

SOME TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING READING

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This is a brief summary of some of the reading techniques that were studied in the course, TESOL Methods and Materials part II, Reading and Writing. I wish to give credit for the presentation of these techniques to Dr. Donald Knapp of Temple University, Japan. In this summary I will present six practical techniques that can be adapted for teaching reading.

1. Steps to Make Reading Easier

In presenting any new passage of written material for students to read, the teacher can do at least five things to make reading easier. Although some of these steps are interrelated, they may be broken down as follows:

a) Establish a purpose. Establishing a purpose helps students to focus their attention on fulfilling that purpose more effectively. To do this the teacher must point out to the students what the aim of the lesson is. For example, if a passage is being read to establish a context for new vocabulary, then this should be pointed out.

b) Develop interest or involvement. In this step the teacher should try to arouse the interest of the students in the reading. By asking leading questions the teacher can make the act of reading a process of discovery for the student.

c) Give preparation for new content, concepts and ideas. Cultural concepts may need to be explained and unusual ideas of an author may need to be introduced by the teacher in such a way as to set up expectations for the students. The teacher can

introduce the new ideas and concepts but leave enough of an information gap that the students will still discover more on their own.

d) Talk about the organization of the material. On a small scale this step involves discussing the rhetorical devices used and organization of a passage. On a large scale, this step would involve previewing the chapters and sequence of a whole book.

e) Give background preparation. Sometimes it will be helpful to inform the students of the author's point of view, his background, bias or prejudice.

2. Oral Reading

Read and look up, was one useful method of oral reading that was suggested in the Temple University class. In this method, a passage of reading material familiar to the student is used. The student reads a phrase, puts his finger on the place he was reading, puts the book to his chest, looks a student partner in the eye and says the phrase. Then the student returns to the place he was reading, goes on to the next phrase, reads it, recites to his partner and continues in the same manner. Using this method, it is alright to change the exact words as long as the same meaning is retained. This method works best with dialogues such as those used in oral English classes.

3. Cloze Tests for Teaching

Cloze tests as exercises for teaching reading can be made by taking a reading passage, giving it a title, leaving the first sentence complete and deleting every seventh or every tenth word after. Skip a number or a name if it is in the seventh or tenth place and delete the next word. In scoring, any acceptable word that the student has written in the place of the deleted word is given credit. Cloze exercises cause students to look beyond each individ-

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ual word to see the whole picture and meaning of what they are reading. It forces students to make predictions and guesses about words and meaning as they fill in the blanks. Thus, cloze exercises encourage ESL students to use some of the same strategies that good readers use in their native language.

4. Sustained Silent Reading

Sustained silent reading is a method where a period of time is set aside for uninterrupted silent reading in class.

The guidelines are as follows:

- 1) Each student must read silently.
- 2) The teacher also reads silently, with no interruptions from the students and without interrupting the students.
- 3) Each student selects a single book, magazine, newspaper or other reading material and once a selection is made, no changes are allowed for that class period.
- 4) A timer should be used to signal the end of the silent reading period but nobody should see it including the teacher.
- 5) Absolutely no testing of any kind is done. No records are to be kept. No reports are given by the students. No questions should be asked about what the students are reading.
- 6) Start with about a ten minute period. At the end of the reading period, if students are ready and eager to read more then add more time the next day the class meets.

Students tend to look forward to reading during this period. They can be made responsible for obtaining their own reading materials in English but it is best if there is a large supply of good material available in the classroom for the students.

5. The Language Experience Approach

The language experience approach is often used with native speakers of English who come from a non-academic background or with students who otherwise need remedial work in reading.

It works well in tutoring one or two students in reading. This method works from the assumption that students recognize the meaning of their own language.

To prepare the students for using this method, books having only pictures may be used or a common activity may be done with the students or folktales and common cultural material can be used as a basis of content for a lesson. The teacher must ask leading questions about the pictures, experience, folktales or cultural subject. The teacher tries to make the students think of how a story could be developed from the common subject matter. The teacher then asks what a good first sentence would be and writes exactly what the student says, grammar errors and all. The teacher repeats the sentence to the student and asks if it sounds alright. The teacher is not to change any sentence without the student's consent. In this way a sentence at a time, a story is written. When the story is done, the teacher may ask if there is anything to add or delete from it and make changes according to student response. Copies of the story are made and a week later the copies are given to the students. The students read the material and make any revisions. This step can be repeated again a week later for students to make additional revisions. The teacher must write down exactly what the students say because the goal is to teach reading and not grammar. There really isn't a danger that this exercise will cause students to fossilize errors. Students tend to see their errors over a period of time and to correct them.

6. Using authentic texts

A number of reading activities and exercises can be developed using reading material exactly as the teacher finds it.

Within reasonable limits, it is not necessary to simplify the material for the students if the activities the students do with the material are simple enough. Françoise Grellet, author of *Developing Reading*

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Skills, advocates the use of authentic texts in making reading exercises. Following Grellet's guidelines, our class was given the assignment of developing several reading exercises based on authentic texts that our students could actually come across in Japan. One such exercise is the following:

READING TECHNIQUES

Scanning

Specific aim: To train the students to run their eyes over a text quickly in order to locate specific information.

Skills involved: Scanning

Why? When we are trying to locate specifically required information, usually we need not read the whole text carefully. What we do is try to find in which paragraph the information we are looking for is likely to be, then read this paragraph with more attention.

(Grellet p. 83)

EXERCISE

You are trying to help a friend who has just moved to Osaka. Look at the ads and find what phone numbers could be called to find:

- a) a bilingual T.V. _____
- b) stereo equipment _____
- c) a kerosene heater _____
- d) a furnished apartment _____
- e) a job as a model _____

Conclusion

This summary is a report on some practical aspects of the Temple University course. These are simply techniques that may be adapted for classroom use. This is not a complete summary of

CLASSIFIEDS**HOUSING****ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE**

HOUSE in English Village to let. Furnished; three bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen, garage, garden; train to London takes 1 1/2 hours. Please telephone 0727-83-2744 or 0720-76-6998.

Available beautiful, furnished, cozy western apartment at a very reasonable rent. It has one bedroom, one bathroom, a kitchen and a living-room, and is a 5-min. walk to both Kobe Club & Sannomiya station. For more details, please call 078-222-6012 or 06-264-6501.

PRIVATE ROOM VACANTS. Special rates for foreigners. Two meals served. English-speaking boarding house. Osaka English House, Hirakata City, 25 minutes to Osaka or Kyoto. Top of the hill, pleasant environment. 0720-43-3594.

2-DK in mansion in Kitano-cho. Key money, unfurnished. Call 078-871-0180.

ACCOMMODATION WANTED

From April 15, American-Japanese couple seek AP/HOME from Kobe to Osaka area. Can exchange language lessons for rent or pay reasonable sum. Joseph, 0797-32-6344.

Apartment or sub-let on or near Hankyu line by single British male. Call John at 06-433-6262 (late evenings).

Desire to rent furnished or unfurnished bedroom in apartment or house. Only in Japan on business part-time but would pay full share of rent and utilities up to ¥50,000 per month each month. Single, middle-age-businessman (U.S.), quiet, non-smoker, easy to get along and have lived on and off in Japan for last 10 years. Central Kobe area preferable. Is anyone single at there who would like to split expenses? Write to KTOBox.1.

Small apartment needed in Kobe for sub-let March and April. Please no key money. 078-241-8774.

EMPLOYMENT**HELP WANTED**

NATIVE SWISS WOMAN is looking for a job as a model. Please call 075-513-6019 and ask for Anne-Catherine Mayor.

NATIVE ENGLISH TEACHERS wanted. School in Umeda. Call for appointment from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., 06-344-8715, V.I.P. Productions.

CAREER AND PART-TIME opportunities for SPORTS minded personable men and women. Plan and direct international sporting events: GOLD/TENNIS/MARATHON. Japanese and foreigners welcomed. Good command of Japanese with some English, Spanish or other foreign language desired. EXCELLENT working conditions. Domestic and overseas travel. Men aged 22-40 required as sporting event coordinator, PR and sports related business agent. Women aged 18-35 needed for PR work, sporting event secretary and to assist visiting foreign athletes. Interviews will be held Feb. 4, Sat. Please call Mr. Kashima or Mr. Robert Turner for an appointment. Tel: 0798-48-1441. Daily 09:00-18:00. Or send resume to: REP, Inc. 1-3-28, Naruo-cho Nishinomiya-City, 663.

Needed YOUNG, ATTRACTIVE men and women for magazine/TV modelling. Please call 06-244-0131 from noon - 7 p.m.

BRITISH FEMALE teacher needed for our children. Comfortable room offered in excellent setting near Ibaraki station. Ring Mrs. Tanabe at 0726-25-8137.

SITUATION WANTED

Australian legal secretary, fully-qualified in secretarial duties for barristers and solicitors. References available, aged 26, speaks English only. Willing to consider any secretarial position in the Kobe area. Phone 0798-47-9184 after midday.

A Japanese lady is looking for a job as a typist in the Osaka area. Speaks a little English. Keiko Shimazu, 0727-93-1281.

GOODS**FOR SALE**

MINK COAT, black, full length, highest quality, petite size. From SAKS, N.Y.C., value \$6,500; must resell before U.S. return, ¥770,000 or best offer. Dr. Plaza, 06-243-2412 or Joseph 0797-32-6344.

LEAVING Japan - ¥370,000-Aurex stereo system (only 16 month old), ¥150,000; telephone answering machine with remote control message listening capability, telephone, desk, kitchen set, kotatsu, heaters and more. Call David, 0775-73-0453 for details. Can deliver.

Used Up-right piano ¥100,000; also used fridge, air-conditioner and other household goods. Also telephone for sale after Feb. 28. Call 078-241-8774.

APARTMENT SALE - Feb. 12, 1-5, Appliances, kotatsu, bookshelves, electric griddle, juicer/blender, futon, drapes, etc. 06-387-9115.

VIDEO TAPE CLUB. Video tapes to almost anywhere in Japan. Either Beta or VHS. As many titles as you want each month. About 3,600 titles available. All the new movies from U.S. cable & TV, plus 100's of older ones, 0797-38-0571.

GARAGE Sale. Air-conditioner, ¥80,000, Onkyo CX-88 amp/tun/cass. ¥40,000, vacuum cleaner, washing machine, sewing machine, stove, kitchen utensils, curtains. Free chair, old TV. Feb. 11/12/13, 19/20, Near Kintetsu Ayameike Stn., 0742-48-5775 after 9 p.m.

Telephone (¥65,000), refrigerator, stove, washing machine, bilingual TV, chest of drawers, 50cc motorbike, airconditioner, table and chairs, etc. Reasonable. 06-387-9115.

GYOKOKAI (Emaus) Antiques Shop is now open everyday from noon to 5:00 p.m. at 5-2-8, Azumadori, Chuo-ku, Kobe (078-221-5342). Will open anytime on your request, call above number.

PRINT SHOW AND SALE of the work of DAVID SCHNEUER from Israel on Sat., Feb. 25th, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the Pub Room of the Kobe Club (078-241-2588).

Small color National TV with bilingual adaptor, ¥30,000. Call 0797-31-3630.

VIDEOS (excellent for gifts): Fall in Kobe; New Year & Kimonos; Edward Hughes Pottery Demonstration; Kobe 1983 Pantomime - ¥5,000 each, Beta or VHS, 078-851-6654. Also, for lease Sinclair 48K Spectrum COMPUTER - many software cassettes, ¥20,000/3 months.

VARIOUS - Phone, 2-burner range with broiler, refri., hot water heater, kerosene stoves, office chairs, motorcycle helmet, crockpot, and many more. Available end of March, but come early and make a deal. Mike, 0720-21-3963.

WANTED TO BUY

wanted SEWING MACHINE. 078-451-9341, late afternoons or evenings.

RENT OR LEASE

Rent VHS tapes from U.S.A. 3 movies per title, \$5.00 per week. Call for free list, 06-426-1132.

Beautiful 1955 Seeburg 200-Select Juke Box, completely restored with stereo components. Perfect for a restaurant, pub, boutique, or anyone who wants a little nostalgia. For more info, call ISMAC, 078-222-6116, Mon-Fri, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

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the entire class which also dealt with some theory and research about reading instruction. Although I am not presently teaching reading, I wish I had been able to use some of these techniques during the time I taught reading to Saudi Arabian students, since a variety of class activities often increases student interest and motivation

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- Celce-Murica, and Lois McIntosh, Ed. *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House, 1979.
- Grellet, Françoise. *Developing Reading Skills*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Knapp, Donald. Lectures for "TESOL Methods and Materials Part II, Reading and Writing." Temple University, Japan: Osaka, January 27-February 17, 1984.
(Received March 15, 1984)