

Theoretical Foundations

for Teaching English as a Second Language

An ESL Training Module

Chicago Public Schools

Office of Language and Cultural Education

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Theoretical Foundations of Teaching English as a Second Language

I. INTRODUCTION

The teaching of a second or foreign language to speakers of another language has had a long tradition, dating from the Classical Greek period to modern times. In the span of two thousand years, language teaching approaches and methods have undergone shifts in objectives. Sometimes the goal of teaching a foreign language has been to teach it so that students could read it, sometimes so that they could study the culture of the country where the language is spoken, and sometimes so that they could use it to communicate with speakers of that language.

Within the United States, language teaching used to be discussed mostly with reference to teaching foreign languages to American students. In recent decades, however, the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) has become equally, if not more, prominent in the education system. With the influx of immigrants from all parts of the world, ESL is now taught in all educational contexts – Pre-K-12, college, intensive, workplace, and community programs.

The growing needs for teaching ESL have been accompanied by developments in language theory, language learning theory, and a variety of curricular approaches. ESL teachers have benefited from research into the nature of language by gaining a better understanding of how language works and how it is used. They have also learned a great deal about language learners by realizing that there are similarities and differences between learning a first language and a second language and that second language learners have special language, cultural, and individual problems and goals. In addition, ESL teachers have also benefited from learning what works best in the classroom in terms of choosing teaching materials and activities.

II. RELEVANCE OF THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS TO THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The change in student populations in the U.S. makes it imperative for every teacher to understand the nature of difficulties that English Language Learners (ELLs) face in the American classroom. To begin with, teachers need to understand what **language** is. What does it mean to know a language? Knowing a language involves more than just knowing vocabulary and grammar. It also means knowing how to use language to achieve a specific communicative function in its cultural context. Mainstream teachers need to realize that all languages are equally systematic, complex, and capable of expressing a whole range of ideas, but that different languages express ideas differently.

Besides understanding what language is, mainstream teachers also need to understand the complexities of learning a second language. They need to understand the **language learning process** so that they can interpret the progress and learning problems of ELLs. They need to consider what kind of instructional method or technique, teaching materials and classroom environment can best help the learner to acquire the language and how to use these insights in teaching ELLs in the mainstream classroom. In addition, mainstream teachers need to understand the instructional needs of individual ELLs in terms of their language and cultural background, cognitive learning styles, motivation, and personality characteristics.

Finally, given the fact that ELLs must also learn the content material of the school curriculum, mainstream teachers need to know how the special language needs of the ELLs should be considered in the way that the content is presented to them.

III. GOALS OF THE MODULE

This module presents the theoretical foundations of teaching ESL not in a lecture format, but in the form of either an activity or an illustration, followed by a discussion of

the theory underlying the activity/illustration. Through this method of presentation, mainstream teachers will gain an understanding of:

- major viewpoints on the nature of language
- different theoretical perspectives on language learning
- various perspectives on curricular theories and goals

This kind of understanding will enable these teachers to address the ELLs' needs in their classroom better by learning:

- why they need to present content materials to ELLs in a way different from those used with native speakers of English.
- why they need to consider the ELLs' language background and needs in choosing specific materials and teaching techniques.
- why ELLs from different cultures may respond to what is happening in the classroom in different ways.
- why ELLs, just like English-speaking students, benefit from activities that address the use of their individual learning styles and strategies.
- why ELLs, just like English-speaking students, benefit from activities that make best use of the various types of abilities that these ELLs bring to their learning.

IV. TOPICS IN THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF TEACHING ESL

A. Introduction to Theories of Language

In considering the theoretical foundations of teaching ESL, one of the most important issues is the nature of language. A number of theories of language have been proposed in the last century. Among these, the ones that are most relevant to language teaching are **structural**, **cognitive** and **communicative theories**. The structural view of language looks at language as a system of structurally related elements for conveying meaning. In other words, language is built of layers of units – **phonological** (related to speech sounds), **morphological** (related to word formation) and **syntactic** (related to combinations of words in larger units). The cognitive view of language defines language as an internalized system of rules rather than as a set of units and patterns. More specifically this view of language assumes that speakers of a given language have intuitive knowledge of language rules which enable them to make judgments about the relationships between meaning and form and to create and understand an infinite number of sentences using a finite number of rules. The communicative view of language extends the scope of language to include the context of language use. In particular, it maintains that language is not merely a set of internalized rules, but that an adequate theory of language must also include the communicative functions of language.

1. Structural Theory of Language

As an illustration of the structural theory of language, consider the following examples.

Activity 1

Given the following sentence pattern, which of the groups of listed words would fit into which slot?

• Mary's generous boss has recently given her a raise.

• Mary's _____ (1) _____ (2) has _____ (3) _____ (4) her a _____ (5).

a. sister
friend
father
neighbor

b. close
protective
friendly
silly

c. promised
made
showed
paid

d. sandwich
dress
compliment
present

e. frequently
often
rarely
regularly

f. at
in
from
on

g. the
some
any
an

Activity 2

In the following sentence pattern, decide which group(s) of words could replace which of the two nonsense words.

• An excited zimbie approached the spleecky corner.

a. youngster
girl
bystander
businessman

b. dangerous
dark
quiet
crowded

c. left
saw
visited
passed

d. quickly
efficiently
lazily
seriously

You probably found these tasks very easy and the answers obvious. The reason you had no difficulty with this exercise is that English, and language in general, is highly structured. This view of language, called structuralism, appeared in the development of American linguistics beginning with Leonard Bloomfield's book in 1933 and flourished in the 1940s and 1950s. It is based on the concept that language can be described in terms of units and combinations. These combinations are patterned in that each contains slots or positions that are filled by specific kinds of words. The above examples illustrate such combinations on the level of a sentence.

However, the concept of structuralism includes more than just sentence patterns. It also includes units and combinations of sounds and word parts.

Activity 3

Here is an example of how words are formed in a patterned manner:

educate
educator
educators
education
reeducate
educational
educationally
educating
educated
reeducated
uneducated

Following the examples above, try to create as many words as you can by using **act** as the main part of the word.

As you can see, the formation of words is also based on structural principles. Each word contains at least a main part, called root or stem by linguists with one or more added parts, affixes, which can be a prefix (e.g. re-educate) or suffix (e.g. educat-ion-al-ly), which must occur in a particular order. Each of these parts is considered the smallest meaningful bit of the language, called a morpheme, and words are made up of one or more morphemes.

Similarly, the sounds that make up words also follow particular patterns. These sounds, or phonemes, constitute the smallest building blocks of the language. For example, in the word *pit*, there are three phonemes: [p]+[l]+[t]¹. These phonemes are a part of the distinctive sound units of the sound system of the language. The phonemes of a language form a system of contrasts so that *pit* can be contrasted with *bit*, *pat*, *pin*.

pit	bit
pit	pat
pit	pin

In addition, the phonemes of a language follow a certain set of combination rules, and so some phonemes cannot co-occur in a given language and/or they cannot occur in a certain position within a word. For example, in Spanish, the sequences *sp*, *st*, *sk* do not occur at the beginning of a word, but they do in English. In Chinese and Japanese, consonants do not occur together without vowels in between as they do in English. On the other hand, for example, in Polish, unlike in English, a word can begin with *tʃ* as in *tlen* “oxygen.”

¹ these are phonetic symbols used in the International Phonetic Alphabet to represent consistent sound units. In English, as in other languages, phonetic symbols can be spelled with different letters, for example, in English, [k] represents the sound in *car*, *pick*, *chorus*, etc

Activity 4

Consider the following question: Which of the consonant clusters listed below can occur at the beginning of English words, which can occur at the end of English words, and which cannot occur at either end of English words?

[spl]
[str]
[stl]
[tls]
[pr]
[rp]
[sm]

[ml]
[sn]
[zk]
[bl]
[mp]
[rst]

As you can see, in the structuralist view, language is analyzed on three levels—sound level (phonology), word level (morphology), and phrase and sentence level (syntax). The language is described in terms of interlocking linguistic levels of building blocks, beginning with the smallest units (phonemes) which make up meaningful units (morphemes) which combine to form words, and in turn, words make up phrases and sentences. An important concept of structuralism is that language is speech; therefore, their analysis begins with the sound system and moves to words and sentences.

2. Cognitive Theory of Language

The cognitive view of language can be captured with the following examples.

Activity 5

Try to decide on the possible meanings of the following sentences. Paraphrase each sentence to show its various meanings.

1. Visiting relatives can be a nuisance.
2. Terry loves his wife and so do I.
3. The chicken is ready to eat.
4. The boy saw the man with a telescope.

Since these sentences each have two possible meanings, structural patterns cannot account for their ambiguities.

Activity 6

Now notice the relationship between the following pairs of sentences:

1. The puppy found the child.
The child was found by the puppy.
2. The boy wrote the senator a letter.
The boy wrote a letter to the senator.
3. The bride came down the aisle.
Down the aisle came the bride.
4. The tailor cut the fabric with a pair of scissors
With a pair of scissors, the tailor cut the fabric.

Even though the structural patterns in the sentences in each pair are different, the sentences can be interpreted as having the same meaning. In other words, the structural pattern approach is again inadequate for describing such phenomena.

For these reasons, the structural view of language came under criticism in the late 1950s. In 1957, Noam Chomsky published a book called *Syntactic Structures*, in which he claimed that language is more than patterns, units, and combinations. An adequate description of a language should also include relationships between sentences. For example, he believed that sentences such as statements and questions, positive sentences and negative sentences, active and passive sentences should be explicitly accounted for. To account for this kind of a relationship, he proposed a two-level analysis of sentences, rather than describing sentences as being made up of a series of syntactic slots. With this two-level approach, called transformational grammar, he was able to account for not only those sentence relationships mentioned above, but also such phenomena as ambiguities and paraphrases. Chomsky proposed that each sentence should be analyzed on two levels: with an abstract deep structure that accounts for its meaning and a surface structure that accounts for its form. In the case of an ambiguous sentence with two meanings, for example, there are two deep structures realized as the same surface form. On the other hand, paraphrases are sentences with one deep structure and more than one form.

In a further development of his theory (1965), Chomsky claimed that a theory of language must also explain the creative and intuitive aspects of language. For example, it must account for the speaker's ability to distinguish grammatically acceptable sentences from those that are not acceptable.

Activity 7

Try to decide which of the following sentences are grammatically acceptable and which are not:

1. John is difficult to love.
2. It is difficult to love John.
3. John is anxious to go.
4. It is anxious to go John.
5. The food sickened me.
6. The milk illed me too.
7. The girl wrote a check.
8. The dog wrote a check.
9. The book wrote a check.

According to Chomsky, a theory of language must be able to account for the speaker's knowledge and ability to make grammatical judgments and to distinguish between form and meaning. His famous example:

Colorless green ideas sleep furiously.

demonstrates that a sentence may be grammatically correct and yet be meaningless. This shows that the structuralist theory of sentence patterns with slots and fillers is inadequate.

Another important tenet of Chomsky's theory is that language is rule-governed and that the internalized knowledge of the native speakers allows them to create and understand

an infinite number of utterances/sentences from a finite set of rules. This phenomenon allows us to understand a sentence like

I saw a hippopotamus eating pancakes on the roof.

even though it is very unlikely that anybody has ever said or heard this sentence before.

3. Communicative Theory of Language

Before we discuss the communicative view of language, let us consider the following dialogs:

Activity 8

What is wrong with the following dialogs?

1. Tom: Hi, Joe. Hey, is that a new bike?
Joe: Yes, I purchased it yesterday.
Tom: It's awesome!
Joe: Thank you. It is nice of you to say so.

2. Greg: Susan, this is Alice Carter.
Susan: Hi, Alice.
Alice: How do you do?
Susan: Hey, Greg's told me a lot of good stuff about you, Alice.
Alice: He is certainly very kind and generous.

3. Thomas Crawford is a college president. Bob is a student at the college.
They pass each other on the quad.
Bob: Hi, Tom.

4. (Kathy and her daughter Jenny are in the kitchen. Kathy is doing the dishes.)
Kathy: Can you bring that dirty plate over here?
Jenny: Yes, I can.
(Jenny remains seated.)
Kathy (after 5 minutes): Where is that plate?
Jenny: Oh, you wanted me to bring it now?
Kathy: No, Tuesday next week!

5. Kathy is in the kitchen and Jenny is the living room.
Kathy: Is that the doorbell?
Jenny: Yeah.
(Two minutes later, the doorbell rings again).
Kathy: Jenny, why didn't you get the door?
Jenny: Oh, did you want me to?
Kathy: Who else?!

As you can see from the dialogs above, the exchanges are all grammatically correct and the slots filled with the right types of words, and yet something is amiss. Clearly language is more than just patterns and grammatically acceptable sentences. To account for the inappropriate responses in the dialogs above, another theory of language was proposed in the 1970s. It broadens Chomsky's theory of language by including not only knowledge of the rules of language (linguistic competence), but also the communicative functions of language (communicative competence). Communicative competence allows speakers to use language that is appropriate in a given situation in terms of the level of formality, relationship to the listener, and the purpose of the utterance.

Depending on what language function speakers are trying to express, they need to follow the appropriate steps. For example, when the phone is ringing, the person answering it must begin with "Hello" rather than "How's Bob doin'?"

The theory of language that emphasizes the communicative and interactional nature of language is currently the accepted view of language, particularly in the context of teaching languages.

B. Introduction to Theories of Language Learning

There are several theories of second language learning that have had considerable impact on language teaching in the last fifty years, often following developments in theories of language. But unlike the generally comprehensive views of language theories, each theory of second language learning attempts to account for different aspects of language learning. The **behavioristic** theory of language learning views the language learner as an organism responding to the linguistic environment. The **cognitive** theory views the language learner as activating an innate ability to process the rules of the language. The **humanistic** approach takes a holistic view of the learner, paying attention to the affect and individual characteristics of the learner.

1. Behavioristic Theory of Language Learning

Since this module focuses on the theoretical aspects of teaching ESL, the best way to illustrate language learning theories is to examine an example of a lesson used in teaching. This is based on the assumption that teaching reflects what teachers believe is true about their students' learning processes. In other words, this module on theoretical aspects of teaching must include discussions of language acquisition theories as they relate to teaching.

Illustration 1

In this sample lesson, the teacher presents the following dialog in a handout:

- A: Excuse me. Can you please tell me where the restroom is?
B: Certainly. It's on the first floor.
A: Thank you.
B: Don't mention it.

The teacher reads the dialog aloud for the students; they repeat after the teacher; s/he asks the students to memorize the dialog; they perform it several times. This is then followed by the teacher asking the students to practice a pattern in the dialog by substituting some phrases in the appropriate slot. Every time a student makes the right substitution, the teacher praises him/her.

Could you please tell me where _____ is?

- the English Department
- the library
- the post office
- the grocery store

Certainly. It's _____.

- in the next building
- across the street
- around the corner
- behind this building

This teaching approach is based on the behavioristic theory of language learning which maintains that there are three crucial elements in learning: **stimulus**, **response**, and **reinforcement**. The stimulus is usually in a form of a sentence pattern; the response is a repetition of this pattern with various types of substitutions by a student; and the reinforcement is provided by the teacher. The teacher's praise (the reinforcement) helps establish the connection between the pattern and the correct response. The ultimate goal of this practice of repetition and reinforcement is to promote habit formation in the students when they repeat the correct responses and in this way learn the language. This highly mechanical and structured way of presenting and practicing language patterns is thought to allow students to learn only correct forms and to form good language habits.

2. Cognitive Theory of Language Learning

To illustrate the cognitive theory of language learning, let us consider the following lesson. Analyzing this lesson will allow us to discover how an underlying language learning theory informs a teaching approach.

Illustration 2

The teacher prepares a lesson based on a particular communicative function. S/he does this by first providing the students with expressions for performing this communicative function. Then s/he groups the students in pairs and gives them an assignment of roles.

In each pair, Student A is given the following description:

Imagine you are looking for the library. Your partner is a passer-by who may have the information you need. Ask for the information.

Student B is given the following:

Respond to your partner's questions.

Each student is also given a set of expressions useful in communicating the ideas they need to include in their dialog.

Student A's handout may include the following expressions:

- Excuse me. Could you (please) tell me the way to the library?
- Pardon me. Could you (please) tell me how to get to the library?
- (Excuse me.) Can you (please) tell me where the library is?
- (Excuse me.) How do I get to the library?
- Is this the way to the library?
- Do you know where the library is?

Student B's responses may include the following:

- Certainly. It's on the first floor.
- Sure, just follow the yellow line on the floor.
- Third floor, to the right of the stairs.
- Go to the next hallway and turn left. You can't miss it.
- Sorry, I don't know.
- I'm sorry. I'm new here too.

The elements underlying this teaching approach are based on the cognitive theory of language learning. In this theory the assumption is that learning is promoted through meaningful communication rather than by mere repetition. The form of the meaningful communication is through performing communicative tasks. Krashen has developed one of the more comprehensive presentations of this language learning theory in his second language acquisition theory. He proposes five hypotheses to describe second language acquisition—the **Acquisition-Learning** Hypothesis, the **Monitor** Hypothesis, the **Natural Order** Hypothesis, the **Input** Hypothesis, and the **Affective Filter** Hypothesis.

According to Krashen, there is a difference between acquiring a second language through natural, meaningful interaction with native speakers and learning it through formal and conscious study of language forms and functions. What learners learn consciously, through formal studying, can act as a monitor or an internal grammar editor whenever they are using language in a situation where there is time to self-correct, they are focusing on the form, and they know the rules explicitly. Krashen also asserts that second language learners acquire the rules of a language in a predictable order similar to that of first language learners, although there are some variations due to first language influence. In promoting acquisition, Krashen believes that learners should be presented with language that is just a little bit difficult for them, called comprehensible input. He also maintains that acquisition takes place best in a non-threatening environment.

3. Humanistic Approach to Language Learning

As an introduction to the nature of the humanistic approach to language learning, fill out the following questionnaire, using your own experience with foreign language learning as the basis for your answers (*substitute with the language you have studied):

Activity 9

Using the scale provided, judge the following statements as they refer to your own language learning preferences.

Strongly agree = SA
 Agree = A
 Undecided = U

Disagree = D
 Strongly disagree = SA

	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. I am studying Spanish* because I feel it may be helpful in getting a job.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. I want to be able to use it with Spanish*-speaking friends.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. I need to pass two years of a foreign language in order to fulfill my college requirement.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Knowing another language will enable me to meet and converse with a wider group of people.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. I am usually at ease during tests in my language classes.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

(Adapted from Ramirez, 1995, pp. 164-167)

A questionnaire like this might be used by a language teacher trying to understand the learner’s motivation, attitude towards the target language, and the level of anxiety regarding the learning task. This focus on the individual learner began in the second language learning research in the 1970s. The researchers have been mostly interested in discovering what factors outside of the language itself (**the extralinguistic factors**) and within the individual learner can influence how a student learns a language. This approach takes a **humanistic** view of the learner. Each learner may bring to the language learning task different motivations, attitudes, learning anxiety, learning abilities, and strategies. The language teacher needs to take these factors into consideration in his/her teaching. Likewise, the language learner needs to understand the importance of these factors in his/her learning success. Consequently, students are often given questionnaires to reveal their individual characteristics.

Activity 10

Using the scale provided, judge the following statements as they refer to your own language learning preferences.

Strongly agree = SA
 Agree = A
 Undecided = U

Disagree = D
 Strongly disagree = SA

	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. I prefer to learn by doing something in class.	___	___	___	___	___
2. I get more work done when I work with others.	___	___	___	___	___
3. When I read instructions, I learn better.	___	___	___	___	___
4. I learn better when I make drawings as I study.	___	___	___	___	___
5. When I work alone, I learn better.	___	___	___	___	___
6. I learn better when I participate in role playing.	___	___	___	___	___

(Adapted from Ramirez, 1995, p. 156)

The above type of questionnaire is aimed at finding out the learning style preferences of the learners.

NOTE: In the case of younger learners, this type of questionnaire may be difficult for them to answer, so the teacher may choose to use observation or interview to discover their preferences.

Activity 11

Using the same scale as in Activity 10, judge the following statements with respect to your own language learning experience.

Strongly agree = SA
 Agree = A
 Undecided = U

Disagree = D
 Strongly disagree = SA

	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. I preview and plan strategies for a learning task.	___	___	___	___	___
2. I attend to specific aspects of language input.	___	___	___	___	___
3. I check and monitor my performance.	___	___	___	___	___
4. I frequently repeat complete phrases.	___	___	___	___	___
5. I judge my ability to perform a language task.	___	___	___	___	___

(Adapted from Ramirez, 1995, p. 159)

The above type of questionnaire is aimed at discovering the learner’s learning **strategies** (see also the **NOTE** above).

A more recent development in the approach that focuses on the learner is the theory of **Multiple Intelligences**. To illustrate the application of this approach to language teaching, let’s consider the following language learning activities.

Illustration 3

Students in a language class are given a reading on the makeup of the population in the U.S. After this introduction to the topic, the students are given the following choice of tasks:

Task 1

Choose a recipe for any ethnic dish and prepare it for the class.

Task 2

Learn a song from another country and perform it for the class.

Task 3

In a group, prepare a presentation about one of the ethnic groups in the U.S.

Task 4

Prepare a speech discussing the contributions of immigrants to this country.

Task 5

Research and present data on the number of immigrants from various countries in the U.S. according to the last census. Calculate the percentages of different racial and ethnic groups in the overall population.

Task 6

Prepare a map of the United States that shows where the majority of the Hispanics and Asians live in this country.

Task 7

Write a journal entry reflecting on your feelings about the ethnic diversity in the U.S.

The above activities illustrate the recognition of the different abilities that learners bring with them to the process of learning. According to Howard Gardner, human intelligence has multiple dimensions that should be addressed in the process of teaching. He distinguishes eight intelligences:

- linguistic intelligence—the ability to use language
- logical/mathematical intelligence—the ability to think rationally
- spatial intelligence—the ability to form mental models of the world
- musical intelligence—having a good ear for music
- bodily/kinesthetic intelligence—having a well-coordinated body
- interpersonal intelligence—the ability to work well with people
- intrapersonal intelligence—the ability to understand oneself
- naturalist intelligence—the ability to understand and organize the patterns of nature

Among these types of intelligence, linguistic intelligence is most obviously related to language learning. However, the other ones, perhaps with the exception of naturalist intelligence, can and should also be utilized in the process of language learning and teaching.

Activity 12

Decide which of the tasks listed in Illustration 3 best addresses each of the first seven intelligences mentioned above. As a language learner yourself, which task would you like best?

Another perspective on language learning within the humanistic approach that is frequently encountered in the discussion of language learning and teaching is called **Cooperative Language Learning**. It can be seen as attributing as much importance to interpersonal intelligence as to linguistic intelligence. This approach leads to extensive use of group activities in the classroom.

C. Introduction to Curricular Models

Curricular models are an important aspect of theoretical foundations of teaching ESL, providing the theoretical basis for the teachers to decide what to teach, how to select teaching materials, what techniques to use in presenting these materials. Among the many curricular models, the **content-based** and the **whole-language** approaches have been of special relevance recently since they have been adopted in many ESL programs, especially in the K-12 level.

Content-based curriculum involves integrating subject matter such as science and math, and language study. One premise of content-based instruction is that ELLs are more successful when they use a language to learn subject matter rather than learn the language as an end in itself. Another premise is that content-based instruction meets ELLs' needs for learning a second language better by not only helping them develop their language ability, but also by preparing them for academic studies or mainstreaming.

The whole-language approach originated with the teaching of language arts to native speakers in the 1980s and since the early 1990s has been adopted and adapted by ESL professionals in many programs. The main premises of the approach are that language is whole and that language learning should be integrated in terms of the various skills involved—listening, speaking, reading, writing.

1. Content-Based Curricular Model

To begin the discussion of content-based curriculum, let us examine the following illustration:

Illustration 4

The teacher selects a theme for a unit, for example, the role of immigration in U.S. history. S/he designs a series of activities to cover the topic with the students.

Task 1

The teacher asks the students to respond to a number of statements about immigration by stating whether they *strongly agree*, *agree*, *agree somewhat*, *disagree*, *strongly disagree*. Some possible statements are:

- The U.S. immigration policies are too strict.
- Too many immigrants come to the U.S. every year.
- Without the immigrants, the U.S economy would suffer.
- Immigrants are a burden on the U.S. economy.
- Congress should tighten the immigration laws.
- The U.S. would not be as powerful as it is without the immigrants.

The students discuss their answers.

Task 2

The students are given a list of sentences that include new vocabulary from a text that will be used later. Each new word is italicized in the sentence, and for each, there is a list of either synonyms or definitions provided. The students are asked to guess the meaning of these words from the context of the sentences and to choose the correct answer. A possible sentence may be:

- A record number of immigrant children *pose* new problems for schools.
- a. get ready for photographs
 - b. ask
 - c. present

Task 3

The students are asked to read the text and pay attention to headings and subheadings. They are asked to turn the headings into questions and answer the questions when they read the text.

Task 4

After reading the text again, the students are asked to answer a series of questions based on the text.

Task 5

The students are asked to write a journal entry reflecting on the content of the reading and commenting on their understanding of the text or on their own experience with immigration-related issues.

Task 6

The students are asked to divide into two teams and prepare for a debate on whether immigration laws should be changed to allow fewer/more immigrants to enter the U.S.

The content-based approach uses this type of activity to help the students develop language proficiency through specific subject matter. Research suggests that people learn a second language more successfully if they are focused on meaning rather than form. Therefore, if students get engaged in processing the meaning of the text, they can improve their language without focusing explicitly on the language itself. Content-based approach uses a variety of activities or tasks that are text- or discourse-based, which allows the students to work with language on the level beyond single sentences so as to develop an understanding of how meaning and information are communicated through texts and discourse. This approach also involves integrating several skills to provide students with an optimal learning experience in which each skill enhances another. For example, listening to a lecture and taking notes can support the writing of a summary. Another argument for teaching through content is that it allows the language to be used for specific purposes. This helps maintain the students' interest and positive attitude. It also brings them closer to achieving the goal of not only becoming proficient in the language but also of being able to participate in academic activities in the mainstream classroom.

2. Whole Language Curricular Model

Another curricular model that is currently used in teaching ESL is the **Whole Language Approach**. To illustrate the way teaching is done using this approach, let us consider the following example.

Illustration 5

In a class that uses *Charlotte's Web* as the first novel to be read, the teacher assigns 10 pages of reading every day and asks the students to keep a double-entry journal. When the students are in class, they may be involved in the following types of activities:

Task 1

Freewrite on any topic of interest to you, for example, your favorite pet or a special place or your worst day.

Task 2

In your group, discuss the 10 pages that you read yesterday. Focus on things that you liked, didn't like, or didn't understand. Use your double-entry journal as the basis for your discussion.

Task 3

Take the point of view of Charlotte in a letter that you will write to Wilbur explaining why it is important for him to become a part of the community of animals in the pen.

Revise your essay using the comments from your readers.

Task 4

Step 1

Brainstorm ideas for an essay describing your best friend and explaining why s/he is your best friend.

Step 2

Compose a draft of your essay on the above topic.

Step 3

Read your partner's draft and complete these statements:

What I like the most about this piece is:

I would really like to hear about:

I don't quite understand:

If this were my paper, I would:

Step 4

Revise your essay using the comments from your readers.

Step 5

Using the inventory of error types that we have discussed, find and correct as many errors in your essay as you can.

The above illustration exemplifies the type of tasks used in the Whole Language Approach. The term whole language was created in the 1980's in the teaching of language arts. This approach was in reaction to the teaching of separate components of language such as grammar, word recognition, and phonics. The proponents of the Whole Language approach view language from an interactional perspective. This approach echoes the wholistic concept of humanistic language learning.

When adopted to teaching ESL, the Whole Language Approach manifests itself in using literature and massive amounts of reading and writing to help learners acquire the language. In this view, ELLs exposed to extensive amounts of reading will acquire the language more successfully than if they were focused on individual elements of the language. This kind of fluent reading promotes reading for pleasure during which the learners focus on making meaning of the text rather than reading to decode the meaning of individual words. To enable the learners to reach this stage of fluent reading, it is necessary to select texts that are at the appropriate level of difficulty

(challenging enough, but not frustrating) and of interest to the students. In practice, the teacher provides a selection of readings from which the students can choose. The selection can be made based on a cloze test which can help evaluate the level of difficulty of a given text. To make a cloze test, the teacher selects a reading passage of about 250 words, deletes every fifth word (beginning with the second sentence and leaving the first and last sentences intact), leaves an underlined blank for each deleted word, and asks the students to provide the most appropriate word in each blank. The number of correct answers given by the students can help establish the level of difficulty they have with the text.

This approach also involves a considerable amount of writing. Writing activities are integrated with reading, and like reading, they are designed to promote fluency in expressing ideas rather than creating errorless texts. In practice, students engage in a variety of writing tasks, including double-entry journals (in which they quote parts of the text and they write their responses alongside the quotes), point-of-view writing (in which the students assume the role of one of the characters to develop a certain idea), editorials, feature stories (often in the form of student-made books), autobiographies, and others.

An important feature of this approach is collaborative learning among students who engage in daily journal discussions and other group work related to both their reading and writing.

V. TIPS FOR TEACHERS TO MODIFY INSTRUCTION

- Try to separate the ELLs' language problems from cognitive and/or academic difficulties.

All languages are equally complex and systematic. ELLs who arrive with little or no English are already fully proficient (for their age) in their own language and should not be perceived as having learning disabilities (unless, of course, there is evidence to the contrary).

- In presenting new material, think in terms of discussing phrases rather than individual words, teach the ELLs how to pronounce them, and provide context for how the new words are used.

Language is an integrated system structured on various units and levels. It is not enough for the ELLs to learn new vocabulary through its definitions alone. They need to know how a given word relates morphologically, syntactically, and semantically with other words.

- Provide opportunities for ELLs to use all the language skills, i.e. use oral activities along with reading and writing.

ELLs' ability in the four skills may be uneven—some may have stronger oral skills than writing skills (or vice versa), some may have trouble with listening comprehension, but be good readers. The activities and materials need to be varied to help the ELLs make use of their stronger skills and to help them develop their weaker skills.

- Be aware that ELLs coming from a different cultural background may seem to behave verbally and/or non-verbally in an inappropriate manner in the classroom from the point of view of American culture.

Some ELLs may come from cultures in which the classroom is teacher-centered, so they may have difficulty adjusting to an interactive, participatory classroom. Also, miscommunication can occur when ELLs use a certain form, a certain tone of voice, a certain intonation following

the rules of his/her own language in English. In addition, non-verbal behavior such as eye contact can convey different meanings in different cultures.

- Be reasonable in your expectations of progress for the ELLs in your classes.

Language acquisition does not happen overnight. It is a process that requires time to develop and the ELLs cannot be expected to become functional in English within a semester or even a year. How fast they can progress depends on many factors such as age, language aptitude, school experience, affective factors, personality traits, learning styles, etc.

- Facilitate understanding of your lessons for ELLs by using concrete examples, hands-on activities, visual aids, etc., since ELLs cannot yet rely on a sufficient level of English proficiency.
- Create a low-anxiety environment in your classroom by:
 - allowing ELLs a silent period before you expect them to participate in the class orally;
 - using materials that are linguistically accessible, but still at a level of difficulty slightly above their current proficiency;
 - tapping into their background knowledge to increase their confidence; and
 - assigning ELLs to a “home group” or pairing them with students who are open to newcomers to create a sense of belonging in the ELLs.
- Accommodate the varied needs of the ELLs in terms of their different intelligences and their learning styles and strategies, their different interests by using a variety of activities, tasks, materials, teaching aids, etc.

VI. GLOSSARY

affix	either a prefix or suffix (see entries for <i>prefix</i> and <i>suffix</i>)
behaviorism	a psychological theory of learning that claims learning results from positive reinforcement of an appropriate response to a stimulus
behavioristic theory of language learning	application of <i>behaviorism</i> to language learning
cognitive theory of language	theory that focuses on language as a system of rules that speakers of the language know unconsciously
cognitive theory of language learning	theory of language learning that claims human beings have the innate capacity to acquire language and that language learning involves acquiring the rules of the language
communicative competence	knowledge of not only the sounds, words, phrases, and sentences of a language, but also how to use them appropriately in social context
communicative theory of language	theory that focuses on how speakers use language to achieve various communicative functions
content-based model	a curriculum model in which the syllabus is organized according to and based on a subject matter, <i>e.g.</i> geography, history, mathematics, etc. and the instruction integrates subject matter with language study
extralinguistic factors	factors relevant to the act of communication that are outside language <i>per se</i> , <i>e.g.</i> situation, context, roles of speaker and listener, etc.

humanistic theory of language learning	theory of language learning which focuses on the learner as a person and emphasizes the importance of considering the role of affect, learning styles, and personality in the language learning process
interlanguage	the language that a second language learner uses at any stage in the process of second language acquisition
learning styles	preferences that individuals consistently display in how they approach the process of language learning (e.g. preference for visual learning, auditory learning, etc.)
learning strategies	specific methods of approaching a language learning task or problem (e.g. self-management, repetition, note taking, elaboration, cooperation, etc.)
linguistic competence	knowledge of the sounds, words, and combinations of words into larger structures in a language
linguistic performance	ability to apply linguistic competence
morpheme	smallest unit of language that has meaning
morphology	the study of the formation of words
phoneme	the smallest unit of sound that makes a difference in meaning
phonology	the study of the sounds and sound patterns of a language
prefix	a morpheme that is added to the beginning of a word to change its meaning or its class (part of speech)
reinforcement	an element in the language learning process that takes the form of approval of the teacher or fellow students and that increases the likelihood of a given student response to be repeated and eventually to become a habit

response	in language learning, the learner's reaction to a stimulus
root	the morpheme that gives a word its primary word meaning
stimulus	in language learning, what is taught or presented of the language being learned
structural theory of language	theory that views language as a system of units and patterns built on various levels of organization
structuralism	see <i>structural theory of language</i>
suffix	a morpheme added to the end of a word to change its class (part of speech) or its grammatical function
syntax	the study of combinations of words in larger units such as phrases and sentences
whole-language model	a curriculum model which views language holistically rather than as individual elements to be learned and in which the syllabus is organized around works in literature, involving massive amounts of reading and writing to avoid decoding the meaning of individual words

VII. PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

I. Introduction – 5-7 minutes

II. Relevance of module – 10 minutes

III. Goals of the Module – 5 minutes

IV. Introduction to Theories of Language

A. Structural Theory of Language

Activity 1 – 5 minutes

Activity 2 – 5 minutes

Activity 3 – 10 minutes

Activity 4 – 10 minutes

B. Cognitive Theory of Language

Activity 5 – 10 minutes

Activity 6 – 5 minutes

Activity 7 – 10 minutes

C. Communicative Theory of Language

Activity 8 – 15 minutes

DISCUSSION – 10 minutes

BREAK – 5 minutes

V. Introduction to Theories of Language Learning

A. Behavioristic Theory of Language Learning

Illustration 1 – 5 minutes

B. Cognitive Theory of Language Learning

Illustration 2 – 10 minutes

Discussion – Krashen – 10 minutes

C. Humanistic Approach to Language Learning

Activity 9 – 5 minutes

Activity 10 – 5 minutes

Activity 11 – 5 minutes

Illustration 3 – 5 minutes

Activity 12 – 5 minutes

BREAK – 5 minutes

D. Introduction to Curricular Models

1. Content-Based Curricular Model

Illustration 4 – 15 minutes

2. Whole Language Curricular Model

Illustration 5 – 15 minutes

VI. Questions and Teaching Tips – 15-20 minutes

VIII. ACTIVITIES, ANSWER KEY AND DISCUSSION

The Nature of Language and Language Learning

True or False

1. Human language is arbitrary; for the most part, the sounds we use bear no resemblance to the things they symbolize.
2. Language is systematic; it is governed by rules.
3. Children have to be taught the rules of their first language to be able to speak it.
4. The speakers of a language know the rules of their language implicitly.
5. Some languages are more complex than others.
6. Languages are intimately related to the societies and individuals who use them.
7. Children learn language primarily through imitation.
8. Language learners need to learn a second language through translation.
9. Language teachers must make every effort to prevent learner errors.
10. Individual learners' success depends on various linguistic, cultural, and affective factors.

The Nature of Language and Language Learning

Answers and explanation

1. True

By their very nature, speech sounds and meaning are different: speech sounds are concrete and meaning is abstract. Therefore, the choice of whatever sequence of speech sounds is used to represent whatever meaning in a language is an arbitrary one, but this relationship works because it is established by the conventional use of the speakers of a language (for example, there is no specific—meaning-based—reason why in one language an object is called *table*, and in another language, the same object is called *mesa*). One possible exception to the arbitrary relationship between speech sounds and what they symbolize is the imitative or onomatopoeic sounds of a language, e.g. *arf! arf!* to mean the barking of a dog, although different languages often imitate barking differently.

2. True

Language is not made up of any random combinations of sounds, words, etc. At every level of language – phonology, morphology, syntax – there are patterns of combination that are permitted and others that are not, for example, in English the article must occur before the noun and not vice versa.

3. False

Children acquire their first language without explicit instruction from their parents or caretakers. They figure out implicitly how the language in their environment works by being exposed to it.

4. True

The speakers of a language cannot articulate the rules of their language unless they have some formal training in grammar and/or linguistics. And yet, they obviously use the rules when they are using the language.

5. False

In general, children of all languages are basically linguistic adults by the time they are five or six years old. Given this same developmental timetable, we can assume that all languages are equally accessible, i.e. equally easy or difficult, for acquisition, although different languages may be more or less complex in different sub-components of the language.

6. True

A language functions only within the context of its speech community. It bears an integral interrelationship with and reflects the cultural values, assumptions, and norms of the speech community.

7. False

Imitation plays a role in the acquisition of language by children because of the linguistic data they are exposed to, but imitation is not the method or process of

7. (cont.)

acquisition. Children acquire their first language by making hypotheses (unconsciously) about the workings of the language they are exposed to. Imitation cannot account for the type of “errors” that children make, e.g. “I *helded* my doll really tight.” Also, children regularly produce sentences they have never heard before.

8. False

Translation is not necessarily for learning a second language, although at the beginning level it can facilitate understanding. Learners can infer the meaning of a new language by using prior knowledge of context, for example. For example, a picture of a dog labeled with the target language is easily understood without translation.

9. False

Errors are a natural phenomenon in learning both the first language and a second language. Errors usually indicate the developmental process or stage of the language learner. Also, because the rules of a language are developed gradually, learners must go through interlanguage stages before arriving at adult or native norms.

10. True

Although children acquire their first language successfully even with the least favorable condition, the success of both adults and children acquiring a second language subsequently depends on variations of different language and cultural backgrounds, learning conditions and opportunities, learner aptitudes and motivation, etc.

Goals of the Module

Teachers will gain understanding of:

- major viewpoints on the nature of language
- different theoretical perspectives on language learning
- various perspectives on curricular theories and goals

This kind of understanding will enable these teachers to address the ELLs' needs in their classroom better by learning:

- why they need to present content materials to ELLs in a way different from those used with native speakers of English.
- why they need to consider the ELLs' language background and needs in choosing specific materials and teaching techniques.
- why ELLs from different cultures may respond to what is happening in the classroom in different ways.
- why ELLs, just like English-speaking students, benefit from activities that address the use of their individual learning styles and strategies.
- why ELLs, just like English-speaking students, benefit from activities that make best use of the various types of abilities that these ELLs bring to their learning.

Activity 1

Given the following sentence pattern, which of the groups of listed words would fit into which slot?

• Mary's generous boss has recently given her a raise.

• Mary's _____ (1) _____ (2) has _____ (3) _____ (4) her a _____ (5).

- | | | | |
|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| a. sister | b. close | c. promised | d. sandwich |
| friend | protective | made | dress |
| father | friendly | showed | compliment |
| neighbor | silly | paid | present |
| | | | |
| e. frequently | f. at | g. the | |
| often | in | some | |
| rarely | from | any | |
| regularly | on | an | |

Activity 2

In the following sentence pattern, decide which group(s) of words could replace each of the two nonsense words.

- An excited zimbie approached the spleecky corner.

- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------|-------------|
| a. youngster | b. dangerous | c. left | d. quickly |
| girl | dark | saw | efficiently |
| bystander | quiet | visited | lazily |
| businessman | crowded | passed | seriously |

Activity 3

Here is an example of how words are formed in a patterned manner:

educate
educator
educators
education
reeducate
educational
educationally
educating
educated
reeducated
uneducated

Following the examples above, try to create as many words as you can by using **act** as the main part of the word.

Activity 4

Consider the following question: Which of the consonant clusters listed below can occur at the beginning of English words, which can occur at the end of English words, and which cannot occur at either end of English words?

[spl]

[str]

[stl]

[tfs]

[pr]

[rp]

[sm]

[ml]

[sn]

[zk]

[bl]

[mp]

[rst]

Activity 5

Try to decide on the possible meanings of the following sentences. Paraphrase each sentence to show its various meanings.

1. Visiting relatives can be a nuisance.
2. Terry loves his wife and so do I.
3. The chicken is ready to eat.
4. The boy saw the man with a telescope.

Activity 6

Notice the relationship between the following pairs of sentences:

1. The puppy found the child.
The child was found by the puppy.
2. The boy wrote the senator a letter.
The boy wrote a letter to the senator.
3. The bride came down the aisle.
Down the aisle came the bride.
4. The tailor cut the fabric with a pair of scissors
With a air of scissors, the tailor cut the fabric.

Activity 7

Try to decide which of the following sentences are grammatically acceptable and which are not:

1. John is difficult to love.
2. It is difficult to love John.
3. John is anxious to go.
4. It is anxious to go John.
5. The food sickened me.
6. The milk illed me too.
7. The girl wrote a check.
8. The dog wrote a check.
9. The book wrote a check.

Activity 8

What is wrong with the following dialogs?

1. Tom: Hi, Joe. Hey, is that a new bike?
Joe: Yes, I purchased it yesterday.
Tom: It's awesome!
Joe: Thank you. It is nice of you to say so.
2. Greg: Susan, this is Alice Carter.
Susan: Hi, Alice.
Alice: How do you do?
Susan: Hey, Greg's told me a lot of good stuff about you, Alice.
Alice: He is certainly very kind and generous.
3. Thomas Crawford is a college president. Bob is a student at the college. They pass each other on the quad.
Bob: Hi, Tom.
4. (Kathy and her daughter Jenny are in the kitchen. Kathy is doing the dishes.)
Kathy: Can you bring that dirty plate over here?
Jenny: Yes, I can.
(Jenny remains seated.)
Kathy (after 5 minutes): Where is that plate?
Jenny: Oh, you wanted me to bring it now?
Kathy: No, Tuesday next week!
5. Kathy is in the kitchen and Jenny is the living room.
Kathy: Is that the doorbell?
Jenny: Yeah.
(Two minutes later, the doorbell rings again).
Kathy: Jenny, why didn't you get the door?
Jenny: Oh, did you want me to?
Kathy: Who else?!

Activity 9

Using the scale provided, judge the following statements as they refer to your own language learning preferences.

Strongly agree = SA
 Agree = A
 Undecided = U

Disagree = D
 Strongly disagree = SA

	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. I am studying Spanish* because I feel it may be helpful in getting a job.	___	___	___	___	___
2. I want to be able to use it with Spanish*-speaking friends.	___	___	___	___	___
3. I need to pass two years of a foreign language in order to fulfill my college requirement.	___	___	___	___	___
4. Knowing another language will enable me to meet and converse with a wider group of people.	___	___	___	___	___
5. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	___	___	___	___	___
6. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	___	___	___	___	___
7. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	___	___	___	___	___

*substitute with the language you have studied

Activity 10

Using the scale provided, judge the following statements as they refer to your own language learning preferences.

Strongly agree = SA
Agree = A
Undecided = U

Disagree = D
Strongly disagree = SA

	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. I prefer to learn by doing something in class.	___	___	___	___	___
2. I get more work done when I work with others.	___	___	___	___	___
3. When I read instructions, I learn better.	___	___	___	___	___
4. I learn better when I make drawings as I study.	___	___	___	___	___
5. When I work alone, I learn better.	___	___	___	___	___
6. I learn better when I participate in role playing.	___	___	___	___	___

Activity 11

Using the same scale as in **Activity 10**, judge the following statements with respect to your own language learning experience.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. I preview and plan strategies for a learning task.	___	___	___	___	___
2. I attend to specific aspects of language input.	___	___	___	___	___
3. I check and monitor my performance.	___	___	___	___	___
4. I frequently repeat complete phrases.	___	___	___	___	___
5. I judge my ability to perform a language task.	___	___	___	___	___

Activity 12

Decide which of the tasks listed in Illustration 3 best addresses each of the first seven intelligences mentioned above. As a language learner yourself, which task would you like best?

Activities: Answer Key and Discussion

Activity 1

Answer:

- slot 1—b
- slot 2—a
- slot 3—e
- slot 4—c
- slot 5—d

This is an example which illustrates that sentences are based on patterns in which different parts of speech occupy different positions in a sentence. Given the sentence in this activity and the lists of words provided as possible fillers, only the above answers are possible. Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and other parts of speech occupy specific positions in a sentence relative to one another.

Activity 2

Answer:

- zimbie—can be replaced with words in *a*
- spleecky—can be replaced with words in *b*

Given the original sentences it is clear that only *nouns* in *a* can replace *zimbie* and only *adjectives* in *b* can replace *spleecky*. The positions of *zimbie* and *spleecky* in the sentence make it obvious that they are a noun and an adjective, respectively, even though they are nonsense words.

Activity 3

Some possible words that can be created using **act** as the main part of the word are:

- | | | |
|----------|------------|--------------|
| acts | react | proactive |
| actor | reactor | interact |
| actors | reactors | interaction |
| action | reaction | interactive |
| active | reactive | overreact |
| activate | reactivate | overreaction |

Activity 4

The following consonant clusters of sounds can occur at the beginning of English words:

- [spl-]—spleen, splash, etc
- [str-]—strike, straight, etc
- [pr-]—pretty, professional, etc
- [sm-]—smart, smell, etc
- [sn-]—snail, snow, etc
- [bl-]—blow, blue, etc

The following consonant clusters of sounds can occur at the end of English words:

- [-rp]—harp, sharp, etc
- [-mp]—limp, ramp, etc
- [-rst]-- burst, cursed, etc

The following consonant clusters of sounds cannot occur at either the beginning or the end of English words:

- *[stl]
- *[tls]
- *[ml]
- *[zk]

Note: the asterisk (*) is used conventionally to indicate any language form that is not possible or acceptable in a given language

Activity 5

The following are possible paraphrases for each of the given sentences:

- 1 a. It can be a nuisance to visit relatives.
- 1 b. Relatives who visit can be a nuisance.

- 2 a. Terry loves his wife and I love my wife.
- 2 b. Both Terry and I love his wife.

- 3 a. The chicken is cooked now and can be eaten.
- 3 b. The chicken is hungry and wants to eat.

- 4 a. The boy saw the man through a telescope.
- 4 b. The boy saw the man who was holding a telescope.

Activity 6

Both sentences in 1, 2, 3 and 4 have basically the same meaning. This shows that the same ideas can be expressed through different structural patterns or forms

Activity 7.

The following sentences would be considered acceptable by native speakers:

1, 2, 3, 5 and 7

Native speakers will find the remaining sentences unacceptable, and even though they probably would be unable to explain why they are unacceptable, they are still able to make this judgment based on their unconscious knowledge of the language. For example, to give an explicit explanation of why number 4 is unacceptable, one would have to know about transitive and intransitive verbs, about different categories of adjectives in terms of syntactic restrictions, and about transformations.

Activity 8

In dialog number 1, when Joe responds to Tom, he uses language that is too formal for the situation in terms of his relationship with his friend. Tom may interpret his choice of words as a sign of standoffishness. The same interpretation can occur when Alice in dialog number 2 uses her formal responses to Susan. In the dialog number 3, Bob uses a greeting to the president that is clearly too informal. The situations in dialogs number 4 and 5 illustrate how a listener can misinterpret, deliberately or otherwise, the communicative function of what the speaker has said.

Activity 9

Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 are about the type of motivation that learners have in learning a foreign language. Questions 5, 6, and 7 are about the affective factors of language learners, such as self-esteem, inhibition, anxiety.

Activity 10

Questions in this questionnaire refer to learning styles. Educators distinguish various learning styles based on these preferences, such as reflective and impulsive, visual and auditory styles. In language learning, learners differ in terms of whether they work better alone or with others, whether they like to do hands-on activities or more analytical activities, whether they get detailed instructions or are given open-ended descriptions of the learning tasks, etc.

Activity 11

Questions in this questionnaire refer to learners' strategies. Language learners may employ such strategies as selective attention, self-monitoring, repetition, inferencing, etc.

Activity 12

- **task 1** addresses bodily/kinesthetic intelligence
- **task 2** addresses musical intelligence
- **task 3** addresses interpersonal intelligence
- **task 4** addresses linguistic intelligence
- **task 5** addresses logical/mathematical intelligence
- **task 6** addresses spatial intelligence
- **task 7** addresses the intrapersonal intelligence

IX. HANDOUTS

Illustration 1

In this sample lesson, the teacher presents the following dialog in a handout:

- A: Excuse me. Can you please tell me where the restroom is?
B: Certainly. It's on the first floor.
A: Thank you.
B: Don't mention it.

The teacher reads the dialog aloud for the students; they repeat after the teacher; s/he asks the students to memorize the dialog; they perform it several times. This is then followed by the teacher asking the students to practice a pattern in the dialog by substituting some phrases in the appropriate slot. Every time a student makes the right substitution, the teacher praises him/her.

Could you please tell me where _____ is?

- the English Department
- the library
- the post office
- the grocery store

Certainly. It's _____.

- in the next building
- across the street
- around the corner
- behind this building

Illustration 2

The teacher prepares a lesson based on a particular communicative function. S/he does this by first providing the students with expressions for performing this communicative function. Then s/he groups the students in pairs and gives them an assignment of roles.

In each pair, student A is given the following description:

Imagine you are looking for the library. Your partner is a passer-by who may have the information you need. Ask for the information.

Student B is given the following;

Respond to your partner's questions.

Each student is also given a set of expressions useful in communicating the ideas they need to include in their dialog.

Student A's handout may include the following expressions:

- Excuse me. Could you (please) tell me the way to the library?
- Pardon me. Could you (please) tell me how to get to the library?
- (Excuse me.) Can you (please) tell me where the library is?
- (Excuse me.) How do I get to the library?
- Is this the way to the library?
- Do you know where the library is?

Student B's responses may include the following:

- Certainly. It's on the first floor.
- Sure, just follow the yellow line on the floor.
- Third floor, to the right of the stairs.
- Go to the next hallway and turn left. You can't miss it.
- Sorry, I don't know.
- I'm sorry, I'm new here too.

Illustration 3

Students in a language class are given a reading on the makeup of the population in the U.S. After this introduction to the topic, the students are given the following choice of tasks:

Task 1

Choose a recipe for any ethnic dish and prepare it for the class.

Task 2

Learn a song from another country and perform it for the class.

Task 3

In a group, prepare a presentation about one of the ethnic groups in the U.S.

Task 4

Prepare a speech discussing the contributions of immigrants to this country.

Task 5

Research and present data on the number of immigrants from various countries in the U.S. according to the last census. Calculate the percentages of different racial and ethnic groups in the overall population.

Task 6

Prepare a map of the United States that shows where the majority of the Hispanics and Asians live in this country.

Task 7

Write a journal entry reflecting on your feelings about the ethnic diversity in the U.S.

Illustration 4

The teacher selects a theme for a unit, for example, the role of immigration in U.S. history. S/he designs a series of activities to cover the topic with the students.

Task 1

The teacher asks the students to respond to a number of statements about immigration by stating whether they *strongly agree*, *agree*, *agree somewhat*, *disagree*, *strongly disagree*. Some possible statements are:

- The U.S. immigration policies are too strict.
- Too many immigrants come to the U.S. every year.
- Without the immigrants, the U.S. economy would suffer.
- Immigrants are a burden on the U.S. economy.
- Congress should tighten the immigration laws.
- The U.S. would not be as powerful as it is without the immigrants.

The students discuss their answers.

Task 2

The students are given a list of sentences that include new vocabulary from a text that will be used later. Each new word is italicized in the sentence, and for each, there is a list of either synonyms or definitions provided. The students are asked to guess the meaning of these words from the context of the sentences and to choose the correct answer. A possible sentence may be:

- A record number of immigrant children *pose* new problems for schools.
- a. get ready for photographs
 - b. ask
 - c. present

Task 3

The students are asked to read the text and pay attention to headings and subheadings. They are asked to turn the headings into questions and answer the questions when they read the text.

Task 4

After reading the text again, the students are asked to answer a series of questions based on the text.

Task 5

The students are asked to write a journal entry reflecting on the content of the reading and commenting on their understanding of the text or on their own experience with immigration-related issues.

Task 6

The students are asked to divide into two teams and prepare for a debate on whether immigration laws should be changed to allow fewer/more immigrants to enter the U.S.

Illustration 5

In a class that uses *Charlotte's Web* as the first novel to be read, the teacher assigns 10 pages of reading every day and asks the students to keep a double-entry journal. When the students are in class, they may be involved in the following types of activities:

Task 1

Free write on any topic of interest to you, for example, your favorite pet or a special place or your worst day.

Task 2

In your group, discuss the 10 pages that you read yesterday. Focus on things that you liked, didn't like, or didn't understand. Use your double-entry journal as the basis for your discussion.

Task 3

Take the point of view of Charlotte in a letter that you will write to Wilbur explaining why it is important for him to become a part of the community of animals in the pen.

Task 4

Step 1

Brainstorm ideas for an essay describing your best friend and explaining why s/he is your best friend.

Step 2

Compose a draft of your essay on the above topic.

Step 3

Read your partner's draft and complete these statements...

What I like the most about this piece is...

I would really like to hear about...

I don't quite understand...

If this were my paper, I would...

Step 4

Revise your essay using the comments from your readers.

Step 5

Using the inventory of error types that we have discussed, find and correct as many errors in your essay as you can.

XII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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