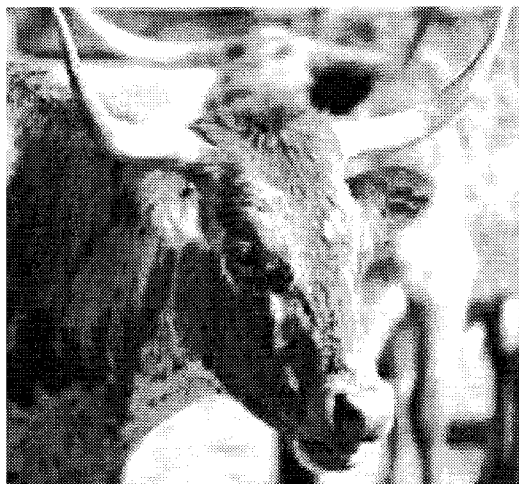
English	Latin	Chinese	Hmong	Vietnamese	Spanish
shorthorn cattle, longhorn cattle	<i>Bos taurus</i>	牛 ox	nyuj ox	bò ox	la vaca (milk cow) el ganado (cattle) el toro (bull) el becerro (calf)
Brahman cattle (zebu)	<i>Bos indicus</i>	黃牛 yellow-ox	nyuj ox, cow	bò ox, cow	
cow		母牛 female-ox	maum nyuj female-ox	bò cái ox-female	
bull		公牛 male-ox	txiv nyuj male-ox	bò đực ox-male	
calf		牛仔 (犢) ox-son (calf)	menyuam nyuj child-ox	bê (North) nghé (South)	
gaur, seladang	<i>Bos gaurus</i>		twm ntswg twg water buffalo-nose-smash	bò Ấn-độ (ox-India)	
kouprey	<i>Bos sauveli</i>				
banteng	<i>Bos javanicus</i>				
yak	<i>Bos grunniens</i>	犛牛 mountain-ox	nyuj qus (ox-wild)	bò Tây-tạng (ox-Tibet)	el yac
musk ox	<i>Ovibos moschatus</i>	麝香牛 fragrant-ox	nyuj qus (ox-wild)	xạ-hương ngưu (fragrant-ox)	
water buffalo	<i>Bubulis bubalis</i>	水牛 water-ox	twm	trâu, sừu	el búfalo
American bison	<i>Bison bison</i>	美洲野牛 America-ox	nyuj qus (ox-wild)	bò rừng (ox-forest)	el búfalo
Cape buffalo	<i>Syncerus caffer</i>	非洲野牛 Africa-ox			



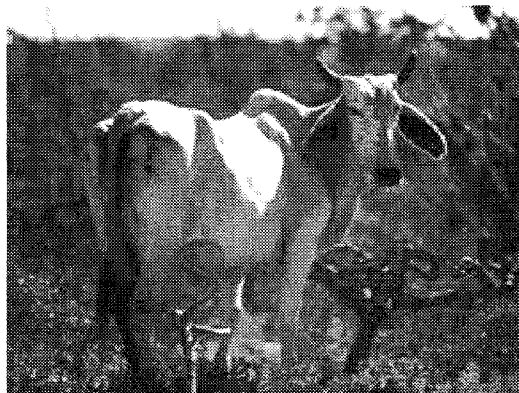
Water buffalo



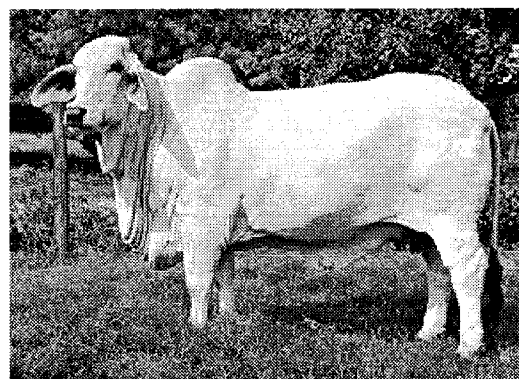
Cape buffalo



Longhorn (domestic) cattle, brought to North America from Spain in the late 1400s, almost gone by early 1900s. (Texas Longhorn Breeders' Association of America, Ft Worth TX 76164).



Brahman, originally from India, spread to Asia and Africa; imported to North America in 1849, by a rancher who had served in Turkey and seen the cattle there.



Crossbreeding has produced this modern American version of the Indian Brahman cattle (American Brahman Breeders Assoc., Houston TX.)



Shorthorn (domestic cattle) brought to North America by the colonists.

Only the musk ox and the bison are native to North America. The world's other oxen (family Bovidae) include domestic cattle, water buffalo, carabao, brahman (or zebu), yak, banteng, and gaur.

In Europe, the ancestor animal is the *aurochs* ('giant' 'ox', *Bos taurus primigenius*). From the aurochs came the short-horned domestic cattle seen in the United States today. The Vikings may have brought some short-horned cattle with them, but certainly they were an important part of the colonists' cargo in the early 1600s.

The Texas longhorns are descendants of the Spanish domestic oxen (originally from northern Africa) brought by Columbus to the West Indies on his second voyage in 1493. From there the longhorns were brought to Mexico, then to Texas. The Texas longhorn, adapted over 400 years of life on the Great Prairie, was cross-bred with European cattle to become nearly extinct by 1900.

Domestic cattle in the United States today can be traced to five types of cattle raised for their meat and five kinds raised for their milk.

Beef cattle

Shorthorn (England to US, 1783)

Hereford (England to US, 1817)

Brahman (India/China to US, 1849)

Aberdeen Angus (Scotland, 1873)

Charolais (France, 1936)

Dairy (milk) cattle

Holstein (Netherlands to US, 1795)

Ayrshire (England to US, 1822)

Guernsey (England to US, 1831)

Jersey (England to US, 1850)

Brown Swiss (Switzerland to US, 1869)



Vietnamese domestic ox, "yellow ox" to the Chinese.



Water buffalo



The Water-Buffalo and the Tiger

Vietnamese Tale

A farmer was plowing his fields. "Why are you so lazy?" he asked the water-buffalo pulling the plow. "You are very slow and you have no strength. Look how quick and strong the tiger is! If only you could be like that."

"Do you really think the tiger is stronger than I? Take me to one now and I shall show you," replied the water-buffalo. He was angry that his master thought he was lazy.

A few days later, the farmer took him to meet a tiger. The tiger roared when he saw the buffalo coming. "What a nice meal!" he thought.

"Mr. Tiger," said the water-buffalo, "let us see who is stronger. You can bite me three times if you will allow me to butt you three times."

The tiger agreed. While the tiger sharpened his teeth, the water-buffalo sharpened his horns. The water-buffalo then rolled in the mud and covered himself with leaves. The tiger could not understand why. He asked the water-buffalo but the water-buffalo did not answer him.

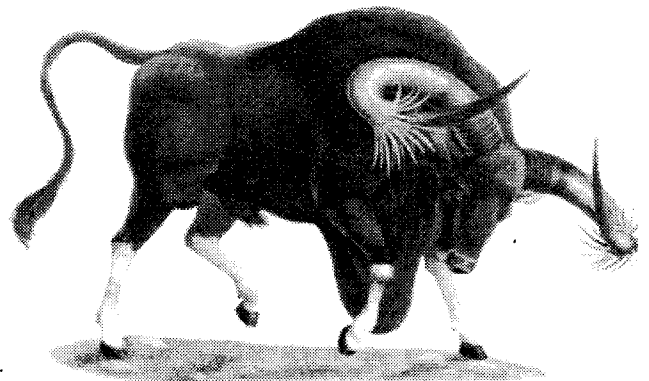
"Come, Mr. Tiger," called the water-buffalo, "you can bite me first." The tiger bit him three times but he could not get his teeth through the mud and leaves. The water-buffalo then butted the tiger. With the first butt, he tossed the tiger over his shoulder. With the second butt, he killed him.

After that the farmer treated the buffalo very well. He did not dare call him lazy and useless again.



Water buffalo, Vietnam. The buffalo boy (kẻ chvín trâu) shown here is the well-known folktale character hero of "clever orphan" stories.

Thai painting of the "koupreng," a wild ox (*Bos*) rather than a water buffalo (*Bubalis*). Found in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. It's on the "critically endangered list" and will be featured on a Cambodian postage stamp.



How the Buffalo Were Released on Earth

A native American tale

In the first days a powerful being named Humpback owned all the buffalo. He kept them in a corral in the mountains north of San Juan, where he lived with his young son. Humpback would not release any buffalo for the people on earth, nor would he share any meat with those who lived near him.

Coyote decided that something should be done to release the buffalo from Humpback's corral. He called the people to a council. "Humpback will not give us any buffalo," Coyote said. "Let us all make a plan to release them."

They camped in the mountains near Humpback's place, and after dark they made a careful inspection of his buffalo pen. The stone walls were too high to climb, and the only entrance was through the back door of Humpback's house.

After four days Coyote summoned the people to another council, and asked them to offer suggestions for releasing the buffalo. "There is no way," said one man. "To release the buffalo we must go into

Humpback's house, and he is too powerful a being for us to do that."

"I have a plan," Coyote said. "For four days we have secretly watched Humpback and his young son go about their daily activities. Have you not observed that the boy does not own a pet of any kind?"

The people did not understand what this had to do with releasing the buffalo, but they knew that Coyote was a great schemer and they waited for him to explain. "I shall change myself into a killdeer with a broken wing," Coyote said. "In the morning when Humpback's son goes down to the spring to get water, he will find me. He will want me for a pet and will take me back into the house. Once I am in the house I can fly into the pen, and the cries of a killdeer will frighten the buffalo into a stampede. They will come charging out through Humpback's house and be released upon the earth."

The people thought this was a good plan, and the next Morning when Humpback's son came down the path to the spring he found a killdeer with a crippled wing. As Coyote had foreseen, the boy picked up the bird and carried it into the house.

"Look here, Father," the boy cried. "This is a very good bird!"

"It is good for nothing!" Humpback shouted. "All the birds and animals and people are rascals and schemers."

"It is a very good bird," the boy repeated.

"Take it back where you found it!" roared Humpback, and his frightened son did as he was told.

As soon as the killdeer was released it returned to where the people were camped and changed back to Coyote. "I have failed," he said, "but that makes no difference. I will try again in the morning. Perhaps a small animal will be better than a bird."

The next morning when Humpback's son went to the spring, he found a small dog there, lapping at the water. The boy picked up the dog at once and hurried back into the house. "Look here!" he cried. "What a nice pet I have."

"How foolish you are, boy!" Humpback growled. "A dog is good for nothing. I'll kill it with my club."

The boy held tight to the dog, and started to run away crying.

"Oh, very well," Humpback said. "But first let me test that animal to make certain it is a dog." He took a coal of fire from the hearth and brought it closer and closer to the dog's eyes until it gave three rapid barks. "It is a real dog," Humpback declared. "You may keep it in the buffalo pen, but not in the house."

This of course was exactly what Coyote wanted. As soon as darkness fell and Humpback and his son went to sleep, Coyote opened the back door of the house. Then he ran among the buffalo, barking as loud as he could. The buffalo were badly frightened because they had never before heard a dog bark. When Coyote ran nipping at their heels, they stampeded toward Humpback's house and entered the rear door. The

pounding of their hooves awakened Humpback, and although he jumped out of bed and tried to stop them, the buffalo smashed down his front door and escaped.

After the last of the shaggy animals had galloped away, Humpback's son could not find his small dog. "Where is my little dog?" he cried.

"That was no dog," Humpback said sadly. "That was Coyote the Trickster. He has turned loose all our buffalo."

Thus it was that the buffalo were released to scatter over all the earth to provide food and clothing for the people.



The American Buffalo is not a true buffalo like the Cape Buffalo of Africa or the Water Buffalo of Asia.

(from page 1)

(water buffalo), **Bison** (bison), **Ovibos** (musk ox), and **Syncerus** (African buffalo). Precisely, then, “bovine” is the general class, equivalent to the more common “ox”; “cattle” are a kind of oxen; and cattle come in “domestic” and “wild” varieties. (A problem is that “cow” is informally used to mean “cattle, singular” as well as a “female bovine.”) The chart on page 2 shows Chinese, Vietnamese, Hmong, and Spanish equivalents for oxen, and it is easy to see that the conceptual groups are not the same across languages.

Communicating meaning across languages is important to reading comprehension and translation, and concept development tied to language and culture. Children learning English are shown a picture of Bossy, one of the short-horned dairy cattle, and are told “cow.” A child then develops the concept of “cowness” by looking at a variety of European short-horned dairy and beef cattle of both genders. They seldom see long-horned cattle typical of Spain, Mexico, and Africa, or Asian Brahman cattle, koupreys, bantengs, or yaks. When they talk to their parents about cows (or cattle), do parents visualize a different concept than do the children? While confusion about cattle may not be very significant, it illustrates the miscommunication that can arise, for example, when parents demand “respect.” Children offer behavior that is consistent with respect as they have learned it in American schools and society, but which is very different from the parents’ concept. (Teachers say, “Look at me when I talk to you.” Parents think, “Respectful children lower their eyes.” Teachers think: “Why does this child call me ‘teacher’? I have a name!” Parents teach: “Never use a respected elder’s personal name, but use a term of respect.” Teachers beam when children are interested enough to ask questions; parents frown at questions as disrespectful.)

Teachers provide experiences and information that develop concepts in English learners. The smallest of examples can provide opportunities for multilingual/multicultural comparison and contrast.

Farmer Chin and the Ox

Long ago, Farmer Chin had a very small field of hard soil in which nothing had grown for years. He bought an ox, a big, gentle creature. Seeing the poverty of Farmer Chin’s family, the good, kind ox was determined to do all he could to help. The ox and the farmer worked from dawn to dusk. The ox’s power and strength broke the soil, its manure was used as fertilizer for the young plants.

Fifteen years later, the farmer was wealthy and had a large house full of servants. But the old ox still lived in his little pen, ate poor food, and had to work very hard. One day the ox broke a leg. “What use is that ox to me now?” said Farmer Chin, and ordered that it be slaughtered.

An old man suddenly approached and said, “This ox has helped you make your fortune. Can’t you now allow him to rest?” Farmer Chin ignored the old man. As the ox’s throat was cut, Farmer Chin felt a terrible pain in his neck. He fell immediately to the ground, dead, and the ox and the old man disappeared.

The farmer’s soul was grasped and dragged into a courtroom. In the courtroom was the old man, who was King Ch’in-kuang, ruler of the first hell. Beside him stood the old ox, now transformed into an official of the court of hell.

The ox took Farmer Chin to a mirror. “Look within,” boomed the king. “See all the creatures whose lives you have taken for food or sport.” All the animals and birds the farmer had ever eaten or killed appeared in the mirror, including the old ox. The king ordered that Farmer Chin be thrown into the most terrible pit for his lack of compassion for all creatures, but most especially for the kind ox.

Example of background knowledge

吳牛喘月

Wu-ox-pant-moon

Emperor Wu’s ox pants at the sight of the moon

Here is a Chinese idiom. If you could read the characters, what does it mean? Who is Wu? What does panting at the sight of the moon mean? Like many Chinese phrases and idioms, there is a story:

在古時候，水牛只生長在吳國（長江，淮河一帶）故稱吳牛，後來人們將水牛帶到天氣很熱的江南，但水牛很怕熱，牠們在南方的晚上見到月亮便以為是太陽，怕得立即氣喘起來。

Long ago the water buffalo existed only in the realm of Wu (the part of China ruled by Emperor Wu). Later people took the water buffalo to the south, where it was very hot. One night the water buffalo saw the full moon and began to pant. He thought the moon was the sun.

Meaning: overreaction

牛衣對泣

ox-dress-face-cry

crying under a straw cape

An “ox dress” is the straw rain cape worn by a cowherd. This idiom refers to the story of a poor man sitting with his wife under the straw cape, crying to her about his miserable life.

miserable, complaining

Aesop on Oxen

The Oxen and the Axle-Trees

A HEAVY WAGON was being dragged along a country lane by a team of Oxen. The Axle-trees groaned and creaked terribly; whereupon the Oxen, turning round, thus addressed the wheels: "Hullo there! why do you make so much noise? We bear all the labor, and we, not you, ought to cry out." (Those who suffer most cry out the least.)

The Heifer and the Ox

A HEIFER saw an Ox hard at work harnessed to a plow, and tormented him with reflections on his unhappy fate in being compelled to labor. Shortly afterwards, at the harvest festival, the owner released the Ox from his yoke, but bound the Heifer with cords and led him away to the altar to be slain in honor of the occasion. The Ox saw what was being done, and said with a smile to the Heifer: "For this you were allowed to live in idleness, because you were presently to be sacrificed." ('Heifer' originally meant any young cattle, but current usage limits it to a female who has not yet borne a calf.)

The Man, the Horse, the Ox & the Dog

A HORSE, Ox, and Dog, driven to great straits by the cold, sought shelter and protection from Man. He received them kindly, lighted a fire, and warmed them. He let the Horse make free with his oats, gave the Ox an abundance of hay, and fed the Dog with meat from his own table. Grateful for these favors, the animals determined to repay him to the best of their ability. For this purpose, they divided the term of his life between them, and each endowed one portion of it with the qualities which chiefly characterized himself. The Horse chose his earliest years and gave them his own attributes: hence every man is in his youth impetuous, headstrong, and obstinate in maintaining his own opinion. The Ox took under his patronage the next term of life, and therefore man in his middle age is fond of work, devoted to labor, and resolute to amass wealth and to husband his resources. The end of life was reserved for the Dog, wherefore the old man is often snappish, irritable, hard to please, and selfish, tolerant only of his own household, but averse to strangers and to all who do not administer to his comfort or to his necessities.

The Lion and the Three Bulls

THREE BULLS for a long time pastured together. A Lion lay in ambush in the hope of making them his prey, but was afraid to attack them while they kept together. Having at last by guileful speeches succeeded in separating them, he attacked them without fear as they fed alone, and feasted on them one by one at his own leisure. (Union is strength.)

The Flea and the Ox

A FLEA thus questioned an Ox: "What ails you, that being so huge and strong, you submit to the wrongs you receive from men and slave for them day by day, while I, being so small a creature, mercilessly feed on their flesh and drink their blood without stint?" The Ox replied: "I do not wish to be ungrateful, for I am loved and well cared for by men, and they often pat my head and shoulders." "Woe's me!" said the flea; "this very patting which you like, whenever it happens to me, brings with it my inevitable destruction."

The Gnat and the Bull

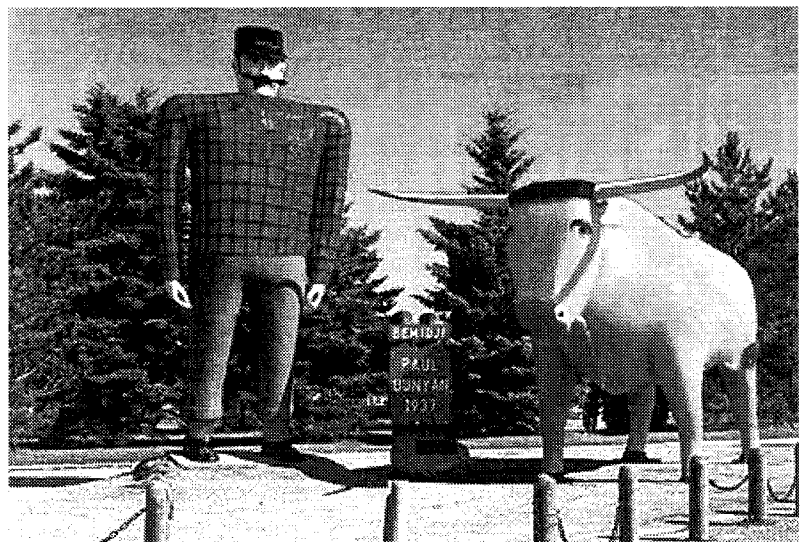
A GNAT settled on the horn of a Bull, and sat there a long time. Just as he was about to fly off, he made a buzzing noise, and inquired of the Bull if he would like him to go. The Bull replied, "I did not know you had come, and I shall not miss you when you go away." (Some men are of more consequence in their own eyes than in the eyes of their neighbors.)

Background Knowledge

- Aberdeen
- Buffalo Bill
- "bull in a china shop"
- bull market
- Battle of Bull Run
- Paul Bunyan
- "cock and bull"
- constellation (taurus)
- genus, species
- "worship the golden calf"
- "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence."
- herbivore
- John Bull
- Sitting Bull
- "take the bull by the horns"
- "until the cows come home"

(Hirsch, "Cultural Literacy," items related to oxen. It's important that students know these bits of background so they can better understand what they hear and read.)

Tall Tales—Babe the Blue Ox



Babe the Blue Ox was the companion of Paul Bunyan, North American hero of tall tales originally told by loggers during cold evenings in the logging camp.

Ox proverbs & idioms

...to kill the ox while straightening its horns (Japanese).

If you lie down after eating, you'll turn into an ox (Korean, Japanese).

A cow must graze where it is tied (West Africa).

A donkey went seeking horns and lost its ears (Arabic)

A frog wanted to be an ox and swelled up until he burst (Greek).

You cannot get milk from a male buffalo, nor butter from churning water (Hindi).

Go to court for a cow and lose your sheep (German).

He cannot manage the calf yet he wants to carry the bull (Italian).

You can't make an ox bend his head if he doesn't want to drink (Chinese).

A fool will pair an ox with an elephant (Ethiopia).

A home without a woman is like a barn without cattle (Ethiopia).

If there were no elephant in the jungle, the buffalo would be a great animal (Ethiopia).

A cow that has no tail should not try to flick away flies (Guinea).

A man who has once been tossed by a buffalo, when he sees a black ox, thinks it's another buffalo (Ivory Coast).

Because a man has injured your goat, do not go out and kill his bull (Kenya).

If the bull would throw you, lie down (Nigeria).

Horns do not grow before the head (Nigeria).

A cow must graze where she is tied (Sierra Leone).

The end of an ox is beef, and the end of a lie is grief (Madagascar).

The ox when weariest treads surest.

An old ox makes a straight furrow.

An old ox will find a shelter for himself.

Chinese**牛刀殺雞**

ox-knife-kill-chicken

use an ox-knife to kill a chicken

Use a powerful solution to a simple problem (to make a big deal of something).

牛鬼蛇神

ox-ghost-snake-spirit

group of no-good people

牛頭不對馬嘴

ox-head-not-match-horse-mouth

not relevant

初生之犢不畏虎

newborn-calf-not-fear-tiger

innocent, naive, inexperienced

**People born in the Year of the Ox**

are honest, placid, deliberate, and considerate. They may be slow to start but they continue long after others are tired or bored. They are sure of their own minds and seldom follow trends or fads. They tend to resist advice and can be intolerant or stubborn. Once provoked, their temper can be furious. They dislike change, but are able to cope well. In relationships, they do not indulge in romantic displays of passion but are enduring and caring. They are well-suited to careers in agriculture, military, teaching, and the food industry. They enjoy boxing, wrestling, rugby, skiing, and wining and dining.

African Proverbs. C & W Leslau. White Plains NY: Pauper Press, 1985.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs, 2nd edition. J. Simpson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

The Penguin Dictionary of Proverbs. R. Fergusson. England: Market House Books, 1983.

Chinese Sayings. W. M. Bueler. Rutland, VT: Tuttle, 1972.

Book of Proverbs. P. Houghton. London: Blandford, 1981; Cassell edition, 1992.

Proverbs from Around the World. N. Gleason. New York: Citadel Press, 1992.

Chinese Proverbs. T.C. Lai. Kowloon: Swindon Book Co., 1978.

Proverbs East and West. K. Yong-chol. New Jersey: Hollym International, 1991.

Selected Vietnamese Proverbs. Huynh Dinh Te. Oakland CA: Center for International Communication and Development, 1988.

Vietnamese

Bụng trâu làm sao, bụng bò làm vậy.

stomach-water buffalo-function-how,
stomach-ox-function-same

What's true for the buffalo is true for the ox.

Trâu bò h c nhau, ruồi muỗi chết oan.

water buffalo-ox-fight with horns-
fly-mosquito-dead-innocently

The powerful fight, the less powerful are casualties.

Trâu chậm uống nước đục,
trâu ngơ v n cỏ héo.

water buffalo-late-drink-water-muddy,
water buffalo-slow-eat-grass-wither

Late water buffalo drinks muddy water,
Slow water buffalo eats yellow grass.

(Early bird catches the worm.)

...trâu cày ghét bò buộc.

water buffalo-plow-hate-ox-tether

The water buffalo pulling the plow
hates the ox tethered to a tree.

...envious

...trâu cổ cò, bò cổ giải.

water buffalo-neck-stork, ox-neck-sea turtle

... irresponsible, offspring not well-tended

đầu bò đầu bướng

head-ox-head-stubborn
stubborn, bull-headed

đầu trâu mặt ngựa

head-water buffalo-face-horse
cruel, evil

Lao

ນາແລ້ວຂ້າຄວາຍເບີກ

paddy-finish-kill-water buffalo-male

ເສີກແລ້ວຂ້າຄົນຫານ

-war-finish-kill-person-brave

Paddy's done, then slaughter the male water buffalo
War's done, then kill the brave man.

Hmong

Nyuj laug nyuj kub kawb

Nraug laug nraug suab hawb.

Ntoo laus ntoo yoog kav,

Neeg laus lawm los tseem xav-xav.

ox-old-ox-horn-crooked

man-old-man-voice-creaky

tree-old-tree-many twigs

person-old-already-but-still-think-think

Old ox, crooked horns

Old man, creaky voice

Old tree, many twigs

Old man, but still many ideas.

Nyuj tsis pom nyuj ntab

Neeg tsis pom hiab xab.

cow-not-see-cow-dewlap

person-not-see-face.

A cow cannot see under its chin,

A person cannot see his own face.

Nyuj tuag tshuav kub,

Txiv tuag tshuav tub.

ox-die-leave-horn

man-die-leave-son

An ox dies and leaves its horns,

A man dies and leaves his son.

Nyuj ntsuag tsis tuag, nyuj ntsuag hlob tiav pwj,

Tub ntsuag tsis tuag, tub ntsuag hlob ciaj xeev txwj.

Qaib ntsuag tsis tuag, qaib ntsuag hlob tiav lau,

Tub ntsuag tsis tuag, tub ntsuag hlob ciaj hau.

ox-orphan-not-die-ox-orphan-grow up-bull

boy-orphan-not-die-boy-orphan-grow up-warlord

chicken-orphan-not-die-chicken-orphan-grow up-rooster

boy-orphan-not-die-boy-orphan-grow up-village chief

If an orphaned calf does not die, it may become a bull,

If an orphaned boy does not die, he may become a warlord

If an orphaned chicken does not die, it may become a rooster,

If an orphaned boy does not die, he may become a village chief.



El Toro

- el ganado (cattle)
- el ganadero (cattle owner)
- la vaca (cow)
- el vaquero (cowherd, cowpuncher)
- la vaca lechera (milk cow)
- el toro (bull)
- el toro de lidia (fighting bull)
- la corrida de toros (bullfight)
- el torero (bullfighter)
- charlar (shoot the bull)
- coger al toro por los cuernos (take the bull by the horns)
- el buey (ox)
- el toro castrado (bullock, ox)
- el búfalo (buffalo)
- el bisonte (bison)
- el yac (yak)
- jugar al alza (to bull the market, i.e., stocks)

Language and culture

Once the denotation of words is sorted out (page 1), what about connotations? Is an ox the symbol of strength in different cultures, as is "el toro" in Latin cultures? Do other cultures think of patience and endurance when thinking of an ox? Is "cow" a less-than-complimentary reference for a person?

Brainstorm—across cultures—attributes of "cow," "bull," "ox," "bison," and "water buffalo." Look in e-texts (electronic texts) online to find occurrences of "bull" or "cow" or "ox," etc. What human characteristics do they symbolize in literature and folklore? What are the similarities and differences between cultures and languages? How does language choice reflect culture?

Emergency Immigrant Education Program

Middle Grades Learning & Teaching Division,
Academic Support Office, California Department of Education, Hector
Burke, (916) 657-4681, Fax (916) 657-5112

Information Workshops, FY 1997-98 Funding

March 4, 1997 **California Dept of Education**
9:30–11:30 a.m. 721 Capitol Mall, Room 166B
Sacramento CA 95814
Contact: DeAnna Novoa, (916) 654-6966

March 5, 1997 **Fresno County Office of Education**
9:30–11:30 a.m. 1111 Van Ness Street, Room 301
Fresno CA 93721
Contact: Aggie Swift, (209) 265-3081

March 6, 1997 **San Jose Unified School District**
9:30–11:30 a.m. 855 Lenzen Avenue, Board Room
San Jose CA 95126-2196
Contact: Cathie Masters, (408) 535-6551

March 11, 1997 **Montebello Unified School District**
9:30–11:30 a.m. 123 South Montebello Blvd., Board Room
Montebello CA 90640
Contact: Janet Torncello (213) 887-7900 x2242

March 12, 1997 **Newport-Mesa Unified School District**
9:30–11:30 a.m. Davis Education Center, Multipurpose Room
1050 Arlington Drive
Costa Mesa CA 92626
Contact: Rosemarie Bodrogi,
Kathy Rogers, (714) 760-3300

March 18, 1997 **Riverside County Office of Education**
9:30–11:30 a.m. 3939 13th Street, Conference Room
(Enter through 12th and Almond entrance).
Riverside CA 92502
Contact: DeAnna Novoa, (916) 654-6966

March 19, 1997 **San Diego County Office of Education**
9:30–11:30 a.m. 6401 Linda Vista Road, Room 408
San Diego CA 92120
Contact: Rosa Torres, (619) 569-5378

The Emergency Immigrant Education Program is part C of the federal Title VII program. Funds are provided on the basis of a census of students in grades K-12 who were born outside the country and who have attended US schools fewer than 3 years. Funds are used to ensure that limited-English proficient students have the same opportunities to achieve high standards as other children.

Proverbs

There are many ways for students to learn that our differences are surface features of underlying commonalities. Proverbs provide non-threatening material for classroom activities—ones that involve divergent answers, group work, translation from other languages into English, verbalizing “hidden rules” of culture... These are taken from Charles Berlitz’s *Native Tongues* (Wideview / Perigree, 1982), and are drawn largely from European cultures. Within our classes are natural resources for equivalents from Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, China, Korea, Somalia, Ethiopia, Belarus, Ukraine, Armenia, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, the Philippines, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador...

When the cat’s away, the mice will play. (English) When the cat is absent, the mice will dance. (French) When the cat is out, the mice are dancing. (Italian) When the cat is out of the house, the mice have a feast day. (German) Cat gone, old rat comes out. (Chinese) When the master goes out there is a holiday in the shop. (Portuguese) When the boss is not around we know a lot of songs. (Greek)	Speak of the devil.... (English) When you speak of the wolf, you see his tail. (French) Thinking of the cat, it came leaping. (Arabic) When you speak of the donkey, he comes running. (German) Speaking of the King of Rome, suddenly he appears. (Spanish)		Look before you leap. (English) Turn the tongue seven times, then speak. (French) Have an umbrella before getting wet. (Japanese) Before you drink the soup, blow on it. (Arabic) First weigh (the consequences), then dare. (German) If you don’t know the ford, don’t cross the stream. (Russian)
	Too many cooks spoil the broth. (English) Too many cooks ruin the sauce. (French) A ship directed by many pilots soon sinks. (Spanish) With too many rowers the ship will crash into a mountain. (Japanese) When there are five nurses, the child loses an eye. With seven nurses, the child is finally found to lack a head. (Russian) Seven hands, eight feet. (Chinese)	Everyone to his own. (English) Each to his own taste. (French) Concerning tastes, there can be no disputing. (Latin) Ten men, ten colors. (Japanese) Every person is free in his opinions. (Arabic) Every baron has his own special fantasy. (Russian)	
Something is rotten in the state of Denmark. (English) There is something rotten in the state of Denmark. (German) There is an eel under the rock. (French) There is a cat shut up inside. (Spanish) There is a worm in the lion’s body. (Japanese) There is a snake under the hay. (Arabic) There is a needle in the bag. (Russian) I don’t know what kind of medicine is inside this melon. (Chinese) Just because the river is quiet, don’t think the crocodiles have left. (Malay)	Carrying coals to Newcastle... (English) Taking owls to Athens... (German, Greek) Taking jars to Samos... (Italians) He’s going to Tula, taking his on samovar. (Russian)		
	Much ado about nothing. (English) A great vineyard and few grapes. (Portuguese) Much smoke but a small roast. (Italian) Much noise, few nuts. (Spanish) Much bleating, little wool. (German)		Don’t count your chickens before they’re hatched. (English) You can’t hang people before you’ve caught them. (German) Don’t sell the bearskin before you kill the bear. (French, Italian) Don’t eat the sausages before you kill the pig. (Spanish) Don’t count the badger skins before you kill the badger. (Japanese) You can’t count chickens before the autumn comes. (Russian) Don’t curse the crocodile before you have crossed the river. (Swahili) If you meet a bear while crossing a bridge, address him as “my uncle” until you have reached the other side. (Turkish)
You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear. (English) If you’re born to crawl, you can’t fly. (Russian) There’s no way to turn a buzzard into a hawk. (French) You can’t find pears on an elm tree. (Spanish) From an ox you can only get beef. (German)		A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. (English) A bird in the hand is worth a hundred flying. (Spanish) Better an egg today than a chicken tomorrow. (Italian) A sparrow in the hand is better than a pigeon on the roof. (German) Don’t promise a pigeon in the sky but give a tomtit in the hand. (Russian)	

Human themes

Proverbs

Find proverbs from other languages/cultures that have the same message as these, from English & American folklore. Extra credit for bilingual responses!

Reap what you sow. (topic: consequences)

If you strike mud against the wall, even though it does not stick, it will leave a mark. (Arabic)

He shall reap hemp who sows hemp, and beans who sows beans. (Chinese)

He that blows into the fire must expect sparks in his eyes. (German)

From a wormy walnut tree you will gather wormy walnuts. (Greek)

If you sleep with a dog you will rise full of fleas. (Greek)

If you plant a mango then you may eat a mango. (Hindi)

If you bite a stone, you own teeth will be broken. (India)

Where you saw wood, there the sawdust will fall. (Russian)

"If" and "when" were planted, and "nothing" grew. (Turkish)

If you bring a firebrand into your hut then do not complain of the smoke. (West Africa)

April showers bring May flowers.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder.

A word to the wise is sufficient.

Cross that bridge when you come to it.

Don't count your chickens before they're hatched.

The early bird catches the worm.

Every cloud has a silver lining.

Experience is the best teacher.

The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.

Look before you leap.

No man is an island.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

Take the bitter with the sweet.

Two heads are better than one.

Where there's a will, there's a way.

Vietnamese Family Names



Mid-level

Châu	choe (rhymes with <i>toe</i>)
Đinh	ding
Lê	lay
Ngô	ngo (rhymes with <i>toe</i>); if you can't hear the initial <i>ng</i> , say <i>no</i>
Phan	fahn (not <i>fawn</i> or <i>fan</i> , but in between)
Trương	jt-uhng (jt is similar to the <i>oo</i> in <i>book</i> with the teeth together; <i>uh</i> is the hesitation sound)
Vương	vt-uhng



Low, abrupt end

Đặng	dahng (not <i>dang</i> or <i>dong</i> , but in between)
Phạm	fahm (like a New Yorker saying <i>farm</i>)
Trịnh	jing



Low falling

Hoàng	hwong (rhymes with <i>song</i>)
Huỳnh	hwing (rhymes with <i>sing</i>)
Trần	jun (rhymes with <i>fun</i>)



High

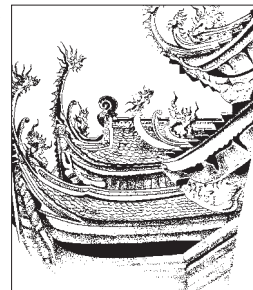
Lý	lee (not <i>lie</i>)
----	-----------------------



Broken

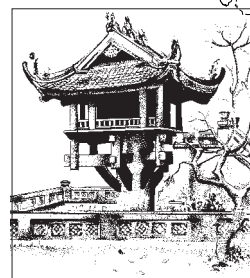
Lữ	lt-tt
Nguyễn	ngoo-ien; (<i>oo</i> as in <i>soon</i>); settle for <i>nu-yen</i>
Võ	vaw-aw (rhymes with <i>law</i>)
Vũ	voo-oo

A Dinh, in Ha-Dong region.
Detail of a Vietnamese roof.
Halinka Luangpraseut.



Characteristics

- Social status and role are reinforced every time one speaks (even the pronouns have to be chosen carefully to show the proper respect and relative status).
- Mayahana Buddhism and Catholicism are major belief systems; ancestor worship extends respect back through time. Buddhists tend to be fatalistic about life's events; the ability to endure well is important.
- Education is important in demonstrating social status. Differences in background (urban, rural) are related to education.
- Maintaining harmonious interpersonal relations is very important ("face"). "I'll try" or "We'll see" probably means "no". "Yes" may mean "I hear you."
- Addressing the teacher as "teacher" shows respect.
- Potential is much less important than performance.



One-footed Temple, Hanoi.
Halinka Luangpraseut

Vietnamese Given Names

Mid-level

Anh	ahn
Cung	koong
Dung	zoong
Hoa	hwah
Hưng	h ư ng
Hương	h ư -uhng
Khang	kahng
Khiêm	kee-em
Khôi	koy
Kim	keem
Lam	lahm
Lâm	luhm
Lan	lahn (between lan/lawn)
Lân	luhn
Lê	lay
Liên	lee-en
Linh	ling
Loan	loo-ahn
Long	longm (long <i>o</i> ; for the final consonant, do <i>ng</i> with the lips closed)
Mai	mai (like <i>mai-tai</i>)
Minh	ming
Nam	nahm
Nga	ngah; or else, nah
Ninh	ning
Phương	f ư -uhng
Quân	koo-uhn
Quang	kwahng
Sang	sahng
Sơn	suhn (the <i>sun</i> ; my <i>son</i>)
Tâm	dtuhm
Tân	dtuhn
Thao	tao (rhymes with <i>Lao</i> , <i>how</i>)
Thiên	tee-en (T.N.)
Thu	too
Trâm	juhm
Xuân	soo-uhn

Low, abrupt end

Bạch	bike
Dậu	zoe (rhymes with <i>toe</i>)
Diệp	zee-ep
Diệu	zee-o (Z.O.)
Định	dìng
Hạnh	haing

Huê	hway
Lệ	lay
Lộc	loke (don't release the <i>k</i>)
Ngô	ngaw (rhymes with <i>law</i>)
Ngọc	ngawp; nawp (this is another "double articulation": close the throat for the <i>k</i> , and the lips for the <i>p</i> .)
Nguyệt	ngoo-iet; nwet
Phượng	f ư -uhng
Thạch	tyke
Thiện	tee-en (T.N.)
Thọ	taw (rhymes with <i>law</i>)

Low falling

Bình	bing
Đào	dow (rhymes with <i>how</i>)
Đi- ư n	dee-en (D.N.)
Hi- ư n	hee-en
Hồng	hongm (the <i>o</i> is long: <i>home</i>)
Hùng	hoongm
Mùi	moo-ee
Tài	dtai (as in <i>mai-tai</i>)
Thìn	teen
Toàn	dtoe-ahn
Tuy- ư n	dtoo-ien

High

Bích	bick
Đức	d ư k
Ph	foo
Ph c	fook (don't release the <i>k</i>)
Q y	kwee
Sáng	sahng
Thắng	tahng
Tuấn	dtoo-uhn
Tuyệt	dtoo-iet
Xuyến	soo-ien

Broken

Dũng	zoo-oong
Diễm	zee-em
Liễu	lee-oo
Mỹ	mee-ee



Rising (?)

Bảo	bow? (rhymes with <i>how</i> ?)
Hải	high?
Hảo	how?
Thảo	tow? (rhymes with <i>how</i> ?)
Thủy	too-ee?

Chinese Family Names

Chinese children from Vietnam have their names spelled in the Vietnamese style. Some change to the Taiwanese or Hong Kong style when they get their citizenship. Common Sino-Vietnamese names are listed below, with typical Cantonese romanization and common Vietnamese spelling (the choice of Vietnamese name may come from a close-sounding name, or a word that sounds different but means the same).



High falling *(Vietnamese form)*

Cheung, Jung	Trương
Chau, Jew	Châu
Chu	Chu
Gong	Giang
Fong	Phương
Van	Ôn
So	Tô



High rising

Yuen Nguyễn



Low falling

Chan, Chin	Trần
Wong	Hoàng/Huỳnh
Wong	Vương
Ho	Hà
Lam	Lâm
Lai	Lê
Fung	Phùng
Leung	Lương
Lau	Lưu
Man	Văn
Ng, Eng	Ngô
Pang	Bành
Tang	Đặng
Wu	Hồ
Yu, Yee	Du



Low level

Cheng	Trịnh
Chiu	Triệu
Fan	Phạm
Luk	Lục
Shum/Sam	Thẩm
Yeung, Young	Dương

Chinese Given Names

Chinese children from rural Vietnam often have a "home" name that is their ordinal position in the family: #1 son, #2, #3, and so on. Urban (educated) Chinese tend to have an "outside" name that has a meaning, to do with character or aspirations.

A Nhat	ah-nyut	#1
A Nhi (Yee)	ah-nyee	#2
A Xam (Tam)	ah-sahm	#3
A Xay (Say)	ah-say	#4
A Ung	ah-uhm	#5
A Loc	ah-loke	#6
A Chat	ah-chut	#7
A Bat	ah-baht	#8
A Cau	ah-cow	#9
A Sap	ah-sahp	#10

Other "home" names also denote the position in the family:

Dai, Tai	dtai	old, big
Mui, Muoi	moo-ee	sister
Tay, Tai	dtai	brother

Characteristics

- Chinese culture is ancient and has influenced Vietnamese, Mien, Hmong, Korean, and Japanese cultures. Many of the Vietnamese values towards scholarship, the role of children toward parents, and the nature of interpersonal relations are similar to the values of the Chinese.
- Filial piety and ancestor worship is a strong part of every family.
- Families are patrilineal, large groups of men who share a common ancestor and their wives. Kin keep track on one another by common "generation" names.
- Confucianism is a way of teaching values and behavior, not a religion.
- The Chinese came to the United States as ethnic refugees—the Vietnamese expelled them from the country after the war ended.

Hmong Family (Clan) Names



High, short duration

<i>Khab, Khaab</i>	Khang	kah, kahng!
<i>Phab</i>	Pha	fah!
<i>Tsab</i>	Cha	jah!, jahng!
<i>Tswb</i>	Chue	jt̩! (t̩ like book, teeth together)



High falling (like an exclamation!)

<i>Faj, Faaj</i>	Fang	fah!, fahng! (between <i>fang</i> and <i>fong</i>)
<i>Hawj</i>	Her	h̩h! (<i>uh</i> , bite the teeth together)
<i>Lauj</i>	Lor, Lo	low! (not <i>high</i>)
<i>Thoj</i>	Thao	taw! (rhymes with <i>law</i>)
<i>Tsheej</i>	Cheng	cheng!
<i>Vaj, Vaaj</i>	Vang	vah!, vahng! (between <i>vang</i> & <i>vong</i>)
<i>Vwj</i>	Vue	v̩t̩!
<i>Xyooj</i>	Xiong	shyong! (long <i>o</i>)
<i>Yaj, Yaaj</i>	Yang	yah!, yahng! (between <i>yang</i> & <i>yong</i>)



Mid, longer duration

<i>Koo</i>	Kue	kong (<i>cold</i> with <i>ng</i> in place of <i>ld</i>)
------------	-----	---



Low, short duration

<i>Lis</i>	Ly, Lee	lee
<i>Muas</i>	Moua	moo-ah



Low, abrupt end

<i>Ham, Haam</i>	Hang	hah, hahng
<i>Kwm</i>	Kue	kt̩



Characteristics

- Hmong are organized into patrilineal clans. The last name represents the clan. People from the same clan can never marry.
- There are two main dialect groups: White Hmong and Green Hmong. White Hmong is the standard written form, although the only two-way dictionary is Green Hmong.
- Hmong believe in the power of various spirits and their ancestors. Many Hmong have converted to Christianity.
- Hmong came to the United States as political refugees because of their affiliation with the "secret army" that fought the communists during the war.
- In the mid-1970's there were only about 35 Hmong at the university level, all overseas.

Hmong Given Names

High, short duration

<i>Dawb</i>	Der	dt̩h
<i>Hnub</i>	Nou	noo
<i>Iab</i>	Ia	ee-ah
<i>Kub</i>	Kou	koo
<i>Ntsuab</i>	Youa	njoo-ah
<i>Txiab</i>	Xia	dzee-ah
<i>Yeeb</i>	Ying	ying
<i>Neeb</i>	Neng	neng
<i>Tsab</i>	Cha	jah
<i>Tswb</i>	Chue	jt̩
<i>Xeeb</i>	Seng	seng

High falling

<i>Tooj</i>	Tong	dtong! (long <i>o</i>)
<i>Leej</i>	Leng	leng!
<i>Nyiaj</i>	Nhia	nyee-ah!
<i>Txiaj</i>	Chia	dzee-ah!
<i>Txhiaj</i>	Xia	tsee-ah!

Mid, longer duration

<i>Hli</i>	Hli	hlee
<i>Ntxhoo</i>	Song	nsong (long <i>o</i>)

Low, short duration

<i>Mos</i>	Mao	maw (like <i>law</i>)
<i>Npis</i>	Bee, By	mbee

Low, abrupt end

<i>Foom</i>	Fong	fong (long <i>o</i>)
<i>Ntxawm</i>	Yer	ntz̩h
<i>Txhim</i>	Chi	tsee



Low falling, breathy end

<i>Lag</i>	La	lah
<i>Ntxawg</i>	Yer	ntz̩h



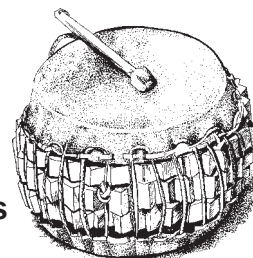
Rising (?)

<i>Maiv</i>	Mai	mai? (<i>mai-tai</i>)
<i>Diav</i>	Dia	dee-ah?

Iu-Mien Family (Clan) Names

	High, short, abrupt end	
	<i>Zuaq</i> (Sae)Chou	dzoo-ahk
	High falling (!)	
	<i>Yangh</i> (Sae)Yang	yahng!
	<i>Bienh</i> (Sae)Phan	pbee-en!
	<i>Lorh</i> (Sae)Lo	law!
	<i>Lioh</i> (Sae)Liew	lee-o!
	<i>Zanh</i> (Sae)Chin	dzahn!
	<i>Siouh</i> (Sae)Sio	see-ow!
	Low, abrupt end	
	<i>Dangc</i> (Sae)Teurn	dtahng
	<i>Bungc</i> (Sae)Fong	pboong
	Rising	
	<i>Zeux</i> (Sae)Chao	dzay-oh
	Falling, rising	
	<i>Leiz</i> (Sae)Lee	lay
	Mid	
	<i>Tong</i> (Sae)Tong	dtong (long o)

Characteristics



- Mien are related to the Hmong in history, but their languages are not mutually comprehensible.
- Mien culture has absorbed more Chinese ways than Hmong. For example, Mien use Chinese characters to write their lineage history and ritual texts, eat with chopsticks, have generation names, and follow a Mien form of the Chinese belief system Taoism. Ancestor worship is important.
- “Mien” means “people”; “Iu-Mien” means “Iu (Yao) people”.
- There are several Roman writing systems for the Mien language. All are affiliated with missionaries, and are rejected by those Mien who see Christianity as destructive of ancient beliefs and customs. There is a world-wide Mien effort to adopt one of the systems as the standard, to form a common communication link. There is no dictionary yet, but there are Mien classes in churches and schools.
- Mien came to the U.S. as political refugees for their role with anti-communist war effort.

Lao Names

Surnames are multisyllable and given names have two syllables—a prefix and a main part. Friends may drop the prefix and use just the second syllable. To pronounce the names, break them up into parts.

Family names

Souk-som-boun (health, prosperity)

Vieng-kham (golden city)

Vong-kham-keaw (gold lineage)

Vong-pra-chan (moon lineage)

Luang-pra-seut (very precious)

Given names

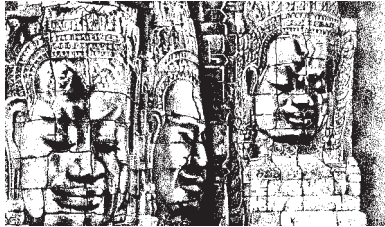
Kham-sy

Kham-say

Kham-phanh

Other common word parts in given names: thong, sone, souk, dang, vong, boun, pheng, phone, phoun, phouang, kham, bang, bone, my, ma, manh.

Cambodian Names



Angkor Wat walls. Halinka Luangpraseut.

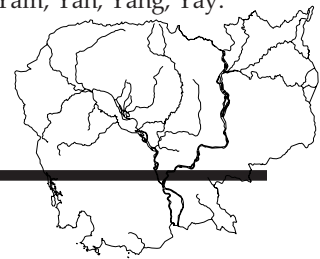
Characteristics

- The Khmer people are descendants of an ancient powerful and widespread kingdom, rich with arts and literature.
- Most Khmer follow Theravada Buddhism.
- The Khmer refugees have suffered tremendous social shattering, and most are holocaust survivors. Without Buddhist temples, villages, or family, there is little social support during acculturation to American life.
- Homeland political allegiances cause factions among Cambodian communities in the U.S.

Names are generally of two parts: the family name is one syllable and the given name is two or three syllables. Examples are:

Family Name	Given Name
Chea	Sokha
Chhom	Neary
Pok	Bona
Hem	Chantha
Som	Rattana

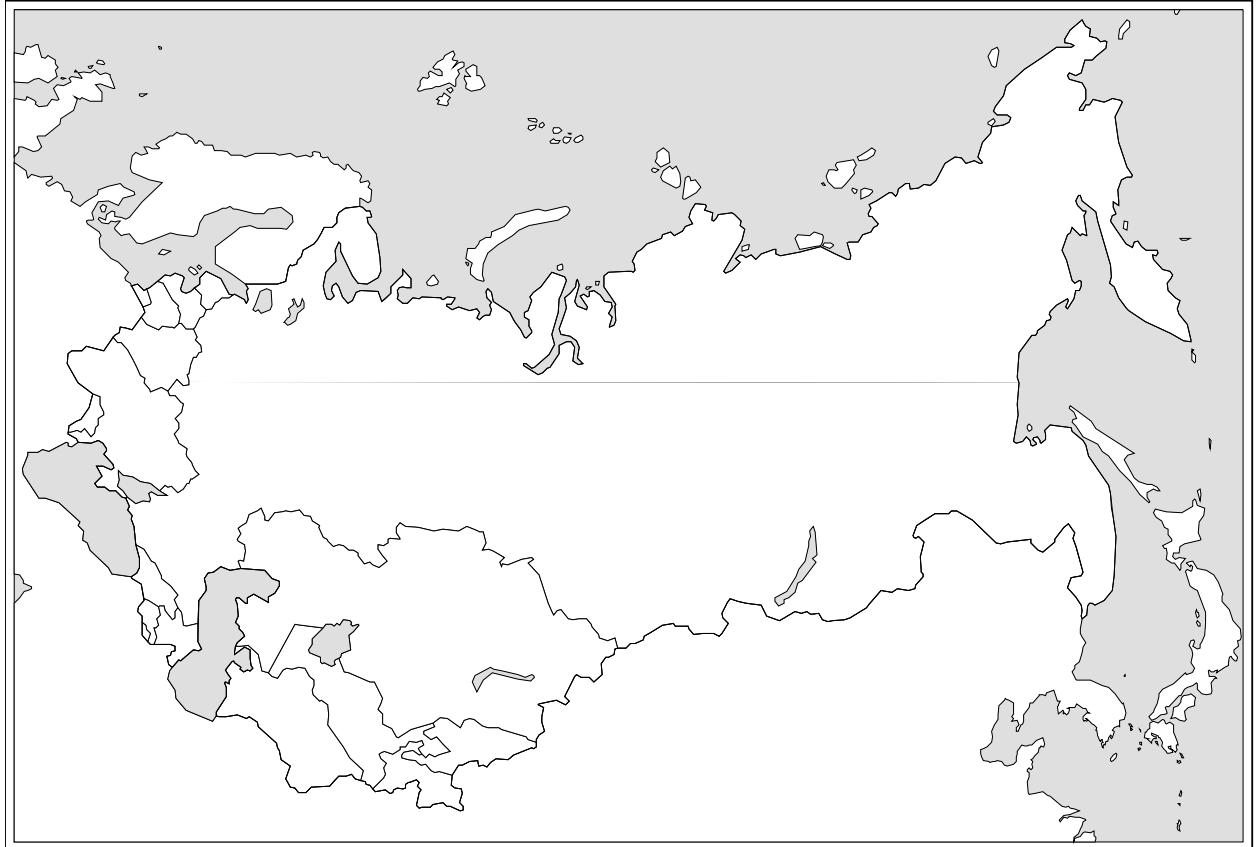
Only Cambodian names have 2 *h*'s in a row! Examples of other family names are: Ang, Ay, Boeun, Buon, Chham, Chhan, Chhay, Chhem, Chheng, Chhoeum, Chhuon, Choeun, Chuon, Hang, Hean, Heng, Hoeum, Hoeun, Hoeung, Hong, Hok, Huon, Keo, Kheung, Khlok, Khoeung, Koeuh, Lim, Loeun, Loeuth, Lon, Loun, Luom, Luy, Ma, Mai, Mee, Men, Mon, MOUNG, Nay, Nem, O, Oeu, Ok, On, Ou, Ouk, Oum, Oun, Phen, Phoeun, Phuon, Pok, Ra, Ram, Roeun, Roeung, Sam, San, Sat, Seng, Som, Sous, Ta, Thoun, Vann, Voeun, Voeuth, Vuy, Vy, Yam, Yan, Yang, Yay.



Lao girl going to the temple during the new year observances. Halinka Luangpraseut.

Characteristics

- Lao are culturally more similar to the Thai and Cambodians than the Vietnamese, Chinese, Hmong or Mien.
- Lao are Theravada Buddhists, a belief system shared by only the Thai, Cambodians, Ceylonese, and Burmese.
- Village temples provided teaching of values and behavior, especially for boys.
- Families are organized bilaterally rather than patrilineally.
- The Lao had access to education, but once basic Lao literacy was learned, they turned to French textbooks. The best Lao dictionary is one-way only, and is no longer published. Thai dictionaries may be of use to some Lao.
- The Lao were the ethnic majority in Laos, but the many minority groups (including Hmong and Mien) comprised almost half the population.
- Lao came to the U.S. as political refugees.



Ukrainian Names

Tend to end with "o", "ik", "uk":

Eryomenko
Goroshko
Kirichenko
Lyashenko
Melnik
Yakimchuk
Zaharchuk
Ivanyuk

First names are the same for Ukrainians and Russians. There is a short form for most:

Natalya	Natasha
Nadezhda	Nadya
Dmitry	Dima
Mikhiel	Misha

Armenian Names

End with "ian":

Muradyan
Avagyan
Ayvazyan
Bunyatyan
Mgeryan
Deukmejian

The "g" in Armenian names is a hard "h" sound; transliterated into Russian, which does not have the sound, it became a "g".

"Mgeryan" is "mm-hair-ee-an".

Russian Names

Surnames have a male and female form:

<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Kozlov	Kozlova
Petrov	Petrova
Fedorov	Fedorova
Ivanov	Ivanova
Zaikin	Zaikina
Istomin	Istomina
Bachinsky	Bachinskaya

The middle name identifies the father. **Ivan Kozlov** has two children (note the last name first):

Kozlov Petr **Ivanovich**
Kozlova Svetlana **Ivanova**