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The Questioning Process: An Approach to ESOL That Combines the Teaching and Learning of English with the Facilitation of Growth in Self and Cultural Awareness

Gordon Mathews

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THE QUESTIONING PROCESS:

AN APPROACH TO ESOL THAT COMBINES THE TEACHING
AND LEARNING OF ENGLISH WITH THE FACILITATION
OF GROWTH IN SELF AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

Gordon Mathews
B. A. Yale University, 1978

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Master of Arts in Teaching degree at the School for
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This project by Gordon Mathews is accepted in its present form.

Date: Oct. 2, 1980

Principal Advisor: Patrick R. Moran

Project Advisor: Howard A. [Signature]

ABSTRACT

This project delineates an approach to ESOL that combines the teaching and learning of English with the facilitation of growth in self and cultural awareness -- a greater knowledge of one's self and one's cultural molding. This approach involves the examination by students of items from American media, to understand what such items say, what they imply about American culture and for students' own culture(s), and what these implications mean for students themselves. The instructor facilitates this process through the progressive asking of questions -- thus the name 'the questioning process' -- and simultaneously monitors language usage by students' discussion for use in subsequent language instruction.

The approach delineated in this project evolves from the author's concerns over the political and cultural implications of ESOL. The project's preface is an analysis, subjective in tone, of global evolution, and of the role of American and of ESOL in that evolution. The project's chapters form an objective response to the subjective questions raised by the preface -- an approach to ESOL based on the Socratic method, delineated through a set of specific techniques and procedures in the ESOL classroom, and through a set of examples of and materials for this approach. The project's appendix is a narrative of some potentially helpful personal experiences using this approach.

The project is designed to be of use both to those ESOL teachers who wish to use only its techniques and materials, and to those who wish to consider it in depth, as a philosophically-thought-out approach to teaching ESOL.

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INTRODUCTION

This project sets forth an approach to teaching ESOL that combines the teaching and learning of English as a second language with the facilitation of growth in self and cultural awareness -- a greater knowledge of one's self and one's cultural molding. This approach involves, specifically, the examination by students of items from American media, to understand what such items say, what they imply about American culture and for students' own culture(s), and what these implications mean for students themselves. The instructor facilitates this process through the progressive asking of questions -- hence, the name I've given my approach: the questioning process -- and simultaneously monitors language use by students in discussion for use in subsequent language instruction.

The discussion of this approach over the course of the coming pages proceeds as follows: (1) The project's preface: an analysis, subjective and personal -- based on my own study and reflection -- of global evolution, and of the political and cultural implications of ESOL and of self and cultural awareness in this evolution; (2) the project's chapters (the bulk of the project): an objective response to the preface's analysis -- an approach to ESOL based on the Socratic method, delineated through a set of specific techniques and procedures in the ESOL classroom, and through

a set of examples of and materials for this approach; and

(3) The project's appendix: a narrative of some potentially helpful personal experiences using this approach.

The project is designed to be of use to those ESOL teachers who desire to use only its techniques and materials; it will, however, be of greatest benefit to those who consider it in depth as an approach to ESOL. The approach delineated in this project is a carefully-thought-out solution to a personal questioning as to the nature of the contemporary world's evolution and my small role within it; those who follow my path of reasoning, as shown in the pages to come, will be able to view this project's approach in its broadest context: the world as a whole and how one might best live within it.

The project proceeds, more specifically, along the following lines. There is first a brief forward, which tells of my personal background in writing this project. There is then the preface, which postulates the question, "Why should the teaching and learning of ESOL be linked with the pursuit of growth in self and cultural awareness?", and attempts to answer that question through an examination of the role of America and of ESOL in the contemporary world. The preface concludes, as a result of that examination, that any answer to the question can only be subjective, depending upon each ESOL teacher's personal approach to teaching -- my own personal answer forms this

project's raison d'ê[^]tre. The project's first chapter sets forth a process by which growth in self and cultural awareness may be facilitated -- a process by which the method of questioning typified by Socrates is applied to the examination of items from contemporary media, in such a way that the examiner is ultimately led to examine himself through questioning, and thereby comes to a fuller understanding of himself and his cultural molding. The project's second chapter considers how this process may be applied to ESOL, in such a way that growth in awareness is combined with the teaching and learning of English -- it delineates the resulting expansion of that process's steps and goals. The project's third chapter outlines, through a statement of steps and goals, a comprehensive example and a step-by-step delineation of practical techniques, how this process may actually proceed in the ESOL classroom; and the fourth chapter examines the selection and use of materials from American media -- first through discussion, then through a series of ten examples of items from American media and their accompanying questionings. The project's appendix sets forth my own experiences and suggestions as to the questioning process's procedure and materials for the ESOL classroom; the appendix thus forms a subjective addenda to the objective delineations of chapters three and four.

A note before proceeding: English has no sex-neutral pronoun, and using "he or she" and "his or her" in every paragraph and on every page makes for a highly awkward writing style. Accordingly, I've used the male pronoun to refer to any hypothetical student or teacher -- while this pronoun has definite connotations of sex, and of sexism, connotations I don't particularly want to convey, I have found no suitable alternative to its use.

FOREWORD: MY BACKGROUND IN WRITING THIS PROJECT

Before proceeding with the body of this project, I will tell briefly of my personal background in formulating the approach which this project delineates. I take this step because, as I've indicated in the introduction, that approach is not one which simply sprang forth onto these pages detached from my concerns as to what it means to be a teacher of ESOL, and a person in this world -- rather, it is directly a product of those concerns. With the next few pages, I seek to place the delineation of the questioning process which is this project in the context of those personal insights and experiences from which it came.

I first came upon the questioning process while I was a sophomore in college. I was studying philosophy, and while I was enjoying my studies, they seemed to lack the personal meaning for me that I'd hoped they would have -- Plato and Descartes and Kant I found interesting and absorbing, but all the same, the questions that these philosophers were asking and exploring were not questions which had much link with my own life and experiences. One fall afternoon, I remember putting down Plato's Dialogues and picking up a copy of Time Magazine and just for fun trying out what I understood of Socrates' method -- a method of asking people questions in order to bring them to a deeper understanding of what it is that they say and believe (a

method to be examined in depth in the coming chapter) -- on the article I was reading. The results were interesting: I learned some things about this culture and about my own thinking processes, and I saw in a larger sense how I could make the philosophy I was studying relevant to me -- I could take its methods and apply them not to abstruse concerns about the nature of ultimate reality, but to the more immediate concerns of this reality, and how best to live within it.

Two years later (having sporadically pursued the above discovery in the interim), I began teaching English to a class of inner-city high-school students two hours a day, twice a week. At first, not knowing what else to do, I tried teaching literature -- contemporary short stories -- which, for all my efforts, seemed to simply bore my students. In desperation, I hearkened back to my earlier thoughts about philosophy and its contemporary application -- and brought into class an advertisement for a new car with a beautiful woman sprawled on its hood, taped the ad to the board and asked, "What do you see in this ad? What is this ad trying to sell? How?". The class was bewildered at first, but at my prodding, my very rough approximation of the Socratic method, it gradually came to life. When the class session was done, several students told me that they'd never thought about those kinds of things before.

Over the next year of teaching (until I graduated from college), I slowly refined my approach -- bit by bit figured out how to extrapolate a process of questioning in my own mind to fit the needs and interests of a classroom full of people with backgrounds and experiences very different from mine. And it worked, though it took some interesting turns -- among our other pursuits, we spent a month analyzing kung-fu movies: their context, their assumptions, and their implications.

The September following my graduation from college, I came to S.I.T.; and, because I wanted to be open to ESOL methodology and to the new ideas I knew I'd be exposed to, I laid aside in my mind my past teaching experiences and insights. The dream I had upon entering the MAT program was one of travelling around the world in years to come in a spirit of give-and-take, teaching my language and culture to foreigners and in turn learning their languages and cultures. I knew from dream's birth, in the back of my mind, that the reality was far more complex and ambiguous than my dream would allow; but it wasn't until I'd spent some weeks at S.I.T., and had had some long conversations with former Peace Corps English teachers, that I began to fully conceive of the ambiguity of the role of ESOL in the contemporary world, the inextricable link of ESOL with America.

It is quite possible that, had I taught ESOL for a year or for half-a-dozen years before entering the MAT

Program, the questions that so concerned me during my initial months in the program would have resolved themselves through experience's course. But I hadn't taught ESOL, and those questions did concern me, greatly so -- my presence in the MAT Program became, in those months, increasingly difficult for me to justify to myself. Compounding my inner difficulties was the fact that the MAT Program did not seem to recognize the importance, or even the existence, of these questions (I brought up the subject of the cultural implications of ESOL in two of my fall classes, but the issue did not touch a common chord, and died). As one new to teaching ESOL, I felt adrift, for I could not bridge the gap between the global concerns I was feeling and the methods of teaching ESOL that I was being taught: Silent Way and especially CLL seemed to me to be interesting and effective ways of teaching, but they said nothing to me about those larger questions, not "how teach ESOL?", but "why teach ESOL?", and "what are the implications of teaching ESOL?" -- and these were the questions whose resolution I sought. From talking with instructors, I gathered that an implicit assumption of the program was that, if the teacher of ESOL teaches in a humanistic way -- a way that fosters interpersonal security and openness, then that will serve, in its small way, to make the world a better place to live in. It seemed to me, and still seems so, that while teaching humanistically is important, it is not, in and of itself, enough. It is not

enough to help people become more open with one another, in or out of the classroom -- they must also become aware of the forces which shape their lives which make them the beings that they are. Only in this way can ESOL serve as something more than the unwitting tool of these forces.

As this insight became clear to me, I began to gropingly conceive of an approach to ESOL which could facilitate such awareness -- an approach combining my earlier use of the Socratic Method with inner-city students with the new techniques of ESOL instruction that I was learning. Throughout the late fall, I struggled to formulate this approach; by the time I arrived in Mexico, I felt ready to apply it to the actuality of the ESOL classroom.

At first it did not work well: My high-proficiency classes were reluctant to delve into themselves in pursuit of awareness -- they seemed to want to learn solely English grammar or else tell jokes -- and my low-proficiency classes I simply confused. Over the course of weeks, however, the questioning process made its effective transition from my mind to the classroom; by classes' end, my students were enthusiastically engaged in the questioning process, and seemed to be, through that process, simultaneously learning English and growing in awareness.

Last spring at S.I.T. I spent honing the questioning process still further in my mind -- this time through the insights arrived at in animated conversations with a number

of my fellow MATs, for whom the winter's teaching experience had had the effect of making more concerned about the implications of ESOL -- and last summer I once again tested it in the classroom, at Yale University's ESOL Program. At the point of this writing -- with a year's hard thought and practice behind me -- I feel ready to explicate this approach in the context of an IPP (although I'm well aware that I have a great deal more to learn!). The pages that follow do so.

PREFACE

THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ENGLISH
AND THE PURSUIT OF GROWTH IN
SELF AND CULTURAL AWARENESS -- WHY SHOULD THEY BE LINKED?

This project delineates an approach to ESOL -- the questioning process -- that combines the teaching and learning of English with the pursuit of growth in self and cultural awareness. Before proceeding with that delineation, however, I must first address the fundamental question: Why should there be any such combination? What does the pursuit of growth in self and cultural awareness have to do with the teaching and learning of ESOL? In this preface, I seek to show that the link between those two endeavours is not arbitrary but vital and essential.

My argument will proceed as follows: Upon defining the terms 'self' and 'cultural awareness', I will embark on a global analysis, examining the increasing shrinkage and linkage of the contemporary world, the dominant role of America in that process through its money and its media, and then the role of ESOL in the contemporary world. Through this global analysis, we will find that the role of ESOL in the world is not less ambiguous as to its ultimate meaning and significance than is the role of America in the world -- that ESOL is not free from cultural implications due to the role of America in the world. From this conclusion, I will formulate my personal response: That, as a teacher of ESOL,

I must teach in such a way as to enable students to become aware of the cultural implications of ESOL, and that these implications ultimately involve the self and cultural awareness of my students and myself.

This preface sets forth, first in a global way, then in a personal way, the *raison d'etre* for this project. While what follows in this preface is not essential to an understanding of the specifics of the questioning process -- you, reader, may skip it if it does not seem relevant to your concerns -- its perusal is essential if you are to understand the questioning process from the philosophical standpoint with which it was conceived.

Definition of 'Self and Cultural Awareness'

...'an approach to ESOL that combines the teaching and learning of English with the pursuit of growth in self and cultural awareness'. The first element of this combination -- the teaching and learning of English -- is relatively unambiguous; the second element, however, is more problematic: What exactly does 'the pursuit of growth in self and cultural awareness' mean? Let us now deal with its terms one by one.

Many volumes have been written on the term 'culture' and all that it connotes; in this project, I am primarily interested in the individual and psychological aspects of culture, culture as "a way of thinking, feeling, believing"¹ "...located in the hearts and minds of men".² In the context

of our discussion of awareness, I define 'culture' as being, 'that which molds individuals to think and act in accordance with the environment in which they live'. (Later in this project -- from its second chapter on -- culture takes on a broader connotation than this; it is viewed as 'the way of life and worldview of a people', as well as 'that which molds individuals...'). What does this concretely mean? Simply, this: A typical American, a typical Japanese, and a typical Mexican have very different ideas about life, on many different levels -- their views of work, of status, of sexual roles, of the meaning of life itself, are fundamentally different; indeed, perhaps ultimately untranslatable into one another's terms. It is culture -- the molding of the individual to fit his environment, the society and its way of life and thought into which he is born -- which creates those basic differences of world view between individuals of different societies.

"Our ideas, our values, even our emotions ... are cultural products -- products manufactured, indeed, out of tendencies, capacities and dispositions with which we were born, but manufactured nonetheless."³ Each of us is the individual that we are primarily due to our cultural molding, in all the unique varieties that that molding has taken in each of us. In accordance with this, I define 'self' as being 'the human individual thinking and acting on the basis of his cultural molding'. To return to our example, while

the American, the Japanese, and the Mexican share certain basic human needs -- the need to eat, to sleep, to engage in sex, and, on another level, the need for self-respect and respect from others and for reassurance against the fear of death -- the ways in which these individuals perceive these basic needs and meet these basic needs, and thus the way they see the world and think and act in the world, are fundamentally different, due to their different cultural moldings. (This is not the place to explore what these differences are; I recommend that the interested reader study Ruth Benedict's The Chrysanthemum and the Sword (a study of Japanese culture and mind) and Octavio Paz' The Labyrinth of Solitude (a study of Mexican culture and mind) to obtain an idea as to the differences in mind and self of different cultures. These works are listed in the bibliograph at preface's end.

The above definition of 'self', it is essential to note, does not state that the individual self is entirely determined by his cultural molding -- while each of us necessarily thinks and acts on the basis of our cultural molding -- "there is no such thing as human nature independent of culture"⁴ -- we also, as human beings, possess the power of intelligence to understand our cultural molding, to understand, at least to some extent, why we think and act as we do. This I define as 'awareness': 'knowledge of one's self -- one's thoughts, actions, beliefs, values, hopes,

fears, dreams -- and of that self's cultural molding; understanding of who one is and how one came to be the being that one is'. To return again to our example, while the American, the Japanese, and the Mexican may see the world in basically different ways, if they can, through the pursuit of awareness, each come to understand that their individual views of the world are the products of their own particular cultural moldings, rather than being the one 'right' and 'true' way to see the world, then they can begin to understand and respect one another's views and selves -- and thus, perhaps, to live in peace together.

The exercise of one's mind in pursuit of awareness is an exercise which is in itself culturally molded; we are the conditioned selves that we are, and we can only remain those selves -- we can neither completely understand those selves, nor transcend those selves (except for at isolated moments, perhaps). What we can do, though, is learn to understand ourselves and our molding a bit better, learn to see beyond ourselves and our particulars a bit farther -- while we cannot attain complete awareness, we can grow in awareness. Such growth, as I see it, is an unambiguous good -- for through it, we may come to better understand why we are as we are and why others are as they are; we may come to see beyond our differences and conflicts with those others to that common ground upon which we all stand as human beings.

(And just think of what the world would be like if the mass of human beings were to attain such an awareness!)

A Global Analysis: A Subjective Viewpoint

The meaning of the statement with which I began this chapter should now be clear (at least abstractly -- by preface's end, the practical import of my foregoing definitions will have become apparent). What is not yet clear is the reason for the combination it proposes: 'growth in self and cultural awareness' may be a laudable goal, but what does it have to do with the practical reality of the ESOL classroom, the teaching of a new language to foreigners?

My personal pursuit of an answer to this question takes me far afield from what is generally thought of as being the province of ESOL -- over the next few pages, I will examine the contemporary world's transformation, and America's role in that transformation, an examination subjective in tone, based on months and years of my reading and reflection. The global path of argument I take is necessary in that I believe that the deepest and best reasons for pursuing self and cultural awareness in the ESOL classroom are not to be found in the ESOL classroom, but in that larger world of which it (and you and I) is a small but real part. The teaching and learning of ESOL is not an activity which takes place in a vacuum -- ESOL, in all its implications, cannot, I believe, be understood solely in terms of itself, but only in terms of the

whole world we're in (as much as such a thing is possible). The pages that follow set forth a brief summation of my own efforts to arrive at such an understanding.

The Transformation of the Contemporary World

The world of the present is a world in upheaval. "Until the industrial revolution in which we live, the basic economic and political life of man had remained essentially the same since neolithic days"⁵; since the industrial revolution began, and especially in the past century, the economic and political life of many, if not most, men on the globe has been radically transformed. This transformation has many complex facets; two of the most important of these facets can be summed up in the terms 'contraction' and 'expansion' -- the contraction of the world in which men live, and the expansion of men's minds in seeing and understanding that world.

Contraction: The contemporary world is linked as never before. The diffusion of automobiles, airplanes, factories, hospitals, telephones, radios, newspapers... -- in short, modernity -- to most corners of the inhabited world, is evidence of an emerging global network of technology, commerce, and communications, a network of mutual dependency. "No country is self-sufficient today ... all countries are increasingly linked in a single economic system"⁶ . . . "The world community appears as a ... collection of interdependent

parts rather than a group of largely independent entities, as was the case in the past"⁷.

Expansion: The horizons of men's minds are being broadened, as never before, to encompass the world. Up until fifty or one hundred years ago, the world that was seen through one's eyes and within one's circumscribed day-to-day existence, the world of one's family, one's village, one's region, was for most men the only world that existed. This is no longer true. Today, for that majority of the world's people exposed to radio, or newspapers, or television, the world of their existence becomes, at least to some extent, the whole world, this planet we live on as brought to their immediate environment by media. Increasingly, men no longer live in their isolated villages, but in that "global village"⁸ of which we are all members.

The Role of America in the Contemporary World

'Contraction' and 'expansion' are two ways (the first 'objective', the second 'subjective') of looking at the process by which the world in which people live becomes increasingly a world which all people share in common. Gradually but inexorably the different cultures within which people are molded are becoming linked and fused, through the common goods that people throughout the world use and through the media that people throughout the world perceive. This global process is taking place largely through the influence

of America -- and in particular, America's goods and America's media -- upon the contemporary world.

Evidence for this influence is not difficult to find; for starters, one might consult the works cited in this chapter's bibliography. A few statistics culled from those works, telling of America's monetary dominance of the world (and thus, indirectly, of the worldwide dissemination of American products): "America accounts for one-third of the world's total productive capacity"⁹ . . . "U.S. companies account for 60 to 65% of all foreign investment in the world"¹⁰ . . . "By 1980 [it was predicted in 1973] multinational companies will account for 75% of all the world's manufacturing assets"¹¹ . . . and three-fourths of the world's thirty largest multinational companies are American based.¹² Comprehensive statistics as to the influence of America's media upon the world are more difficult to come by, but a few particular facts seem to reveal the larger picture: "In 1971, the Associated Press [America's largest news agency] estimated that over one billion people outside the U.S. saw or heard the AP news each day."¹³ "The Spanish edition of Reader's Digest is now the most widely-read magazine in Latin America."¹⁴ As of 1973, only five countries, of the 106 in the world having TV networks, did not broadcast American programs.¹⁵ In 1969, approximately 80% of Latin America's TV programs broadcast were produced in the U.S.¹⁶ As one American commentator has written:

"Everyone acknowledges that we live in a contracting world, where human beings, though countries and continents apart, are ever-increasingly sensitive to one another. America's mass-media merchants, for better or worse, function to make this so."¹⁷

America's influence upon the world, in terms of its money and its media, is not at all difficult to ascertain; what is difficult to ascertain -- indeed, perhaps impossible to ascertain -- is the significance of this influence. What does America's influence ultimately mean for the world? The answer to this question seems to depend upon who one reads -- and who one believes.

"Some believe the multinational corporations to be the key to modernization of the global society, a major force in reducing international conflict and eliminating global poverty. To these, it is the most effective global disseminator of technology, and a creator of wealth. To critics, it is a mercenary institution, designed to exploit labor and the poor countries, profit-oriented and devoid of social conscience."¹⁸

Thus, a pro-corporate thinker states: "Few things are more hopeful for the future than the growing determination of American business to regard national boundaries as no longer fixing the horizons of their corporate activity"¹⁹; while an anti-corporate thinker writes:

"With such a great stake in preserving the Third World as a Western-dominated plantation, the U.S. has mustered all its power to thwart genuine nationalistic movements . . . Despite the democratic verbage, the West constitutes an aristocracy enjoying wealth produced by third world soil and manpower."¹⁹

Who is correct? Who knows?

As the significance of America's money in the world seems to be problematic for the impartial seeker of the truth of the matter, so too is the significance in the world of America's media. One authority writes: "It may well be that mass communications ... are about to play a key part in the greatest social revolution of all time -- the economic and social uplift of 2/3 of the world's people."²⁰; while another states:

Whatever else current and future communications revolutions produce, they will produce the increased internationalization of consumption, leisure patterns, youth culture, education, language, and consciousness generally. In this view, the Americanization of everyone still has a long way to go. Such improbable sights as hot-dogs, American-style drum major-ettes, blue jeans and T-shirts saying 'Ohio State University' will be found not only in small provincial French towns, but around the entire world.²²

More directly stated:

Authentic traditional and local culture in many parts of the world is being battered out of existence by the indiscriminate dumping of large quantities of slick commercial and media products, mainly from the United States.²³

I could continue to cite such diverse opinions ad nauseam, but I think that the point has been made: While the facts of America's contemporary influence upon the globe, in terms of its money and its media, are clear, the meaning and significance of this influence is not at all clear -- different authorities have radically different views as to this meaning and significance, views apparently grounded in their

different ideological convictions. Who is correct? My own view is that such convictions are products of culture, as we have defined it: "that which molds individuals to think and act in accordance with the human environment in which they live". One thinker believes that American money and media will save the world from misery and chaos, because the particularity of his molding from birth on, and all his experience and insight and study and ideological convictions based upon that molding, and furthering that molding, have led him to interpret in such a light what he sees of the world's situation. Another thinker believes that American money and media are destroying the best of the world, because the particularity of his molding, and his experience and study and insight and ideological convictions based upon that molding, and furthering that molding, have led him to see the world's situation in another and different light. As to which of these thinkers' views, which of their convictions is more correct, more true -- who, at this point, can possibly know? The correctness or incorrectness of these thinkers' convictions in terms of their accordance with reality simply cannot be ascertained, for there seems to be no objective criteria upon which to make any such judgement -- the facts, even if they be agreed upon, lend themselves to a multiplicity of different interpretations, interpretations apparently based on the different views of the world, and thus the different particular cultural moldings, of those who interpret.

My research thus far as to America's role in the contemporary world has barely scratched the surfaces; I will continue that research in months and years to come, and it is possible that I will eventually come to understand much more than I do now. At this point, however, I can only admit to being baffled: I simply do not know what to believe as to the ultimate significance of America's role in the contemporary world, nor do I know of any clear way in which to determine what to believe.

The Role of ESOL in the Contemporary World

With that inconclusive conclusion behind us, let us now turn to a consideration of ESOL. The role of America's money and America's media in the contemporary world seems to be ambiguous as to its significance. Is the role of America's language in the contemporary world less ambiguous as to its significance? The answer to this query seems to be 'yes', and 'no', depending, once again, on one's point of view. When ESOL is viewed purely as a language, an international language bridging the world's linguistic barriers, its global dissemination can only be seen as an obvious benefit for the world; but when ESOL is viewed as the language of America, its global spread seems no less ambiguous in its significance than the global spread of America's money and media throughout the world. Both these views have their arguments and their merits -- let us consider these views in turn.

Supporting the first view is the fact that -- due largely to Britain's global empire of centuries past, as well as to America's influence of the present -- English is now "the most widely spoken language on earth ... At least one out of five people on earth can speak it fluently or haltingly ... They are to be found throughout every continent, and they include people of all races, nationalities, and religions."²⁴ English is thus the obvious choice to serve as an international language for the world. No other language approaches its worldwide diffusion to such large numbers of people -- and international endeavors of all sorts reflect that fact: "English is unquestionably and increasingly the language of science throughout the world ... With each passing year, English becomes increasingly the language of education ... English is today the language of international business"²⁵. "English today accounts for the major part of the world's communications by mail, telegraph, radio, and television"²⁶. English is the language of air-traffic-control throughout the world. "[Eighty] of the 126 nations in the U.N. now take their working papers in English"²⁷. Nations of all different political systems and cultural traditions have made English a key element of their educational curriculum, nations as diverse as Mexico, Sweden, China, Japan . . . (the list covers much of the globe); because so many nations so diverse in every way have turned to ESOL, it would seem that they have done so not primarily out of

political or cultural affiliation with America, or out of desire for America's technology and goods -- rather, they have espoused ESOL because English, far more than any other tongue, is a truly international language -- and in our increasingly-linked world, it becomes increasingly essential to know.

But there are cracks in this view -- evidence which, while not sufficient to disprove it, does serve to reveal it as being less than the complete picture. I've found little information as to the nature of English's use in various specialized international endeavors, but M. A. Tamers article "Must we All Speak English?" in Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists²⁸ shows very clearly that, in that field, there are those who view English not as simply an international language, but as the language of contemporary America and its hegemony over much of the world. As for English instruction in many of the world's nations, it seems clear that, in at least some instances, such instruction or lack of it is directly linked with a nation's political and economic and cultural relations with America and with the West. Two recent cases in point are Iran and Communist China.

In Iran, with the overthrow of the Shah -- a man of relatively pro-Western cultural and political slant -- and his replacement by a government holding traditional Islamic views, the extensive ESOL instruction taking place in Iran

came to a quick halt; as the new Islamic government made quite clear, it sought to purge Iran of all American influence -- and that included America's language.²⁹

In Communist China, on the other hand, ESOL has recently been welcomed with open arms (its schoolchildren in the past year have, by government decree, begun learning English from the third grade on) -- a development that occurs subsequent to China's new-found warmth towards America, beginning in the early 1970s, and is connected with a massive current effort by China to modernize its industries with the help of Western technology and knowledge -- and as well, with the extensive introduction of American products to China.³⁰ Thus, in these two examples, the rejection of America and the West's influence has meant the rejection of ESOL as well; the acceptance of America and the West's influence has meant the espousal of ESOL.

The preceding pages' fragmentary evidence leads to a very large question -- one which, though not fully answerable (in terms of this inquiry, and perhaps in terms of any inquiry, given evidence currently available) -- is nonetheless the essential question to be considered in terms of what we're trying to ascertain: What is the predominant global perception of ESOL? How is it generally viewed by the world's nations? and the world's people? Is it seen primarily as an international language? Or, as America's language, with all the implications that view entails? The

answer, one would suspect, lies somewhere between these two black-and-white alternatives: ESOL is seen, in the largest sense, as both the language of international communication and as the language of America -- and particularly as a language which facilitates the spread of Western and American technology and goods and media throughout the world. There seems to be little to go on in the way of published facts to determine the correctness of this answer, or of any answer to the above essential questions; in the absence of any such facts or conclusive answers, we must accept the ambiguity of our own very general answer: English is the world's international language, but is as well America's language, and a path to American technology and goods and media -- and no consideration of the role of ESOL in the world can afford to ignore that fact.

Before moving on, let us consider briefly what America's social critics have had to say about the use of its tongue as the world's international language. We find mirrored in America's commentators the same concerns we have been discussing in the past pages -- while one commentator fervently declares:

We should make it clear that we do not seek national advantage. We offer the world our language because it is the only one with the possibility for becoming a common medium for better understanding and cooperation -- for the good of all.³¹

Another, as if in cautionary reply, writes:

English speakers point triumphantly to the fact that more and more people are learning English, and think their language is going to achieve a world-wide status unofficially, and, so to speak, by default. What they overlook is the fact that in far too many quarters, the English language is viewed as the mouth-piece of a real or fancied Anglo-American cultural, political, and economic imperialism.³²

Other writers, among them the anthropologist Margaret Mead³³, have suggested that Esperanto be promulgated as the world's second language, rather than English -- for Esperanto would be free of the cultural and political and economic implications that English bears, if not in fact, in much of the world's eyes. While this suggestion may be chimerical, due to the fact that very few people in the world speak Esperanto, it seems to be a reflection of the doubtful light in which its proponents view English -- the world's obvious candidate for an international language, but disqualified by those implications it cannot break free from in its diffusion around the world.

A Personal Response

The conclusion, then, that we must draw from our discussion of the past six pages is that, while English is closer to being the world's international language than any other the world now possesses, it also is not separable, in much of the world's eyes, from America and its role in the world. We've seen that the significance of America's role

in the world is one which is ambiguous, depending upon what ideology one holds, depending upon what one believes; the same conclusion we must thus also draw in our consideration of ESOL and its role in the world -- in that the role of ESOL in the world seems to be inextricably linked with the role of America in the world, it is not less ambiguous in its ultimate significance than is the role of America in the world. The question we must now consider is: What does this mean for the teacher of ESOL?

One answer to this question -- an answer not without its merits or its advocates -- is, nothing: The global role of America and of ESOL simply has no relationship to or significance for the ESOL classroom; the business of the instructor is to teach the specific points of the English language as effectively as possible to those who seek to learn that language, and no more than that. Needless to say, I disagree with this view -- the ESOL classroom, as I've earlier stated, does not stand in a vacuum but in a world, of which it is a small but real part; the students who learn that language in the classroom then go into the world, to use that language as they will. To me this means that, as an ESOL instructor, I must teach in such a way as to not only convey to students the structure of the English language but, as well, to enable students to become more aware of the implications of ESOL, implications stemming from the fact that English is the language of the most powerful nation in the world, a nation which dominates much of the rest of

the world. The forthcoming project is, in part, a result of that conviction.

But there's more to be considered than that. At the start of this preface, the question was asked: "Why should there be any link between the teaching and learning of English and the pursuit of self and cultural awareness?"; and it was stated that the purpose of this preface was to show that "the link between those two endeavors is not arbitrary but vital and essential". It should by now be apparent that, in an objective sense, I can show no such thing -- for our global analysis of pages past may lead to a multiplicity of different conclusions by different instructors of ESOL; each instructor must decide for himself what the global role of America and of ESOL means in terms of his personal approach to ESOL. In the coming pages, I will discuss what the foregoing global analysis means for me as a teacher of ESOL, and how it shapes the approach to ESOL which this project will delineate. While this discussion will obviously be a subjective one, I believe that it may be of value to you who read it -- for my thoughts as to my role as a teacher of ESOL can perhaps spur you further in your own thoughts, in whatever direction those thoughts may take.

The ambiguous nature of the global role of ESOL leads me to seek to teach in such a way as to make students aware of the cultural implications of ESOL. What are these implications and what does it mean to try to make students aware

of them? Let us backtrack: In the first pages of this preface, we defined culture as being 'that which molds individuals to think and act in accordance with the human environment in which they live'; and we defined awareness as being 'knowledge of one's self and of one's cultural molding'. Later, we looked at the world's current process of transformation -- its contraction; its increasing economic interdependence; the diffusion of technology and goods throughout the globe -- and its expansion: the ever-broadening minds of the world's inhabitants due to the world-wide diffusion of media; the creation of a 'global village'. We then saw that these global processes are due largely to America's influence upon the world and, in particular, to the dissemination throughout the globe of America's money and America's media. Putting all this together, we see that people's human environments throughout much of the globe are being shaped by the presence of goods and media that are largely either of American origin or shaped by American influence -- American culture thus plays a significant part in the cultural molding of people throughout the globe. Thus, to enable people to become more aware of the cultural implications of ESOL means ultimately to enable people to become more aware of their own cultural molding -- to enable them to grow in self and cultural awareness.

This analysis may, perhaps, initially seem far-fetched to one who considers it; if so, I think that a bit of further consideration, in light of our preceding global analysis, will reveal it to be not so far-fetched after all. Reexamine, say, the statistics telling of the global spread of America's media, presented on 19; these statistics leave little doubt that America's media is reaching masses of people all over the world -- entering their environments, shaping them by what it tells them. The molding of people throughout the world is more and more a molding of which -- or at least part of which -- we all share in common, due in large part to America's media and goods and culture; awareness of the implications of ESOL means awareness of the role of America in the world -- its media, its economy, its culture -- which is, ultimately, an awareness of who one is and how one got to be that way. Thus, because of my concerns over the cultural implications of ESOL, I seek to teach ESOL in such a way as to not only enable students to learn English but, as well, to facilitate their growth in self and cultural awareness.

There is, however, a more deeply personal reason for my approach than that cited above, which I will now discuss. In the definitions which opened this preface, I spoke briefly of my concept of awareness -- awareness is the capacity to rise above one's self and one's cultural molding, the particular circumstances of one's existence, to see one's self, others, the world, in an objective and compassionate way.

Awareness, as I have defined it, I believe to be an unambiguously positive state of being.

I want to spend my life and my career engaged in a pursuit that is unambiguously positive -- a pursuit that, in a small way, will serve to make the world a better place to live in. Teaching ESOL in and of itself is, to my mind, not such a pursuit -- for the ultimate implications of the role of ESOL in the world are ambiguous, just as are the ultimate implications of the role of America in the world. I'm simply not sure about the implications of ESOL -- ultimately good, ultimately bad, who knows? I'm simply not sure about the implications of the influence of America over the contemporary world -- ultimately good, ultimately bad, who knows? All I know is that awareness is an ultimate good, the only ultimate good of which, in this ambiguous world of the present, I feel certain. Accordingly, I seek to teach ESOL -- by personal circumstance, my chosen profession -- in such a way as to enable students to not only learn English, but to as well attain a greater awareness of themselves, of their particular cultural molding, and of their larger culture, the world as a whole.

Such attainment cannot be forced -- the impetus for growth in awareness cannot come from others but only from within one's self. If, however, such an impetus exists in students (and I myself have yet to teach an ESOL class where students did not feel such an impetus -- though its emergence

in class may take time), then it is possible to teach ESOL in such a way that students not only learn English but perhaps gain in awareness as well. This project delineates an approach to ESOL that combines the teaching and learning of English with the facilitation of growth in self and cultural awareness. In this preface, I have explained why, for me, that combination is essential. In the chapters to come, I will delineate my approach to that combination.

Summary

The approach to ESOL delineated in this project is one which combines the teaching and learning of English with the facilitation of growth in self and cultural awareness. Self and cultural awareness I define as being knowledge of one's self and one's molding; an understanding of who one is and how one came to be who one is. To understand why the pursuit of self and cultural awareness should be combined with the teaching and learning of English, we entered upon a global analysis (since the ESOL classroom does not exist in a vacuum but within the larger world): We found that the role of America in the world's current transformation is an enormous one, but that the ultimate meaning and significance of this role is ambiguous; and because ESOL seems to be inextricably linked with America in much of the world's eyes, it too is ambiguous as to its ultimate meaning and significance in the world. From such a global view, each teacher of ESOL can

only draw his own conclusions, based on his own philosophy of teaching; my own conclusion is that I want to teach ESOL in such a way as to not only teach students English, but to as well enable students to become more aware of the cultural implications of ESOL -- implications which ultimately involve the self and cultural awareness of each of us. More personally, I want to teach ESOL in a way that is unambiguously positive in its implications (as much as such a thing is possible) -- and, whereas ESOL in all its implications is not unambiguously positive, growth in awareness is. Thus, I seek to teach ESOL in such a way that the teaching and learning of English is combined with the facilitation of growth in self and cultural awareness.

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Footnotes

1. Kluckhorn, p. 23.
2. Geertz, p. 11 (quoting the anthropologist Ward Goodenough).
3. Geertz, p. 50.
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5. Durant, Will, Our Oriental Heritage, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1954.
6. Brown, p. 192.
7. Meadows, p. 18.
8. Read, p. 21 (quoting Marshall McLuhan).
9. Brown, p. 358.
10. Turgendhat, p. 24.
11. Brown, p. 217 (quoting the economic analyst Richard Barber).
12. Brown, pp. 214-215.
13. Tunstall, p. 23.
14. Read, p. 8.
15. Read, p. 23.
16. Tunstall, p. 39.
17. Read, p. 22.
18. Brown, pp. 209-210.
19. Schiller, Mass Communication and American Empire, p. 16 (quoting George W. Ball).
20. Carrier, p. 11.
21. Schram, p. 91.
22. Tunstall, p. 273.

Footnotes (cont.)

23. Tunstall, p. 57.
24. Farb, p. 312.
25. Brown, pp. 271-272.
26. Farb, p. 312.
27. Brown, p. 271.
28. Tamers.
29. As told in a personal letter from an Iranian friend in Tehran, December 1979.
30. Newsweek, July 9, 1979; TESOL Quarterly, December 1979; "China in the 80's"; Seymour Topping, New York Times Magazine, February 3, 1980.
31. McGhee, p. 4.
32. Pei, p. 23.
33. Mead, pp. 148-152.

CHAPTER ONE

THE QUESTIONING PROCESS -- A MEANS OF FACILITATING
GROWTH IN SELF AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

This project delineates an approach to ESOL that combines the teaching and learning of English with the facilitation of growth in self and cultural awareness. In this initial chapter, we will deal with the latter half of that combination. This chapter explains and outlines a process -- the questioning process -- by which growth in self and cultural awareness may be facilitated; in subsequent chapters, we will explore how this method may be used in the ESOL classroom.

The chapter proceeds as follows: We initially define the questioning process in three progressively-more-comprehensive ways; in chapter's course, we discuss those definitions in turn. The first such discussion deals with the questioning process and its facilitation of growth in self and cultural awareness. The second discussion deals with the Socratic Method: What it is and how it has been adapted to fit the questioning process. The third discussion delineates the practical procedure of the questioning process, through discussion and through two examples, and then examines the questioning process as formulated to see how it meets its goal of facilitating growth in self and cultural awareness.

Definition of the Questioning Process

Let us as the outset define the questioning process.

I set forth three definitions, progressively more specific:

1. The questioning process is a means through which growth in self and cultural awareness may be facilitated.
2. The questioning process is a means of pursuing growth in self and cultural awareness through the Socratic Method: the asking and answering in dialogue of progressively-deeper, more probing, questions.
3. The questioning process is a process by which different items from contemporary media are examined, to understand what they say, what they imply, and what they mean for us who examine them. It is a process which utilizes items from contemporary media as starting points and catalysts, from which to arrive at a deeper self and cultural awareness through question and answer in dialogue that is progressively more personally-involving and self-searching.

These definitions are difficult to fully understand in the bare form in which they are presented above. Accordingly, the remainder of this chapter will consist of an examination of each of these definitions in turn. Through such examination, we will come to understand exactly what the questioning

process is: its ultimate aims, and the nature of the procedure through which it pursues those aims.

The Questioning Process and Growth in Self and Cultural Awareness

The questioning process is a means through which growth in self and cultural awareness may be facilitated.

We defined self and cultural awareness in the preface to this project; but let us now briefly go over those definitions once more. Culture we defined as 'that which molds individuals to think and act in accordance with their human environment'; self we defined as 'the human individual thinking and acting on the basis of his cultural molding'; awareness we defined as 'knowledge of one's self and of that self's cultural molding; understanding of who one is and how one came to be who one is'. Self and cultural awareness, as we came to understand that concept in the preface, is an ultimate good -- it is that which enables a person to see beyond himself and his molding, to understand why he is the way he is and others are as they are; it is that which enables a person to see beyond the particulars of his circumstances, to that common ground upon which we all stand as human beings.

The questioning process will not enable one who uses it to attain complete self and cultural awareness. Such a state may not be attainable by human beings; we are, after all, the molded selves and personalities that we are, and we can

neither leave nor fully understand ourselves. We can, however, come to understand ourselves a bit better; we can grow in self and cultural awareness, and such growth is what the questioning process attempts to facilitate.

Growth in awareness, if it is to occur, can only occur through one's self: through one's own efforts and serendipity of insight. The questioning process can serve to facilitate that growth by providing a path of inquiry into one's self and one's cultural molding; but the impetus, the movement down that path, must ultimately come from within. If one utilizes the questioning process, goes down its path, growth in self and cultural awareness may result.

Or it may not. Growth in awareness is intangible -- it cannot be forced, nor guaranteed, nor measured, nor timed, but only pursued, in good faith. The questioning process has shown itself, in my experience, to be a highly effective means of pursuing, and perhaps attaining, growth in awareness; were I not convinced of the enormous potential for the questioning process in facilitating growth in awareness in self and in classroom, I would not be writing this project.

The Questioning Process and Its Adaption of the Socratic Method

The questioning process is a means of pursuing growth in self and cultural awareness through the Socratic Method; the asking and answering in dialogue of progressively deeper, more probing questions.

This definition specifies the basic method of the questioning process through which growth in self and cultural awareness is to be pursued; dialectic, "finding out things through question and answer"¹. Dialectic is by no means a new method of inquiry; rather, it has a time-honored place in the history of Western thought -- its most famous exponent was Socrates. Socrates, as presented in The Dialogues of Plato, has been my lofty inspiration in attempting to formulate the questioning process; because the questioning process is basically an adaption of the Socratic Method (as I have been able to understand it), let us briefly look at the man and his method:

Socrates did not claim to know anything, but spoke of himself only as a seeker after knowledge . . . He believed that knowledge must proceed through doubting, and he was forever posing questions and testing the answers people gave him.²

To every vague notion, easy generalization, or secret prejudice, he pointed the challenge, 'What is it?', and asked for precise definitions . . . His mother was a midwife: it was a standing joke with him that he merely continued her trade, but in the realm of ideas, helping others to deliver themselves of their conceptions.³

¹Bertrand Russell, The Wisdom of the West, p. 53 (Rathbone Books, London, 1959).

²Thomas H. Greer, A Brief History of Western Man, p. 27 (Harcourt, Brace, Wall, 1968).

³Will Durant, The Life of Greece, p. 365-367 (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1939).

Socrates for me represents humanistic teaching -- teaching that involves not simply the transmission of a specific skill or knowledge from teacher to student, but which involves as well the full beings of teacher and students, in their relation to the world and to their fellow human beings -- at its very best; but, whereas Socrates' method remains wholly appropriate for today's world, the content of his teachings does not. The questions that Socrates was concerned with were questions of the nature of: "What is justice?", 'What is 'virtue'?', 'What is the best way for men to live?'. While such questions in their basic intent are obviously highly important questions for today's world or for any human world, they must be approached differently in today's world -- for your 'best way to live' may be different from my 'best way to live', may be different from a black man's 'best way to live', or an Iranians 'best way to live', or a Kalahari bushman's 'best way to live'; our conceptions of the best way to live are different due to our different cultural moldings, and once we have attained the awareness to leave our self-centered conceptions for a moment, we realize that we may speak only for ourselves, given who we are, and not for others, not for all people (with the exception noted below). The Ancient Greeks had little notion of the relativity of their views, but believed that the questions they asked could lead to ultimate answers, ultimate truths, truths true for all people by nature. In

today's world, a world of intercultural awareness, and of diminished confidence in our ability to know ultimate truth, such a belief is for many of us not possible to hold; accordingly, the goal of mind to be sought after in our contemporary world is not ultimate truth: 'What is the best way for men to live?', but rather the conditional and pragmatic truth that is to be found in self and cultural awareness: 'What do I believe about the best way for men to live? What do others believe? Why do I believe as I believe? Why do others believe as they believe? Where, in all of our beliefs, can we find a common basis for understanding and for living in peace with one another?'

Underlying this contemporary restructuring of Socrates's quest, there is, to be sure, a value being put forth that is held to be of value for all people: the value of self and cultural awareness. This value is not put forth as being ultimately true, necessarily, for human beings by nature; rather, it is pragmatically true given this world we're in, a world which increasingly acquires the capacity to destroy itself -- the next world war will likely be man's last. The only hope against such self-destruction, on a personal and interpersonal scale, would seem to be growth in awareness: we must learn to understand one another, to accept one another; in the words of the poet W. H. Auden, "we must love one another or die". Self and cultural awareness is thus a value of ultimate importance in today's world, a value which

transcends the relativity of the different values of each of us in that it can enable the survival of all of us together, whatever our different values.

The Socratic Method is thus to be used in the questioning process, not in pursuit of ultimate truth but in pursuit of that one pragmatic ultimate value of today's world: growth in self and cultural awareness. The Socratic Method may be effective in leading to growth in awareness in this way: through continual questioning, one is forced to examine, and reexamine, and reexamine . . . one's ideas and beliefs and values -- one's self -- until ultimately one is able to see beyond those ideas and beliefs and values, to see how they are a product of a particular cultural molding, just as the ideas and beliefs and values of others are also such products . . . and possibly, ultimately, to see unbound by any such cultural molding. That latter point is not, I believe, attainable; but relentless questioning and answering and questioning can, I believe, take one a great distance in the journey towards it.

Such is the goal of the Socratic Method as adapted to the questioning process. But the Socratic Method, as I understand it, requires, as well as a goal, a basis from which to proceed -- one must have not only an end towards which questioning ultimately approaches, but a starting point, as well, from which questioning begins. For Socrates, as depicted in The Dialogues of Plato, that initial basis was

often a definition of some lofty concept proffered by some unwary expostulator in response to Socrates' "innocent" request, whom Socrates would then barrage with questions exposing the inadequacy of the definition . . . and eventually, through dialectic, a better definition would be put forth, closer to the truth it sought to arrive at. For the questioning process as we have thus far defined it, an entirely different basis is needed: The goal, the ideal we seek to grow towards, is self and cultural awareness -- knowledge of ourselves and our cultural molding; the starting point for our inquiry should thus be some element of culture which has molded us in common, and which we may thus explore in common. The most obvious such element -- because of its enormous impact upon our lives, and because of its tangibility as a basis for inquiry -- is that of media.*

Media: We've seen, in this project's preface, how America's media have spread throughout the world -- bringing the entire world into people's environments, and thereby

*In fact, all kinds of things may serve as starting points from which the questioning process may proceed -- an individual might perhaps begin with a memory of significance to him; a group might begin with a common experience (such as, say, attending public school), or with a proposition of any sort, to be examined. The questioning process may begin from a wide variety of different points, as determined by the needs and the imaginations of those who undertake the questioning process. I have chosen media as the starting point from which the questioning process of this project begins; but that is only one -- though the most obvious and most accessible -- of many potential starting points.

expanding people's minds to incorporate the entire world into their worldviews. But of course this process isn't simply happening to others in the world; rather, it continues to happen to each one of us on a daily basis as we read newspapers, magazines, books, listen to the radio or the stereo, watch television, go to the movies . . . Media serve as the link and window from our personal lives to the larger society and larger world of which we are a part; the effect of media in shaping our selves and views of the world, though impossible to fully gauge, can only be enormous.

Accordingly, it is items from contemporary media which will serve as the starting points for the questioning process as we have defined it. We will utilize media, shaping us in common, as the basis from which, using the Socratic Method, we will pursue growth in self and cultural awareness.

The Questioning Process in Praxis

The questioning process is a process by which different items from contemporary media are examined, to understand what they say, what they imply, and what they mean for us who examine them. It is a process which utilizes items from contemporary media as starting points and catalysts, from which to arrive at a deeper self and cultural awareness through question and answer in dialogue that is progressively more personally involving and self-searching.

The above statement is this chapter's final and most comprehensive definition of the questioning process; but of course it leaves much unexplicated. In the pages that follow, our efforts at explication will focus upon two essential questions: (1) How, practically, does the questioning process proceed?; and (2) How does it facilitate growth in self and cultural awareness in those who undergo it? Most of the remaining pages of this chapter will be devoted to the first of these questions: We will examine through discussion, through diagram, and through two examples, the structure through which the questioning process proceeds from examination of media to examination of self. When that structure has been made clear, we will step back to examine the second of the above questions, using what we have learned from our examination of the first.

The Procedure Described

The practical parameters for the questioning process' use are very broad. The items from media to be examined may be from all different kinds of media: newspaper and magazine articles and advertisements, passages from books, from movies, from radio and TV programming, pictures, photographs -- any items from media that one comes across that grabs one's interest may be used in the questioning process. The dialectic of the questioning process may take place with students in a formal classroom setting, or it may take place with friends

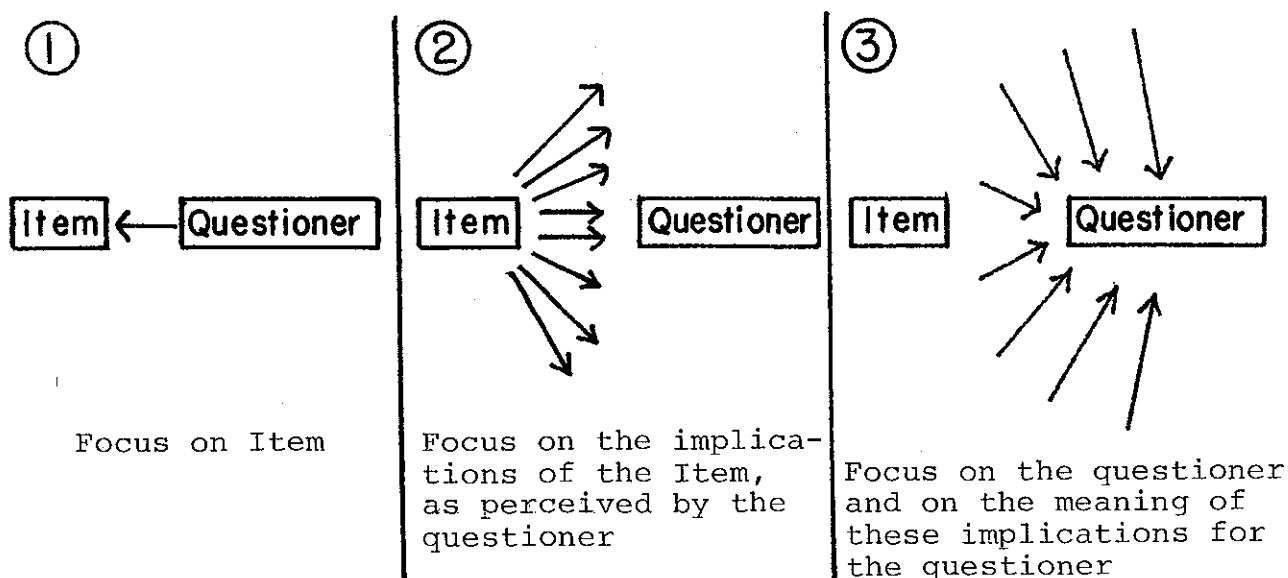
in a bar or restaurant or living room; in such groups, everyone may act as questioner, either informally or formally, or one person may act as the questioner and leader. The dialectic of questioning may also take place within one's own mind -- undergoing the questioning process alone allows one to follow one's own direction and pace of inquiry unimpeded; undergoing the questioning process with others provides one with the stimulation of many minds working together, gaining insights from one another. The questions posed and considered in dialectic may unfold in a myriad of different ways, depending upon the source and subject of the item being examined, and upon the mind(s) of its questioner(s). While most questions arising in dialectic's course will likely prove to be resolvable through hard thought or discourse, some may require additional information for their answer, information obtained through books or libraries or people.

Thus, the questioning process can be used in a variety of different ways, to meet a variety of different situations and needs. But at the heart of the questioning process, linking all the variations it may take in practice, is its structure of inquiry: A structure leading, in three steps, from media to self, which the progressive questions asked within the questioning process always follow.

The first step in this structure consists of coming to an understanding of what the item to be examined explicitly says. The second step consists of examining the context, the

assumptions, and the implications of the item initially in a specific way, then in a more and more general way: "What does the item imply about this culture? about the world? about human nature?". The final step consists of applying these applications to the questioner: "What do you think, believe, feel about these implications? How do they relate to you, to your self and life?".

These steps form a movement from the item to the questioner, from the objective realm to the subjective realm. In the first step, the item is examined objectively: what it 'says', in words or in images. In the second step, the questioner probes beyond the item to what it implies, as he can discern in accordance with his own experiences in life and processes of mind; from his subjectivity, he tries to ascertain the objective implications of the item. In the third step, the questioner applies these implications to himself: What does all this subjectively mean? Visually, these steps may be represented as follows:



The movement of these steps from item to questioner may occur through two different paths: the path of critical analysis, or the path of imagination and empathy. For items relatively impersonal in content, items that focus more on issues or on things than on people, such as news reports or advertisements, the path of critical analysis -- the use of one's intellect, one's powers of reason, to analyze the item and thereby come to understand its implications and its link with one's self -- is generally most effective. For items personal in content, accounts about people or pictures of people, the path of imagination and empathy -- the use of one's imagination to visualize beyond the item to the lives of the people it depicts, to imagine and empathize in a broader and broader way until their lives and one's own life are linked, and perhaps momentarily interchanged -- is generally most effective. Sometimes a single item may be used with either path of questioning: A picture of a black man being arrested may lead to an intellectual attempt to understand black crime, or it may lead to an effort to enter into the black man's mind, to think his thoughts, to momentarily be him; an article about euthanasia may lead to an analysis of the ethics of that practice, or to an imaginative projection into the mind of a person on whom the plug is about to be pulled. Generally speaking, the two paths complement one another -- they lead to different kinds of explorations of item and implications and self, and thus to different kinds

of insights, different kinds of insights that can shed light upon one another.

In concise form, the path of critical analysis and the path of imagination fit within the general structure of the questioning process as follows:

1. What do you see? read? hear? Describe the item and what it says.

Also to be considered, when appropriate:

What is the item's context?

What is your immediate reaction to the item?

2. Beneath, beyond what the item directly says:

Think about the assumptions and implications of the item -- What are they? What do they mean? -- in an immediate sense, and then in a larger and larger sense. Analytically think them through in as broad and as deep a way as possible. What do you think about these implications?

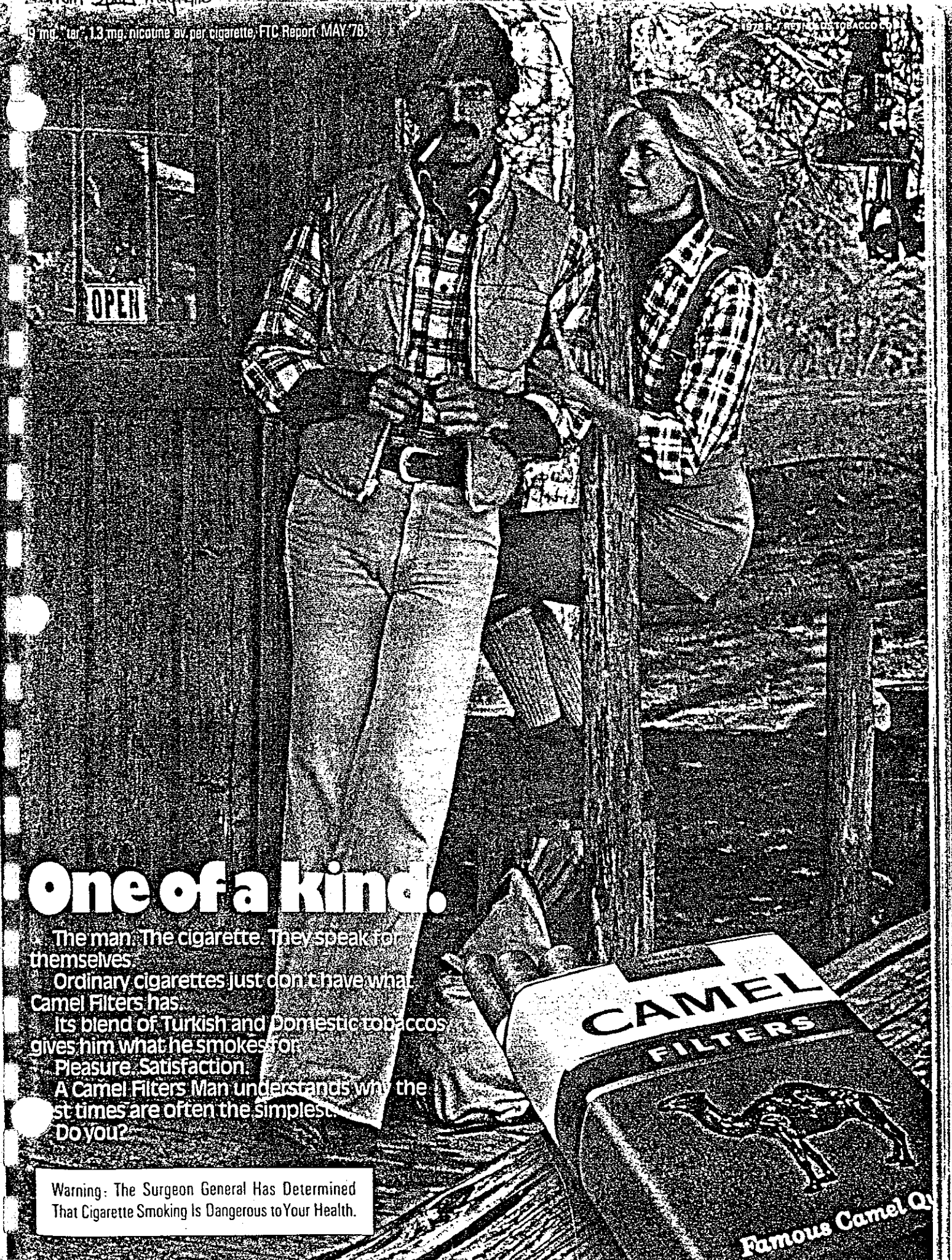
and/or

Use your imagination to see what's happening in the item, and why it's happening. Through your imagination, make what you see real to you; dive in as deeply as you can.

3. What about you? How does your own life fit in with what you've seen, imagined, thought about the item and its implications?

Given what you've seen, imagined, thought: What should you do? How should you live your life?

To give concreteness to the above synopsis, I've set forth in the following pages two examples of how the questioning process might conceivably unfold from specific items of media. The first of these examples serves to illustrate the path of critical inquiry; the second serves to illustrate the path of imagination and empathy; and they both serve to illustrate how the questioning process proceeds from examination of media to examination of self -- in a way that, as I will explain in the pages following these examples, may facilitate growth in self and cultural awareness.



One of a kind.

The man. The cigarette. They speak for themselves.

Ordinary cigarettes just don't have what Camel Filters has.

Its blend of Turkish and Domestic tobaccos gives him what he smokes for.

Pleasure. Satisfaction.

A Camel Filters Man understands why the best times are often the simplest.

Do you?

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

Famous Camel Q

EXAMPLE 1: Cigarette Advertisement

1. What do you see? What do the ad's words say? What does the ad's picture depict?
2. Beneath what the ad explicitly says, what subtle messages does it convey?

- The last two paragraphs of the ad's blurb: What is that supposed to mean? What message does it convey to those who read it?
- The picture's portrayal of a handsome man smoking a cigarette and being held by a beautiful woman -- What does this imply? What effect is this meant to have upon the ad's reader?
- The picture's setting, outdoors in a rustic environment -- What does this convey to the ad's reader?

Let's look at the larger picture:

- If cigarette smoking is "dangerous to your health", then why do these cigarette companies spend so much money trying to persuade people to smoke cigarettes? (this question may seem very naive; but, think about it -- why?...) Are these companies consciously trying to persuade people to endanger their health, in order to make money? Or, is this too simple, too black-and-white an explanation? But then, what is the explanation?
 - If cigarette smoking is "dangerous to your health", then why do people smoke cigarettes? Because they, simply, enjoy it? Because it improves their self-image, makes them feel more confident, or look more confident in others' eyes? Because advertising persuades them to do so? What do you think are the main reasons why people smoke?
3. Do you smoke? Why?

It seems that most of us do things that aren't thought to be very good for us, in terms of our health, and perhaps our lifespans. We eat too much, smoke too many cigarettes, drink too much alcohol, take too many drugs Why do we do these things?

EXAMPLE 1 (Cont.)

- If we do these things because we enjoy them -- then, why should it be the case that so many things that we enjoy doing are harmful to us in the long run? Is this just coincidence? Or, is there somehow some conjunction between the habits that are bad for us and the habits we enjoy?
- Or, do we do these things because we've decided, in our minds, that it's better to have pleasure in the present than health in the future? Or, is there something else going on: we need to escape the pressures of the world and so we do things that are bad for us . . . Do we do these things because we're somehow neurotic, in the sense of not being at peace with ourselves and the world? Or, is this overstating the case?
- Or, do we do these things because we've been conditioned to do them, by advertising, television . . . and we wouldn't do them if we weren't at a tender age influenced, persuaded, conditioned to do so?
- Or, what? Why do we do these things that aren't good for us?

EXAMPLE 2: Newspaper Article: Subway Attack

1. What do you read here? What is this article about?
Go over its story --

2. Let's focus on the person who committed the crime --

Why did the black youth shove Renee Katz into the path of the subway?

-- What could his reasons have been? (Did he have any?)

-- What might have gone through his mind, in the moment just before he pushed her? in the moments just after he pushed her?

Shut your eyes. Picture the youth in your mind. Picture his face. His eyes. Stare into them. Enter them . . .

. . . it's three days after the accident. You are thinking about what you did -- your thoughts are a swirl of confusion . . . You remember back to the incident: you walk down the subway steps, see this girl, push her . . . run away . . . You remember your thoughts at each moment of the accident -- you go back over your thoughts, again and again, until you remember everything, exactly --

What were your thoughts then?

And what are they now? How do you feel about what happened now?

3. Given what you now know -- why did the black youth shove Renee Katz into the path of the train? (Do you now know more than you did previously?)

-- Is the youth completely different from you? Or, is he like you at root, different from you only because of his experiences in life? . . . Could you have done what he did? If your experiences in life, the experiences shaping your character had been different -- could you have done what he did? If you had been born in his shoes, subject to all the exact influences that shaped him -- would you have done what he did?

-- What is it that makes you different from him?

EXAMPLE 2 (Cont.)

-- (Why are you the person that you are?)

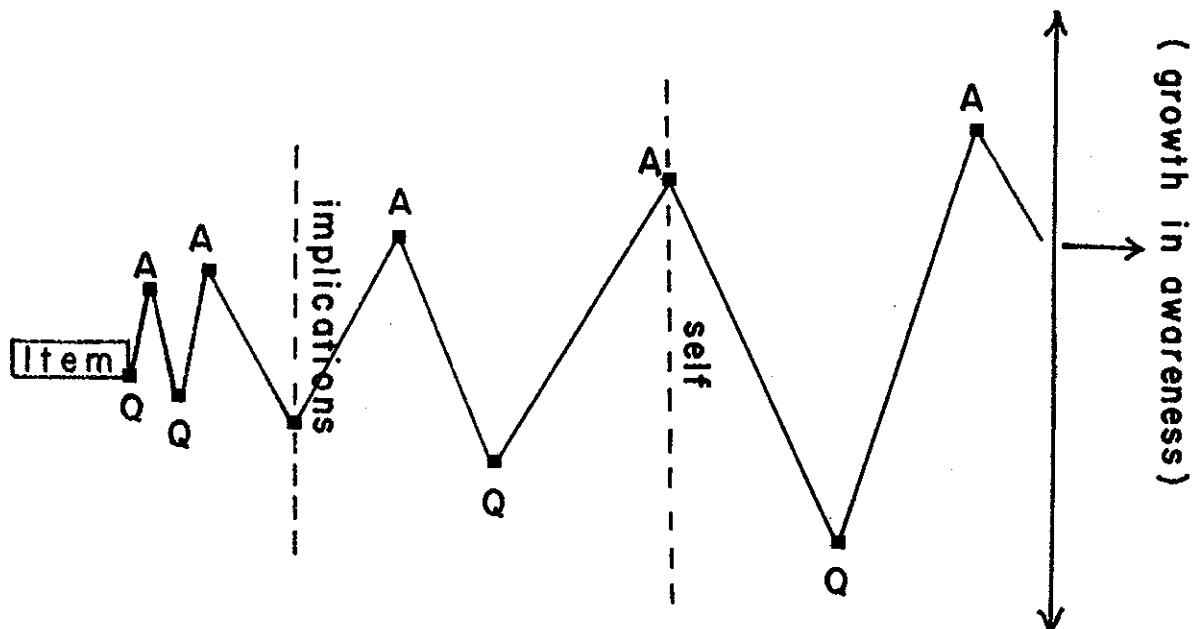
Given what you know, what do you think should be done with the youth, if he's caught? Should he be put in a mental institution? But, is he insane, do you think? If he is, would an overcrowded state mental hospital do him any good? Or, is that not the point -- the point being simply to keep him locked up, away from society? Should he thus go to prison? But then, perhaps he'll get released after a few years, to go out and commit such a terrible crime again. So, should he get the death penalty? But, he's a person, like you and I . . . What should his fate be? What if you had to make a choice? What would you decide?

How this Procedure Facilitates Growth in Self
and Cultural Awareness

Given what we now understand of the questioning process' structure in proceeding from examination of media to examination of self, what can we now say, once again, about the questioning process as a means of facilitating growth in self and cultural awareness? Growth in self and cultural awareness is, as we've seen, the goal and ideal of the questioning process, the purpose for which it exists. Media provide the starting point; the Socratic Method provides the path -- but media and method mean nothing without their end, which is awareness. How does the questioning process, as we have defined it, facilitate growth in self and cultural awareness?

The questioning process uses the examination through questioning of items from media as a means of entering into larger questionings: examinations of the ideas, beliefs, values, assumptions held in our society and in our world; it then asks we who examine to look at these ideas, beliefs, values, assumptions, in light of ourselves, and thereby examine our own ideas, beliefs, values assumptions -- ourselves and our cultural molding. Through such progressive examination, and through the depths of insight into self and others to which it may lead, growth in self and cultural awareness may perhaps take place -- we may each come to better understand the nature of our particular molding and worldview, and may thus learn to see beyond it.

Diagrammatically, this process may be represented as follows:



The questioning process proceeds, through dialogue in question and answer, from item, to implications, to self. If such self-examination goes deep enough -- unlocks the right doors inside the mind -- growth in awareness may result.

The foregoing analysis is abstract; for a more concrete idea as to how the questioning process may facilitate growth in self and cultural awareness, let us return to our two examples. In the first example, the cigarette ad's examination ultimately leads to that very basic question: 'Why do we do things that aren't good for us?'. If an individual -- one who, like most of us, has his share of subtly or not-so-subtly self-destructive habits -- were to take this question and pursue it to his depths with honesty and commitment, he might

perhaps come to see why he lives the way he lives in a new light, with a new awareness, for this is a question which is almost never directly asked and pursued in our culture, but which yet touches upon an essential part of ourselves and our molding; the questioning process facilitates its asking and the new awareness that its answer may bring. In our second example, the subway attack article ultimately leads to the question: 'How are you and I different from the perpetrator of that attack? If we had been brought up in his shoes, might we have committed that crime ourselves?'. Here too, if an individual were to take this question and pursue it to his depths, he might come to see who and why he is -- the basis of his identity -- in a new way, with a new awareness -- for questions such as this are not asked on our normal day-to-day mode of thinking and being, and yet this question probes at the very basis of who we are.

For many of those who undergo the questioning process, questions such as these may well not lead to significant new insights, to growth in awareness -- for our minds are well-armed with defenses against openness, vulnerability, change, growth, and the asking of apt questions and the search within one's self for their answer is often not sufficient to shatter those defenses (which are so deeply engrained in our minds that we're not even aware of most of them). But sometimes these defenses do get shattered by a probing question and the search within for its answer -- sometimes we can think and see and grow beyond our shaped selves. Thosetimes are the

times when the questioning process has fulfilled its purpose; and they happen frequently enough, in my experience, to make the questioning process well worth pursuing.

Summary

The questioning process is a means of facilitating growth in self and cultural awareness. The method through which such growth is to be pursued is the Socratic Method: progressive question-and-answer in dialogue. The starting point for the questioning process is any item from media, chosen for its interest; such an item is examined first for what it directly says, then for what it implies in a larger and larger sense about our society and our world. These implications are then examined for what they mean for we who examine them; if this examination -- examination of self, and its thought, beliefs, values, assumptions -- is carried deep enough, growth in self and cultural awareness may perhaps result.

The questioning process is highly flexible, in that there is a multitude of ways in which it could conceivably be adapted to meet the situations and the needs of those who undertake it. But its essence is this: The examination of some item through question and answer in dialogue, to ultimately come to understand what it means for one's self and in one's self -- an examination that can bring growth in awareness.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ADAPTION OF THE QUESTIONING PROCESS TO
THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ESOL

The preceding chapter delineated the questioning process as a means of facilitating growth in self and cultural awareness. This chapter delineates how the questioning process is to be applied to ESOL, in such a way as to combine the facilitation of growth in self and cultural awareness with the teaching and learning of English.

The first half of the chapter outlines the basic changes to be made in the structure and procedure of the questioning process in order to apply it to the ESOL classroom, changes occurring in three broad areas: the steps of questioning dialogue and discussion, and the selection of materials. The chapter then turns from the structure of the questioning process in ESOL to its goals; following the delineation of these goals, we will discuss their significance, their relation to one another, and their attainment and how progress towards their attainment may be ascertained in the classroom.

The Structure of the Questioning Process in ESOLThe Steps of Questioning

The questioning process, as delineated in the preceding chapter, followed these steps: (1) examination of an item from media, through question and answer in dialogue, for what it says; (2) examination of the item for what it implies, in

a larger and larger sense; and (3) examination of these implications for what they mean for the questioner. While this basic structure remains in the questioning process as applied to the ESOL classroom, there are two new factors which must be considered in that application: (a) students engaged in questioning will be using a language which is foreign to them, and which they are in class to learn -- thus the questioning process must be combined with language instruction; and (b) students engaged in questioning will be of a different cultural background than the items from media which they question (the items to be examined will be from American media, as will be explained), and so the procedure of questioning must be reformulated to accommodate this crossing of cultural boundaries.

These two factors will be dealt with as follows:

(a) students' discussion in the course of questioning will be monitored by the instructor for language usage and misuse; when the questioning process has been completed, the instructor will teach the linguistic points that students need to know, based on what he has heard; and (b) students' examination of the implications of the item they question will consist of first an examination of the item for what it implies about American culture, then an examination of these implications for their link with students' own culture(s), and, finally, an examination of these implications for their link with students' selves. Accordingly, the steps of the

questioning process will be restructured as follows: (1) an examination of an item from American media, through question and answer in dialogue, for what it says; (2) examination of the item for what it implies about American culture; (3) examination of these implications for the light they shed on students' own culture(s); (4) examination of these implications for what they mean for students' (and for instructor's) selves; and (5) English instruction, based on language usage in steps (1) through (4).

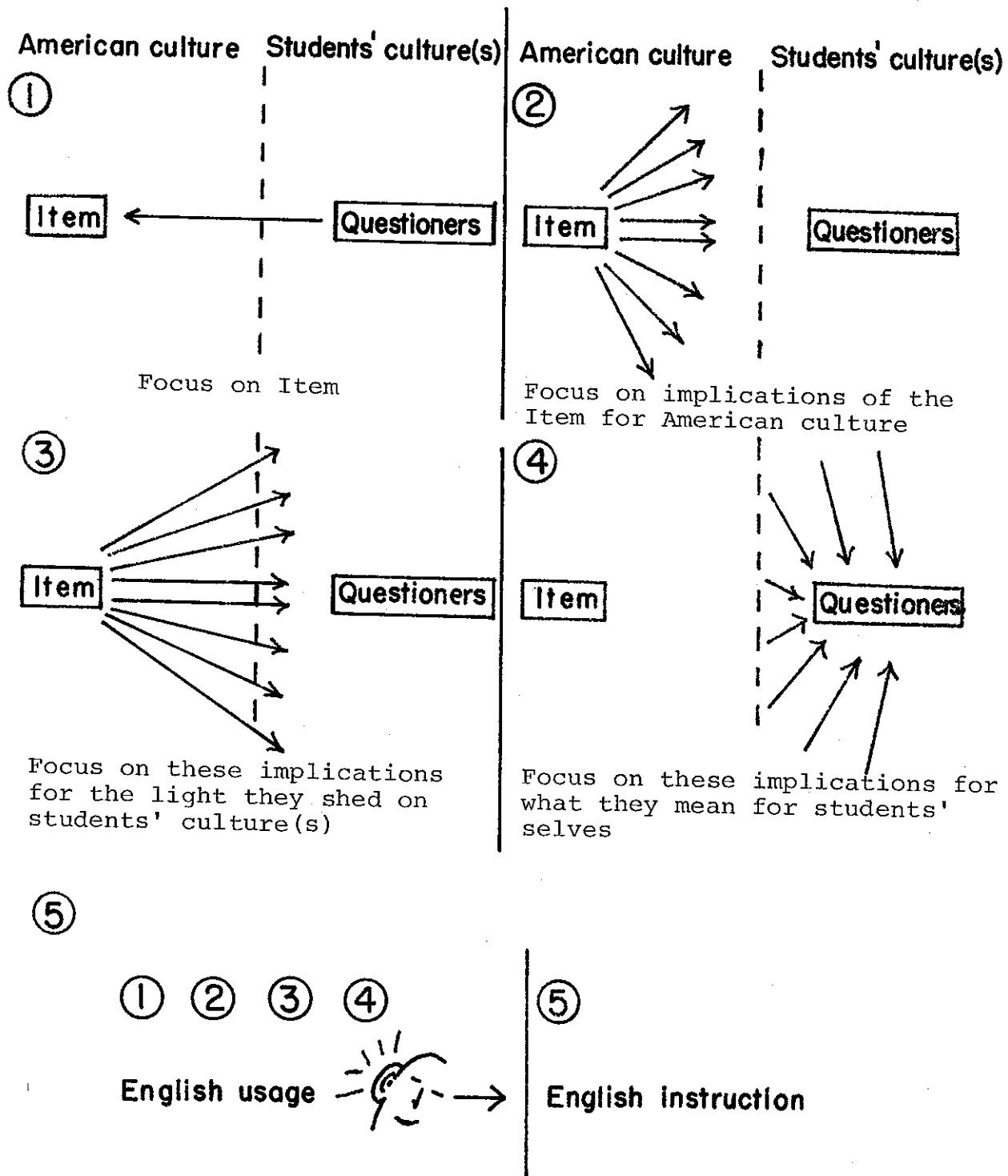
Diagrammatically, these new steps are represented on the following page. It will be useful to compare this diagram with the diagram on page 52, to see in a visual way how the structure of the questioning process has been altered to fit its new role in the teaching and learning of ESOL.

Dialogue and Discussion

The key element of the questioning process as applied to ESOL is discussion and the dual function that it plays. In the questioning process as explicated in the last chapter, question and answer in dialogue is the means by which the questioning process proceeds from examination of an item from media, to its implications, to ourselves, and ultimately, perhaps, to growth in awareness; discussion thus serves as the medium through which such growth may be facilitated.

In the questioning process as applied to ESOL, it becomes, in addition to this, the means by which students learn to better express themselves in English, and by which the

The Steps of the Questioning Process in ESOL



instructor continually checks student progress, and finds out what students need to learn. Discussion's dual function for students is thus this: Students simultaneously explore new ideas and insights as deeply as they can, and, as well, express themselves in a new language as precisely and as grammatically as they can. The instructor's role in this process is dual as well: The instructor simultaneously acts as listener/participant/facilitator in discussion, following closely the course of what is said, and, as well, as monitor of how things are said, listening to the way the language is used, and transcribing or taping errors for use in subsequent instruction.

Materials

Materials, as well as discussion, take on a new significance in the questioning process as applied to ESOL. In the preceding chapter, the question of the selection of items from media for use in the questioning process was not considered, aside from the criteria that the item to be questioned should be interesting to those who question it. In the context of the ESOL classroom, further criterion for materials selection become essential. There are two specific criteria which must be met in materials selection for the questioning process in the ESOL classroom: (a) material must be relevant to students -- their needs, their interests, and their motivation for learning English; and (b) material must be in accordance with students' proficiency in English -- it

can't be too difficult for them to make sense of, but yet should be sufficiently challenging to enable them to learn something new about the language they're learning. The first of these criteria is met by gathering and using a wide range of materials from American media, materials that provide students with an engaging and provocative window into that culture. The second of these criteria is met by using, with low-proficiency ESOL classes undergoing the questioning process, items from American media of a pictorial nature, such as photographs, paintings, graphics, advertisements, comic strips, and by using items in print or on tape as the basis for questioning only as classes progressively gain the ability to understand them.

The Goals of the Questioning Process in ESOL

The preceding pages have described in a nutshell the changes to be made in the structure of the questioning process in order to apply it to ESOL instruction. Let us now turn from an examination of structure to an examination of goals -- the goals of the questioning process in the ESOL classroom:

1. To enable students to effectively learn English.
2. To enable students to come to a deeper understanding of American culture, and of the cultural implications of English/American English.
3. To facilitate in students (and in instructor) growth in self and cultural awareness.

Significance

The attainment of the first of the above goals is paramount if the questioning process is to serve as an approach to ESOL -- the learning of English is, after all, the *raison d'etre* for any ESOL class, and any approach used in the ESOL classroom, whatever that approach's other goals and functions, must effectively teach the English language. The second goal above is perhaps not so immediately clear in its significance: It is based on the arguments presented in this project's preface -- that America's enormous influence in shaping the contemporary world is an influence which is ambiguous in its meaning and its significance, and that the spread of English, America's language, across the world, does not escape such ambiguity of meaning and significance; thus ESOL should be taught in such a way as to make students aware of the cultural (and political and economic) implications of America's language and, as well, of the nature of America's culture. The questioning process, in its ESOL context, seeks to do this. The third goal above is, of course, the goal of the questioning process of the last chapter; it is a goal no less essential to the questioning process in ESOL than to the questioning process as initially formulated. But in the context of the ESOL classroom, it takes on added significance and complexity -- for teacher and students, thus, in most cases, questioner and questioned, are of different cultural background; the pursuit of self and cultural awareness may

thus lead to very different kinds of insights in teacher and students. This difference in cultural background in those who together pursue awareness can, in the right classroom environment, lead teacher and students to gain enormously from one another, to grow in awareness in a way that would not have been possible in a context other than the ESOL classroom, with its rich cultural mixture.

Interrelationship

The three goals of the questioning process are not simply in arbitrary juxtaposition with one another; rather, they are all essentially interrelated. The first and second goals are linked, in that language is inseparable from the culture of its origin, and must be taught in conjunction with that culture; this is all the more true when the language is English, the culture Anglo-American, language and culture disseminated throughout the world, influencing so many of its people. The second and third goals are linked in that, as we've seen in the preface, the world grows ever-more-linked: Due largely to the impact of America's money and media upon the world, the cultural molding of each of us grows ever-more-shared, ever-more-common; self and cultural awareness -- understanding of one's self and one's cultural molding -- and understanding of American culture are, in today's world, understandings which for many of the world's people (especially, one might conjecture, those who are learning ESOL) are not entirely distinct, not wholly apart from one another.

While the above linkages are important, it is the linkage between the first and third of the questioning process' goals which is most essential to the questioning process. 'The questioning process is an approach to ESOL that combines the teaching and learning of English with growth in self and cultural awareness' -- this combination is one whose elements mutually enhance one another: The pursuit of awareness aids the learning of ESOL, the learning of ESOL furthers the pursuit of awareness. Let us examine how this takes place.

Language, in a common sense way, may be viewed at two different levels: As a set of words and rules for pronouncing these words, and combining them into grammatical sentences; and as a means of communicating one's observations, ideas, opinions, values, beliefs, and feelings, to others. These two levels of language are obviously in continual interaction with one another, all the more so in the language classroom, and in the language-learning of the students within -- the student won't be able to communicate in a foreign language without at least some knowledge of that language, and, conversely, the student won't be motivated to learn the language unless he has something to say, some reason for speaking, for communicating in the language.

The questioning process in ESOL, with its simultaneous emphasis on the pursuit of self and cultural awareness and the learning of English, addresses both these interlocking essentials of language learning -- knowledge of how to speak,

and motivation to speak -- in such a way that they continually enhance and grow from one another: The student, in the course of questioning, comes upon a really important thought that he wants to express, and struggles to say it as best he knows how; he subsequently learns, through linguistic instruction, how better to say what he wanted to say, and is thus (slightly) better equipped linguistically for the next session of questioning -- and (slightly) more confident of his abilities to express himself, more able to express himself . . . and, on to the next round of questioning and of language instruction, and so on. In this way, motivation to speak and ability in the language spoken work together in tandem in the process of questioning, leading, eventually, to both greater awareness and greater language proficiency.

But the interaction in the questioning process between students' knowledge of the language and their desire to speak goes deeper than the above: As anyone who has observed a lively discussion in an ESOL class knows, students' fluency (though not necessarily the grammatical correctness of their speech) dramatically improves when they are deeply engaged in what they are saying, and have forgotten, momentarily, their hesitancy and their self-consciousness; beyond this, students' fluency may well dramatically increase over a longer time frame, when they are continually being challenged in discussion after discussion to speak their minds on matters important to them. Obversely, it would seem that, while the

new language obviously makes it much more difficult for students to fully express themselves than would their native tongue, it may also serve as a source of freedom: In one's native tongue, it is all too easy to fall back on cliches and complacencies of speech and thus of mind -- but in a new tongue, the comfortable basis for such complacencies has been removed (especially if the student consciously and conscientiously attempts to think in the new language), and, thus, in a very real way, the student must examine self and cultural molding in a new light. Thus: The questioning process benefits the learning of English by providing students with a deep motivation for them to express themselves; and, in turn, the learning of English benefits the questioning process by forcing students to leave behind old habits of thought and speech. (This equation is a little too neat, since obviously every student, every class, every teacher is different.)

Ascertainment of Progress towards Goals Attainment

In the preceding few pages, I have discussed, in a theoretical way, the significance and interrelationship of the questioning process' goals. Let us now -- in anticipation of the chapter shortly to come -- briefly discuss their practical pursuit, and how progress in that pursuit may be ascertained.

With the first of the questioning process' goals -- that of effectively learning English -- there should be no difficulty in such ascertainment, since the instructor is

constantly monitoring discussion, and thus can see exactly how students are improving and how they're not, on a day-to-day, week-to-week, month-to-month basis. With the second of these goals -- that of coming to a deeper understanding of American culture -- ascertainment of progress is more problematic; but the nature of students' comments in the discussion of steps one and two of the questioning process, when compared on a week-to-week, month-to-month basis, should provide a fairly accurate indication of how students' understanding of American culture is increasing. As for the third goal -- growth in self and cultural awareness -- we've discussed in the preceding chapter just how problematic this goal is: Even within one's self, real growth in awareness can be difficult to recognize -- how much more so it can only be for others to recognize! But even here there are indirect but probably accurate indicators of such growth. One such indicator is simply the nature of students' discussion in steps two, three, and especially four, week after week, month after month -- What are students saying? How are they saying it? Do they seem to be parroting or probing? Do they seem to be listening to one another? Do they seem to be growing in articulateness? In the depth, breadth, honesty, seriousness of what they say? In their respect for the ideas and opinions of others? In their openness to new ideas? In their initiative to probe and search?

Another indicator, certainly the best if given with total honesty, is students' feedback on the questioning process, and on their own growth in insight and in awareness through the questioning process. If students feel that the questioning process is valuable for them in terms of their growth in awareness, then it probably is -- and if they feel it's not, then it's probably not (and should thus be altered to better meet the needs of the class, or perhaps discontinued in favor of some other approach to ESOL instruction).

In the largest sense, of course, the goal of growth in self and cultural awareness is a goal which extends far beyond the classroom; it ultimately refers to the way in which people see the world and live in the world. The attainment of this goal is ultimately one which takes place in a person over the course of a lifetime, not simply in a few weeks or months of English class. The questioning process in the ESOL classroom, in both its process and its resulting insights, can provide no more than a few further increments of growth in awareness -- at best, it will reveal a few glimpses of insight and a rough path by which to come upon more such glimpses as one proceeds. If the questioning process in the ESOL classroom can bring about such small revelation in those who undergo it, then its goal of facilitating growth in self and cultural awareness has been met.

Summary

The questioning process is adapted to the ESOL classroom through two changes in its structure: (a) the dialogue and discussion of students undergoing the questioning process is monitored by the instructor for English usage, on the basis of which students are subsequently instructed in English; and (b) the steps of the questioning process are expanded to accommodate the crossing of cultural boundaries -- students examine items from American media and their implications for America, and then examine these implications in light of their own culture and themselves. The materials examined in the questioning process and the dialogue of the questioning process take on a dual significance in the questioning process as applied to ESOL: They serve not only as a starting point and method by which the questioning process leads to growth in awareness -- they also serve as the means by which English is to be taught. The goals of the questioning process as applied to ESOL are: (1) the learning of English; (2) a deeper understanding of American culture and of the cultural implications; and (3) growth in self and cultural awareness. These goals are all in essential interrelation with one another, but the first and third of these goals are especially so -- the learning of English is enhanced by the fact that students are engaged in a pursuit of deep meaning to themselves; the pursuit of awareness is enhanced in that it is conducted in a language free of the

preconceptions inevitably inherent in students' native languages. Progress towards the questioning process' goals may be ascertained, at least indirectly, by what happens in class on a day-to-day, week-to-week, month-to-month basis; and, of course, continual student feedback is essential.

CHAPTER THREE

THE QUESTIONING PROCESS IN THE ESOL CLASSROOM --
PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES

In the preceding chapter, we saw in a theoretical way how the questioning process is to be adapted to the teaching and learning of ESOL; in this chapter, we turn from theory to praxis -- how does the questioning process actually proceed in the ESOL classroom? Our explication of this procedure will take three forms: a comprehensive statement of the steps and goals of the questioning process; an example of the questioning process as it might proceed in an ESOL classroom, specifically embodying these steps and the pursuit of these goals; and a step-by-step discussion of practical techniques and suggestions for use with the questioning process in the ESOL classroom.

Steps and Goals of the Questioning Process in ESOL:
A Comprehensive Statement

The steps and goals of the questioning process in ESOL should be clear, in a large sense, from last chapter's discussion; let us now set forth these steps and goals in a comprehensive and specific way:

The Questioning Process as an Approach
to the Teaching and Learning of ESOL

GOALS:

1. To enable students to effectively learn the English language;
2. To enable students to come to a deeper understanding of American culture, and of the cultural implications of American English; and
3. To facilitate in students (and instructor) growth in self and cultural awareness by:
 - a. Enabling students to attain a deeper awareness of themselves and their cultural molding, and of others and their cultural molding, and
 - b. Introducing students to a structure of inquiry which may help them to further pursue and attain such awareness.

STEPS:

Step 1: Examination of the item to be questioned
-- an item from the media of American culture -- for what it says:

Language Instruction:

- a. Vocabulary -- words in print, in voice, or suggested by picture, that may be unfamiliar to students.
- b. Close scrutiny of the item, for specific meaning -- word for word, image by image, paragraph by paragraph, whatever is most appropriate given item and class.
- c. Student response: Students demonstrating their understanding of the item by describing what they've seen, read, heard -- through question/answer, through student paraphrases of the item, through written responses -- whatever technique is most appropriate, given item and class.

Continued...

Questioning Process (cont.)

STEPS (cont.):

Step 2: Examination of the item for what it implies about American culture:

-- through the instructor's analytic questioning, and students' responses: "What does the item seem to imply about America?" etc., or

-- through students' imaginings: "Tell me about the American people you see in this item...", with the instructor providing subsequent cultural feedback, and (with low-proficiency classes) linguistic feedback.

Discussion:
Instructor acts as facilitator and as cultural informant, and monitors language usage for later instruction

Step 3: Examination of the item and its implications for how they relate to students' own culture(s):

-- "Could what the item describes happen in your culture? Why? Why not?"

-- "Would the view expressed in this item be typically expressed by people of your culture? Why? Why not?"

-- "Are the implications of this item for American culture true for your culture too? Why? Why not?"

-- "Would the story you imagined about the item happen in your culture? Why? Why not?"

Discussion:
Instructor acts as facilitator and as participant when called for -- but mostly, just listens and monitors language usage

Continued...

Questioning Process (cont.)

STEPS (cont.):

Discussion:
Instructor acts as
facilitator and as
participant as
appropriate, and
monitors language
usage

Step 4: Examination of all these implications
for what they mean for ourselves as
people:

"What do you think about these issues
and ideas that we've been discussing?
How do they relate to your life? How
do they affect you? Given all this --
what's the best way for us to live
our lives?"

This examination may lead to the discussion
of large philosophical questions, tran-
scending culture; or, it may lead to the
exchange of more personal insights and
experiences.

Step 5: Examination of language usage in Steps 2-4:

Language Instruction:
(to be conducted in
accordance with
whatever methods or
techniques that in-
structor and class
deem appropriate)

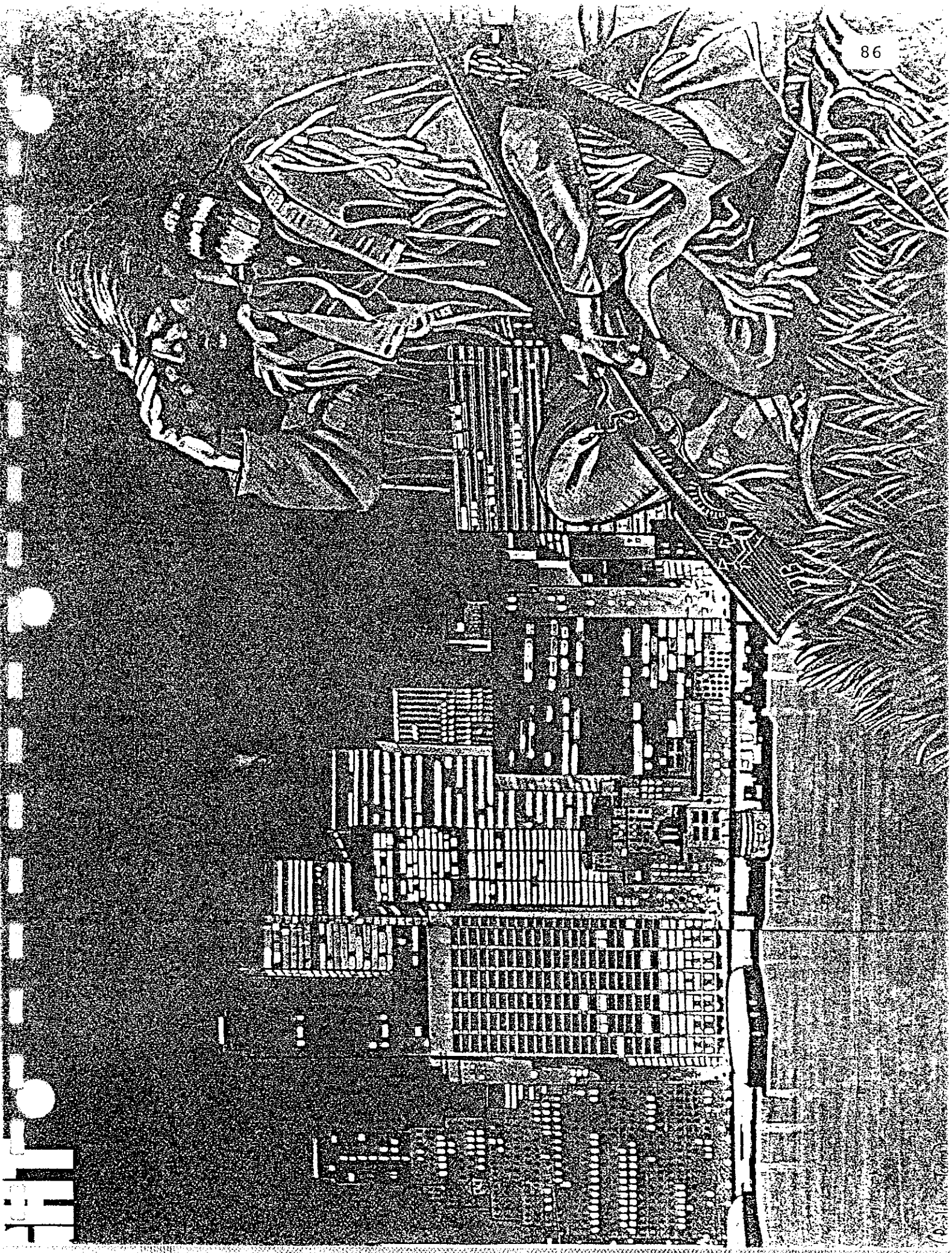
-- the instructor may present a series of
flawed sentences uttered in discussion,
for students to work on and correct; or,
-- a formal lesson may be presented, on
specific points of grammar or pronuncia-
tion or vocabulary that require work,
based on discussion's evidence, and/or
what the instructor thinks students need
to know;
-- review of all that was learned in Step 1,
and of all new vocabulary come upon in
discussion -- and, as well, of what was
covered in the language instruction of
previous questioning processes.

. . . and on, once more, to Step 1 . . .

A Classroom Example

The foregoing is, in a nutshell, the questioning process as applied to ESOL; let us now examine how that process might proceed with a specific item from American media as used with a hypothetical ESOL class. While the forthcoming example does not follow the preceding guidelines to the letter -- as few specific questionings will, due to the flexibility of the questioning process, the wide variety of different forms that questioning may take with different items and different classes -- it follows these guidelines in their basis: That movement from item's explication to consideration of American culture, to consideration of students' culture(s), to examination of self, to English instruction, which is the essence of the questioning process in ESOL.

The following picture appeared in Psychology Today. The questioning process outlined below is that which might occur using this picture with a class of low- to middle-proficiency in ESOL -- a class of, say, ten to fifteen students able to hold basic conversation in English, but not much more than that.



Frontiersman Watching Modern City

1. The instructor asks the class: "What do you see? Describe this scene . . ."

When the class has described all it can, the instructor teaches vocabulary:

skyscraper, harbor, frontier, frontiersman,
coonskin cap, flintlock rifle, Bowie knife,
watch, peer, stare . . .

and reviews these words by silently pointing to various parts of the picture and having students name what they see.

2. "How did this scene happen? What's going on here?"

First, there are several minutes of general speculation in class as to what might have happened to lead up to the picture. When speculation reaches a pause, the instructor asks the class to divide up into several groups of three, four or five people, to imagine the story behind the picture. After five minutes, each group in turn tells its story to the rest of the class.

Each story will be taped; when all stories have been told, the tape will be played back for language correction and instruction (where feasible -- complex points, points the instructor can't do justice to on such short notice, may be deferred until the following class.

"This picture was an illustration for an article in a popular American magazine -- What do you think the article might have been about? What was it saying?"

General speculation, in which the instructor participates. Then the instructor asks:

"From what you know of America and history and change -- How do you think America has changed in the past two hundred years, in terms of the way its people think and live their lives?"

This question -- repeated, paraphrased, until everyone in class completely understands -- is then dealt with in general class discussion (discussion in small groups would also be a possibility, especially in a larger

Frontiersman (cont.)

class), with a student volunteer or the instructor writing down ideas on blackboard or brown paper as they emerge in discussion. When discussion reaches a pause:

"Which of these changes are good, do you think? Which do you think are bad?" Discussion of each item listed in turn. Then: "Overall, are these changes more good than bad? More bad than good? Or is it impossible to say? Why?". Discussion for as long as it lasts.

Throughout this step, the instructor is monitoring language usage, quickly jotting down the errors he hears in the course of discussion. When this step's discussion is complete, the instructor writes various faulty sentences he has heard on the board, for students to correct as they can; the instructor then briefly explains each point in turn, and proceeds.

3. "What about your culture? How has your culture changed over the past two hundred years, in terms of the lives and minds of its people?" After preliminary discussion, the class goes over the list of changes made for American culture in the previous step, to discuss which of these changes are applicable to their own culture(s) and which are not; and the class lists all further changes arrived at in discussion.

"What do you think about these changes? Which are good for your culture? Which are bad? Taken as a whole, are they good or bad? Or, is it impossible to say? Why?"

Discussion for as long as it lasts; if students in the class come from different cultures, then they each can speak in turn about their own culture and their view of its changes. Following discussion, the instructor, as in step two, briefly presents and explains linguistic errors; then:

4. "What about the world as a whole? How has the world changed in the past two hundred years, in terms of the way the mass of its people think and live? . . . Are these changes, in the largest sense, good or bad? What do you think?"

Frontiersman (cont.)

The instructor now asks the class as a whole to come up with a brief but comprehensive answer to this question, through discussion (in English), with one student writing down what the class decides; the instructor then falls silent for ten minutes, and just listens -- or perhaps he leaves the room, to let the class arrive at its answer strictly on its own. When the class has formulated its statement, it is recorded and then played back for language instruction.

"You fall asleep in your English class and awaken two hundred years from now on this day. What happens to you?"

The class divides into small groups, each group telling or acting its story, after five minutes of planning, to the class as a whole. The stories may be taped, or monitored by the instructor, noting language errors on paper. Following brief language instruction based on the errors thus noted:

"What's the world going to be like in two hundred years?"

Discussion for as long as it lasts.

5. Language instruction: A review of all the linguistic points covered in steps one through four, and instruction in all language errors not yet covered. The vocabulary of step one is reviewed; the recordings of steps two, three, and four are replayed once more, with students, as much as possible, doing all the correcting; and the errors which the instructor has noted and transcribed in the course of discussion are written on the blackboard for students to correct as they are able, and for the instructor to correct and explain when students cannot. The more complex linguistic points that emerge will be presented as a formal grammar lesson, as the first activity of the following class.

This questioning process as described would in all likelihood take several class sessions to be completed. If time is restricted -- if, say, the questioning process must be completed in a single class session, it would be possible to set limits on the length of discussion, or to delete one or more of the discussion or storytellings.

The foregoing example addresses all three of the questioning process's goals. The first goal, that of learning English, is addressed specifically by steps one and five, but also by steps two, three, and four, which provide the content for step five's English instruction (instruction which is in part interspersed throughout the discussion of steps two, three, and four) -- these steps reveal to the instructor what students linguistically need to learn, and subsequently do learn. The second goal, that of attaining a deeper understanding of American culture, is specifically addressed by step two, in which students first imaginatively project themselves as strangers in time coming upon contemporary America, then intellectually analyze, with the instructor's cultural feedback, how America has changed in its history; these two activities, in their different ways, require students to look beyond the normal frame of reference with which they view America, to see America over a much longer span of time -- they may thus serve to increase students' understanding of why contemporary America is as it is. The third goal, that of facilitating growth in self and cultural awareness, is particularly addressed by steps three and four, in which students are first asked to intellectually examine the changes that have occurred in their culture and in the world as a whole over the past two hundred years, then to imaginatively project themselves two hundred years into the future -- students must thus examine their culture and their world and

themselves over a long time span, a frame of reference which might perhaps give them a bit more perspective, and thus a bit more awareness, as to the nature of self and cultural molding of the present. Aside from the new insights into self and culture which may thereby be gained, students are exposed to the methods by which such insights may be attained, methods which they may perhaps utilize in their own further pursuit of awareness.

Classroom Procedures, Techniques, Suggestions

The preceding example shows how the questioning process might proceed using a specific item from media with a specific ESOL class. Let us now take a step back from such specifics, to examine in a broader way the different techniques and activities which might be utilized with the questioning process as it proceeds in the ESOL classroom -- and, as well, some of the practical concerns of the questioning process which the instructor should bear in mind. Our examination will proceed step by step, in accordance with the steps we've outlined: (a) We will consider step one's techniques, aimed at the explication to a class of items in print or picture or on tape; (b) We will examine techniques and suggestions for steps two, three, and four: the questioning process' two paths of inquiry and their use in the ESOL classroom; the instructor's roles in directing the questioning process' inquiry and discussion in the ESOL classroom; the facilitation of discussion with low-proficiency ESOL

classes; and the place of English instruction in students' discussion; (c) We will look at step five, and techniques for use in that step's English instruction; (d) We will consider the time span of the questioning process as conducted in the ESOL classroom.

Step One

The first step of the questioning process involves the examination of an item from American media for what it explicitly says or depicts. This step is primarily a linguistic step -- one of decoding the item's meaning in English (which may also require knowledge of American culture), and thus of instruction in the English language. With items of a pictorial nature, this examination can be short and simple -- the instructor asks 'What do you see?'; students reply by naming all the items in the picture and describing all the actions taking place; and the instructor then completes the picture's description, teaching students the vocabulary they do not yet know -- but it may also involve a variety of different language-learning activities. Pictures may be used to teach the gamut of different grammatical structures; they may also be used to generate all sorts of different language usage -- question and answer exercises, role-plays, student-created dialogues -- which may be monitored by the teacher for language instruction. While it is obviously beyond the scope of this project to explicate the many uses of pictures in teaching ESOL, such uses have their place in the

questioning process, and the instructor utilizing the questioning process with low-proficiency ESOL classes should bear this in mind.

With items in print or on tape, explication of what the item says may involve a wide variety of different techniques. With items in print, such as magazine or newspaper articles, potentially troublesome vocabulary may be covered in the previous class; students then would take the article (in xerox or mimeograph) home with them to read, and return to class prepared to answer the instructor's or fellow students' comprehension questions about the article's meaning, or to paraphrase the article or portions of the article in their own words. This latter technique works well in the context of a 'news broadcast' -- each student paraphrases for the cassette recorded a paragraph of an article; the class's rephrased article is then played back for language instruction and for general comprehension of what the article is about. It also works well for first person accounts -- each student paraphrases a paragraph, but using the first-person voice; the class thus tells the story into the tape recorded in such a way that they 'become' the person of the account, which is then played back for language instruction.

With items on tape, from radio or TV, students may be told, before listening, what it is that they will hear -- the instructor may briefly go over subject matter and vocabulary, or may hand out a written transcript of the item's

contents; or, the item may be played with no prior introduction, played over and over again, with the instructor keeping silent, until students have understood as much as they possibly can of the item -- whereupon the instructor explains the rest. The first of these strategies -- that of prior introduction -- is preferable with classes of not especially high proficiency, for American radio and TV can be extremely difficult for non-native speakers to understand, and items from these sources played without initial help in their comprehension can greatly shake the confidence of ESOL classes that had thought themselves proficient. The second of these strategies is best for a highly-proficient class: For a class that needs a challenge, the effort to decide an item from American radio or TV without the instructor's help can provide such a challenge.

There are undoubtedly many more techniques which could be used in the explication of the items to be examined in the questioning process; in the foregoing, we've only discussed a few of these techniques. The important point to be remembered is that there are two functions of this first step of the questioning process as applied to ESOL: (1) to further students' knowledge of English through the explication of the item to be examined in questioning; and (2) to make certain that students completely understand what the item says or depicts -- for without that understanding, questioning cannot properly proceed. The different techniques used in the first

step should meet at least one or, better, both of these functions.

Steps Two, Three, Four

The second, third, and fourth steps of the questioning process are steps involving class discussion, taking place within a structure of question and response in dialogue. While English instruction must be kept in mind by the instructor during these steps -- he either tapes discussion (generally with low-proficiency classes, where there is not a great amount of discussion) or transcribes the faulty English usage he hears (with higher-proficiency classes) for use in the linguistic instruction of step five -- the primary concern of students in these steps is one of exploration, in pursuit of deeper understanding: of American culture (step two), of their own culture (step three), and of themselves (step four). It is in these steps that growth in self and cultural awareness is pursued, and perhaps attained.

(1) The Two Paths of Inquiry

In the first chapter we discussed the two paths of inquiry which the questioning process may follow in the pursuit of awareness -- the path of critical inquiry, and the path of imagination and empathy. These two paths both have their place in the middle steps of the questioning process as applied to ESOL. Most generally -- because of its wider applicability to the full range of different items examined

-- it is the former path which is followed: 'What does this mean? Why do you think that? . . . What does this imply about American culture? Why do you think that? . . . What does this mean for your culture? Why do you think that? . . . What does this mean for you? . . .', with the instructor facilitating discussion through his asking of questions, and students answering for themselves and among themselves, whether in a spirit of sharing mutual insights or in a spirit of debate and argument -- both can have their value in leading to deeper understanding. Alternatively, however, these steps may proceed by means of the instructor's facilitation of students' imagings: 'Tell me a story about this situation . . . Imagine yourself in this person's mind: What are you thinking? . . . What would you do if you were in this situation? . . .'

The path of imagination lends itself to items about people, especially items of highly-charged emotional content (an account of a murder, or a story about how a man lost his job or found a million dollars), items for which analytic reasoning is less appropriate in our efforts at insight than are our powers of empathy and imagination; in addition to this, the path of imagination tends to be particularly well-suited for use with pictures, which tend not to depict issues and ideas, but people, acting in some way -- and this well serves low-proficiency ESOL classes, for whom it is generally easier to tell a story than to try to verbally analyze concepts.

Girl Pushed in Front of IND Train; Hand Severed



Renee Katz

By LAURIE JOHNSTON

A 17-year-old flutist and soprano lost her right hand yesterday morning when, witnesses said, a youth pushed her in front of an oncoming IND subway train at the West 50th Street station.

The girl, Renee Katz, a senior at the High School of Music and Art, was attacked at about 8:15 A.M., while she was on her way to the school at 135th Street and Convent Avenue on the Upper West Side.

Miss Katz, who lives in Flushing, Queens, remained conscious while she was wedged between the train's second car and the platform overhang until she was taken by ambulance to Bellevue Hospital. Her severed hand, found by the police between the tracks after the train was removed from the station, was sent to the hospital packed in ice from a nearby bar.

An operation to reattach it, begun about 10:30 A.M. by a 12-member Bellevue surgical team, was expected to continue until early today. Late yesterday a spokesman said "the hand is alive" following the reconnection at the wrist of an artery and a vein, both major, but with

nerves, tendons and other blood vessels still to be connected. Miss Katz was reported in stable condition, with no other injuries except a scalp laceration.

"We're hopeful the hand will regain significant function and some sensation," said Dr. Daniel Baker, co-chief with Dr. William Shaw of the microsurgery-implantation team.

Justo Barreiro, motorman of the train, said he saw the slightly built young woman, with her shoulder-length blond hair and wearing jeans, pushed from the platform by a black youth "between 15 and 17 years old" wearing orange pants and a brown shirt. The assailant, Mr. Barreiro said, fled immediately to the street.

It was the fifth such attack in the subways this year. Three were in Manhattan and one of those was fatal.

Mr. Barreiro, a subway motorman for 13 years, said he was already slowing for

Continued on Page B4, Column 2

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Girl Pushed in Front of an IND Train; Hand Is Severed

Continued From Page A1

a stop but also used his emergency brake and then notified Transit Authority headquarters to shut off the power and send help. After telling his passengers what had happened, Mr. Barreiro said, he left the doors locked — since the train was only part of the way into the station — while he and his conductor went to Miss Katz's aid.

"She was screaming for her mother, and about how 'I've got to go to college, but at least I was relieved she was alive,'" Mr. Barreiro said. "Everybody in the train could hear the screams but there was really nobody on the platform to chase the kid who pushed her."

"There were mixed emotions in that train. Some people were really cold-blooded — they told us to hurry up or they would be late for work — and I was told

that one male passenger passed out."

No transit police officers were on duty at the time in the station, which was described by a police spokesman as "not a full-time station." Three members of the force alerted at another station were the first on the scene, followed shortly by a transit police Rescue Squad.

Called a Brilliant Student

Miss Katz was described as one of Music and Art's "three or four top flutists" as well as academically brilliant, with a 100 percent Regents examination score in geometry. She planned to attend the New England Conservatory of Music, and had also been admitted to Tufts University.

Although the city Police and transit police questioned several persons, based on descriptions by Mr. Barreiro and other witnesses, all those questioned were released without charges.

Miss Katz, the daughter of Isidore and Rose Katz, graduated from George F. Ryan Junior High School 216 near her home in Flushing before she was admitted to the special high school for the musically and artistically gifted. She has a brother, Robert, 16.

Last weekend, at the senior concert preceding graduation, "Reeny," as she is called by her schoolmates, played flute solos in the Sibelius Second Symphony and the "Roman Carnival Overture" of Berlioz. A member also of the All-City High School Chorus, she sang in its spring concert about two weeks ago. She is also a member of the honor society Arista.

Classmates Are Shocked

Shock, grief and angry indignation over Miss Katz's ordeal were expressed at Music and Art as students gathered in the school's cloister-like halls or stood in the street.

"Whoever did it, they should bring him up here and tie him outside," said 18-year-old Ron Pinnix of Brooklyn, a sophomore student of voice and drums.

Donna Neufville, a junior in voice, who is also a member of the All-City Chorus, said: "People are just so shaken up — everybody here likes Reeny, black and white alike, because she's friendly as well as talented." As for retribution for whoever pushed her, Miss Neufville said, "Capital punishment."

Irving Glazer, Miss Katz's flute teacher at the school, said she had recently played flute in chamber-music sessions. He said she also studied the flute with a private teacher.

As for which path of inquiry is best used with any given item at any given step, it is difficult to ascertain, apart from the particular class and particular situation in which the item is being examined through the questioning process. A combination of both paths, with somewhat greater emphasis on the path of critical inquiry, is probably best; and it is certainly best to facilitate the questioning process and its paths of inquiry in accordance with a class's feedback as to which path is most valuable for them in their pursuit of awareness.

(2) The Instructor's Direction of Inquiry and Discussion

By the steps -- in accordance with our comprehensive statement of steps on pages 82-84 -- the instructor's role in directing the questioning process' inquiry and discussion is as follows: In step two, examination of an item for its implications about American culture -- the instructor is the authority, for he knows his culture as students do not. He, in this step, leads questioning, facilitates discussion, and acts as cultural informant: informing students as to whether their ideas about America and its culture are accurate or misconceived. In step three -- examination of these implications in light of students' own culture(s) -- the students become the cultural informants; the instructor directs questioning along broad structural lines ('What does this mean for your culture? . . .'), and facilitates discussion -- (1) from time to time briefly summarizes, or asks

students to summarize, what has been said in discussion, and weaves together different students' points, and (2) makes certain that everyone in the class has a chance to speak, and that everyone in class understands what is being said -- but basically he listens (and monitors language usage), for what students may teach him. In step four -- examination of all these implications for what they mean for students' (and instructor's) selves -- instructor and students as much as possible leave their roles, to speak as common participants, as people, sharing insights; the instructor asks questions and facilitates discussion so that it can proceed with maximum common understanding, and speaks and listens as one of the group.

In schematic form, the instructor's roles in discussion may be represented as follows:

	<u>Step Two</u>	<u>Step Three</u>	<u>Step Four</u>
Questioner	x	x	x
Facilitator of discussion	x	x	x
Cultural Informant	x		
Participant in discussion			x
Monitor of language usage	x	x	x

The instructor thus questions, facilitates, and monitors language usage in all steps. This need not necessarily be the case -- in a class which shows much initiative, students may act as questioners, and facilitate discussion

as well -- but as a general rule it holds true. In addition to this, the instructor in step two acts as a cultural informant, telling students of American culture; in step three he acts simply as a listener, learning from what students tell him about their culture(s); and in step four he acts as an equal participant in discussion linking all the class as people. Step four is the most difficult of these additional roles, for in classes of certain cultural backgrounds, teacher and student -- due to the former's authority and prestige -- simply cannot speak with one another on an equal basis. In such cases, the instructor using the questioning process may have ahead of him a long process of gradually breaking down the barriers between himself and his students -- if, indeed, he decides that such barriers should be broken, given the cultural situation he and his students are in; if he decides not, the questioning process must be conducted at a certain distance.

The instructor's role in facilitating the questioning process' inquiry and discussion should now be clear; but these roles are considerably easier to delineate than to practice. One problem is that the instructor's multiplicity of roles requires much energy and quickness of mind to be effectively practiced -- but, while this problem may appear to be a large one in the instructor's initial uses of the questioning process, with practice it becomes less significant: The questioning process simply happens, with the

instructor practicing his roles as called for. A second problem cannot be so easily dismissed, and that involves the instructor's task of utilizing the questioning process to facilitate growth in self and cultural awareness in students; let us now consider that problem.

The ESOL instructor, being of different cultural molding than his students, cannot fully understand the minds and cultures of his students; thus, the ESOL instructor using the questioning process in the ESOL classroom must be extremely careful to direct that process in such a way as to not impose his own values and view on students and their own explorations of self and culture. In a large sense, the very use of the questioning process by the instructor in his ESOL classes is such an imposition of values upon students, in that the value of self-awareness, as pursued through the Socratic method, is a product of the Western cultural tradition (Socrates: "The unexamined life is not worth living"), a tradition of which ESOL students may not be a part; but so be it -- the assumption underlying the questioning process is that self and cultural awareness is an ultimate good, and is best pursued through the Socratic method; while this assumption is definitely one which is cultural in nature, it is worth believing and conveying to others, whatever their culture (as we've discussed on pages 43-49 of the first chapter). The concern here is not that the above consciously-held and promulgated value is being imposed on students

through the questioning process, but that in the course of discussion the instructor may unwittingly, through his questioning or his facilitation of discussion, impose other values and assumptions upon students, that will obstruct their self-exploration and pursuit of awareness.

This concern is especially critical with classes of low-proficiency in English. Whereas students in proficient ESOL classes can verbally respond, spontaneously speak for themselves about the questions they've been asked, the ideas they've been exposed to, and are thus on a level of relative equality with the instructor, students in classes not so proficient cannot so respond -- they're in effect a captive audience. The instructor must thus take great care to phrase questions and facilitate discussion in such a way as to not lead students, but to allow them to express, as much as they possibly can, their own free opinions, probings, explorations, whatever they may be. He must in short try to make people think -- but what they think is not for him to try to shape.

This last precept is, once again, easier to state than to practice; in the give and take of the questioning process's discussion, it may be very difficult at times for the instructor to remain culturally aware and sensitive in his questioning, to keep himself and his cultural views out of his questioning. Perhaps the best form of vigilance against such intrusion is for the instructor to bear in

mind the questioning process' third goal -- to facilitate growth in self and cultural awareness in students -- and to apply his questions and his facilitation of discussion against this goal to see that they are in line with it -- to see that they in fact address students' efforts to grow in awareness, rather than simply conveying the instructor's own awareness or lack of it. In the appendix to this project, this issue of the instructor's facilitation of the questioning process's inquiry and discussion is dealt with in a more personal way -- I there tell of my own experiences and insights. For now, let us move on.

(3) The Facilitation of Discussion with
Low-Proficiency ESOL Classes

The discussion of steps two, three, and four will likely be quick and fluent in high-proficiency ESOL classes, in which students can articulate their thoughts and feelings with relative ease (indeed, in such classes, discussion may become so fast and lively that the instructor has a difficult time simultaneously facilitating discussion and transcribing student errors -- this is a skill which takes considerable practice to acquire). But discussion of a deep and valuable kind can as well take place in classes of quite low English proficiency: Any class capable of holding a basic conversation in English can undergo the questioning process, can exchange meaningful ideas and insights about complex issues, if the following steps are taken:

(a) The instructor makes certain in advance -- through discussion or through class vote as to the item -- that the item to be examined is of vital interest: students want to talk about it.

(b) The instructor provides in advance the basic vocabulary needed for discussion about the item and its implications.

(c) The instructor, in asking questions or giving directions, takes great care to make what he says clear to students, by speaking slowly and clearly and repeating as much as necessary, by using the blackboard to draw symbols or pictures or graphs to clarify all potentially difficult points, and by having students rephrase questions or directions in their own words.

(d) Students, in the course of discussion, paraphrase one another's responses: whenever a student speaks, he rephrases in his own words what the previous speaker has said, to the previous speaker's satisfaction.

(e) The instructor actively and carefully facilitates: steps in to interpret and draw out students' points when those points aren't clear, and from time to time briefly reviews and ties together the different points that have been made in the course of discussion. The instructor speaks slowly and clearly, so that everyone understands -- and if someone doesn't, the teacher explains, or has a student explain, until they do.

(f) The instructor pauses frequently -- every 10, 20, 30 minutes, whatever seems appropriate -- to give brief linguistic feedback and instruction based on what students have said: when this is done, students don't feel 'cast adrift' in the new language they're speaking.

All these steps, and especially step (e) above, require great alertness and sensitivity on the part of the instructor; if the instructor either talks too much or too little, is either too directive or too non-directive in his facilitation of discussion -- and these parameters depend, of course, upon each individual class and its makeup and spirit -- discussion may flounder and die. To make a discussion come alive with a class of low-proficiency ESOL students -- and thus, perhaps, relatively insecure ESOL students -- is a difficult thing to do; but, it is amazingly gratifying when it happens, when deep insights in English begin to emerge from a class that apparently could scarcely speak English -- students' confidence in their language knowledge and ability may rise dramatically from such experience.

(4) The Role of Linguistic Instruction
During Discussion

Before proceeding to the language instruction of step five, let us briefly consider the role of language instruction in the discussion of steps two, three, and four. With low-proficiency classes, as we've just noted, frequent

pauses during discussion for language instruction are important for the progress of the questioning progress, both in bolstering students' communicative skills and in bolstering students' confidence. With classes of higher proficiency, such instructional pauses probably won't be necessary, though they may be utilized if students want them; this is certainly an area in which a class's wishes should prevail.

The key linguistic issue with relatively fluent ESOL classes engaged in discussion is one of how much -- if at all -- the instructor should linguistically intrude into students' explorations. If a student in such a class makes a language mistake he has no business making, given his knowledge of English, should the instructor interrupt, thus forcing him to correct his English but perhaps obliterating his train of thought? Or should the instructor simply keep silent, and wait for step five, the time for linguistic instruction proper? The answer to this dilemma depends upon the nature of each class and each student. If a student is progressing at a suitable rate in his English knowledge and usage through the instruction he receives in step five, then probably he should not generally be interrupted during discussion for the correction of his language mistakes; but if a student persists in making the same silly language mistakes over and over again in the course of discussion, then probably he should be interrupted when he makes such mistakes, so as to 'cure' him of his faulty usage of some particular

grammar point. If the latter strategy is adopted, it is imperative that the instructor explain to the class and to particular students exactly why he is interrupting them, so that they understand and do not become resentful at the interruption of their ideas. In a larger sense, it is probably best if the class as a whole decides, along with the instructor, as to the issue of whether or not to have language correction during discussion; through such communication, the class as a whole, instead of just its instructor, can assume a real responsibility for its language-learning.

Step Five

Step five of the questioning process is concerned with linguistic instruction -- this is the step in which students' language misuse during all the preceding discussion of steps two, three, and four is discussed and corrected; beyond this, it is the step in which formal grammar and pronunciation lessons may be presented. This step is obviously of essential importance to the ESOL class; accordingly, it may occupy as much as half, or more, of total class time. With a low-proficiency ESOL class, which will require much explicit formal language instruction in order to grow in communicative skills, this step should be given very great emphasis, and a large amount of class time (often, as noted, interspersed with the other steps of the questioning process); with a high proficiency class, one which knows the basic grammar and vocabulary of English, this step is not quite so critical,

though obviously highly important, and may occupy less total class time. Of course, each class is ultimately different as to its needs: Some classes may prefer much questioning and discussion, while others may prefer much language instruction -- the proportion of language instruction to discussion in the questioning process as conducted with each class should reflect each class's needs.

In this step should be reviewed all the new vocabulary learned in step one and during discussion, and all the language correction that has been made in discussion's course. Once this has been done, all the flawed language uttered during discussion, but not yet corrected, should be dealt with. If discussion, or parts of discussion, have been taped, the instructor may play back faulty sentences on tape over and over again until students are able to correct them; if students cannot make a correction, the instructor then explains the nature of the language mistake made and how it is to be remedied. If students' language misuse in discussion has been transcribed by the instructor, the instructor may write the faulty examples on the board for students to correct as they are able, and explain to the class the errors of those examples as necessary.

Instruction must be selective -- especially with low-proficiency classes, the instructor must not try to explain in step five all student errors he hears in discussion's course, but only those commensurate with a class's ESOL

ability and level; to try to explain, for example, an error in infinitive versus gerund use to a class than can just barely hold a conversation in English is risking confusion and discouragement in students. The instructor, accordingly, should let some kinds of student language errors pass, while teaching from other kinds of errors.

With some student language errors, a correction and brief explanation will be sufficient; other errors, though -- those that touch upon major points of the English language that students need to understand -- will require from the instructor more in-depth instruction. In this case, the instructor may defer full explication of the error until the beginning of the subsequent class -- and in the interim he can prepare a comprehensive lesson based on the error, and on the aspects of the English language it serves to illustrate. Such a lesson could involve simply a straightforward explication of the point to be covered; or it could be given using the techniques Silent Way, or ALM, or CLL -- or of any other method the instructor chooses. Step five is the step in which the questioning process may be integrated with any of a variety of other methods of ESOL instruction; and since this step may occupy a large portion of class time, such integration could be quite significant. While it is beyond the scope of this project to further explore the integration of the questioning process with other methods, perhaps one who reads this may take up that exploration for himself.

A Note on Time

Having considered the procedure of the questioning process' steps in turn, let us now turn back briefly to the questioning process as a whole: How long will all this take? The questioning process could conceivably last for weeks, if discussion proved to be fruitful, continually regenerative; on the other hand, the process could conceivably be done within thirty or forty minutes, if the item to be examined were simple, and discussion were perfunctory. The best way to proceed with the questioning process is to simply allow class discussion to proceed through the questioning process' steps as far and deep as it will go; and when it reaches its natural end, or becomes repetitious or monotonous, to stop it, with class' consent, and move on to language instruction -- which too may take up a large amount of time or a small amount of time depending on what must be covered, given the class' misusage in the previous discussion. This ideal unlimited time span for the questioning process's course might prove difficult to practice in the limited time span of the classroom: A questioning process may have to be conducted over several class sessions, or perhaps restricted in its overall time. It is, however, important that the questioning process be allowed as much as possible to run its full course with a class, if it is to fully pursue its goals: Growth in self and cultural awareness, especially, is a goal whose pursuit requires an ample amount of time for

discussion in the classroom -- and the stopwatch's demarcations may in some situations prove inimical to that pursuit.

Summary

This chapter delineates some techniques and procedures by which the questioning process may be facilitated in the ESOL classroom. For the questioning process' first step, the techniques to be used are aimed at explicating the item so that students completely understand it, and at teaching students new English through the item. For the questioning process' second, third, and fourth steps, the emphasis is primarily on the facilitation of growth in awareness rather than on linguistic instruction, and accordingly, the techniques and skills to be used are those which aid students' discussion and inquiry; they include directing students' inquiry down the path of critical inquiry or the path of imagination; facilitating students' inquiry in such a way that their pursuit of insight into self and cultural molding is aided by the instructor rather than obstructed by his values and views; facilitating discussion so that students in low-proficiency classes can effectively engage with one another; monitoring students' language usage for instruction in step five, and correcting students' misuse in the course of discussion as called for. For the questioning process's fifth step, any techniques may be used which enable effective English instruction -- this is the step in which the questioning process may be integrated with other methods

of ESOL instruction. As for time: Though the reality of the classroom may require time limits to be set, the questioning process is best conducted without prescribed time limit, simply following its course at a class' pace.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE QUESTIONING PROCESS IN THE ESOL CLASSROOM --
MATERIALS

In the preceding chapter, we considered the procedure and techniques of the questioning process in the ESOL classroom; what remains to be considered are the materials -- the items from media -- to be used with the questioning process as applied to ESOL. In this chapter, we will examine the selection and use of such materials. The first section of the chapter is a discussion of the criteria for materials selection for use in the ESOL classroom; the second section of this chapter consists of a selection of examples -- ten items from American media and their accompanying questionings.

Materials Selection

How should materials be selected for use with the questioning process in the ESOL classroom? Earlier (pages 70-71), we established two basic criteria for materials selection and use -- first, that items be from America's media, and second, that items of a pictorial nature be used with low-proficiency ESOL classes and items in print or on tape be used with higher-proficiency ESOL classes. While these criteria need not be held absolutely -- as for the first criterion, relatively proficient ESOL classes might

prefer to translate items from their own culture's media into English for use in the questioning process (which could thereby lead to some very interesting insights); as for the second criterion, pictures may be of value to ESOL classes of all proficiency levels, and low-proficiency ESOL classes might occasionally be profitably exposed to brief excerpts from print or tape: say, a paragraph from an article, or a three-sentence dialogue from a TV or radio show -- they are generally best followed. As for the first criterion: Items from American media provide (when in print or on tape) direct examples of contemporary American usage, and provide a window into American culture; furthermore, because of the global spread of such media around the world, as we've noted, and the general linkage of the world's cultures, these items likely have either direct or indirect relevance to students' cultures and selves. As for the second criterion: pictures provide low-proficiency ESOL classes with a tangible and vivid basis for learning new English and for learning of American culture; as well, they can provide for such classes a means of entry into essential issues for questioning -- issues dealing with American culture, with students' culture(s), and with students' selves -- that probably could not be entered into by such classes through other forms of media, forms of media they could not yet understand without extensive help from the instructor.

In addition to these two criteria for materials selection, there is an additional criterion for materials selection that is perhaps the most important of all: The items to be utilized for questioning must be interesting to the classes that will examine them. What is considered to be interesting will of course vary from class to class; but, in general, this criterion means that items should tend to focus more on people than on impersonal issues, and should deal at least implicitly with the American way of life and looking at the world, rather than exclusively upon the play of current events.

If the ESOL class engaged in the questioning process is located in America, then an excellent way of meeting the above criteria is to have students themselves select the items to be used in questioning through their own perusal of American media (particularly magazines and newspapers); one way of proceeding would be to have each member of the class in turn present an item for questioning -- and perhaps lead the questioning process' inquiry and discussion as well, with as much aid and input from the instructor as is necessary.

If the ESOL class is abroad, the above technique may be more difficult to apply; but if the instructor possesses a collection of items from American media, it may still be practiced -- a class can select, through voting, the particular items it wishes to examine through questioning; or,

different students may select different items and, as above, in turn present them to the class for questioning.

The ESOL instructor who plans on using the questioning process abroad would do well to make for himself a collection of items in xerox form and on tape from American media for use in questioning. Such a collection would best consist of a wide variety of items: from all different media (TV, radio, magazines, newspapers, books, ...), aimed at all different strata of age and social class (material from National Enquirer as well as from The New York Times, from Grit as well as from Rolling Stone), and from local as well as national sources (from local radio as well as from ABC - New York, from The Brattleboro Reformer as well as from The Boston Globe), covering the spectrum of American issues and opinions (basically, everything that we of our culture are concerned with should be covered, to as wide an extent as possible), in a variety of different ways (comic strips, news photographs, editorials, ads, advice columns, talk shows, ...). The task of gathering such a wide range of materials in a careful balance is a difficult and time-consuming one -- but it is very important; the instructor who uses such a collection of materials in his classes is presenting to his students a window into American culture (and ultimately a window into their own culture and selves), and it is essential that this window not be distorted.

Ten Examples and their Accompanying Questionings

Introduction

The pages that follow present some of the most interesting items from my own collection of materials (over the past year I have collected several hundred such items, for use in my future classes abroad) -- I have taken ten items and written for each of them a sample questioning: an example of how the questioning process's inquiry might proceed using the item as a basis and a catalyst. My purpose for including these items and questionings in this project is to stimulate the imaginations of those who peruse them, and who may perhaps use the questioning process in the ESOL classroom: the forthcoming items serve to show the wide variety of different items with which the questioning process may be used; their accompanying questionings serve to reveal a few of the many different paths of inquiry that the questioning process's dialectic may follow.

The main criterion for selection of the forthcoming items is that the items all seemed interesting to me, and thus at least potentially interesting to ESOL classes, in which they could thus serve as appropriate vehicles from which the questioning process might proceed. Beyond this criterion, the forthcoming items have been chosen as a unit due to their overall variety -- they come from many different media (magazines, newspapers, books, radio, TV) and deal

with many different aspects of American culture (from woman's place to the threat of nuclear war, from the role of work in America to the role of God) -- and also due to their overall balance: While large philosophical issues are considered in the items implicitly if not explicitly, the emphasis is on people and their lives -- and this corresponds with the balance that instructors using the questioning process with their classes will perhaps find most suitable.

The questionings I have written to accompany these items are brief: they do not delineate classroom presentation of these items, nor techniques of English instruction (for we have covered those areas fully in the previous chapter), but focus upon the questioning process's inquiry in steps two, three, and four: Utilizing in combination the paths of critical analysis and of imagination, they postulate progressive questions through these steps -- questions to be considered by a hypothetical class, or perhaps by the reader -- which, if pursued, might lead to greater awareness.

The general course these questions follow is (as we've seen): (for further detail, please refer back to pages 81-83)

Step 1: What does the item say?

Step 2: What does the item imply about American culture?

Step 3: What do these implications mean for students' culture(s)?

Step 4: What do these implications mean for ourselves as people?

The particular course followed in the coming questionings, while within these guidelines, is widely variable, depending upon the nature of the item being examined and the line of inquiry that seems potentially most fruitful. These questionings in their particularity are by no stretch of the imagination meant to be prescriptive -- they are simply examples, showing a few ways of many possible ways in which the questioning process might conceivably proceed. They illustrate the way my own mind works as a questioner in the ESOL classroom; as you read what I have done, it may be helpful for you to formulate for yourself additional questioning, reflecting the workings of your own mind.

The forthcoming examples are in sequence: The first three items are pictures, and their questionings are more appropriate for lower-proficiency ESOL classes; the following seven items are either in xeroxed print (five), or on tape (two), and their questionings are designed for use with higher-proficiency ESOL classes. Beyond this, the items in their two sequences are ordered in terms of the nature of their questionings, so that each questioning is in some way related in its explications to the questionings that precede it, as would occur in a class using the questioning process over a period of weeks. Thus, I recommend that the following examples be read straight through rather than at random, in order to see how the questioning process might unfold over a number of separate questionings.

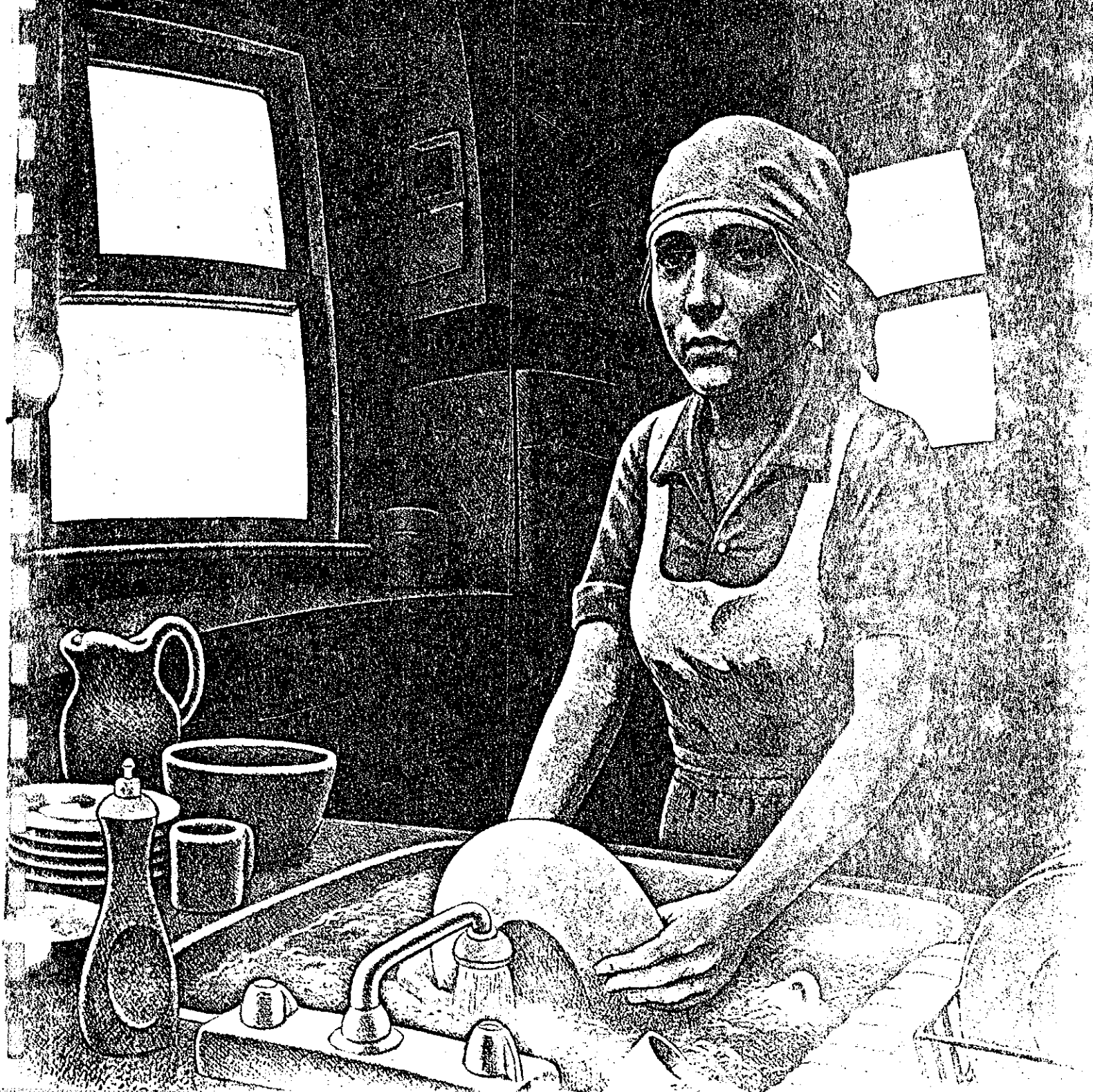
Contents of Examples

PICTURES:

1. Woman Washing Dishes
(from Psychology Today) p. 119
2. Children Watching Television
(from Psychology Today) p. 121
3. Family in Divorce Court
(from An American Family: A History
in Photographs, Jeffrey Simpson,
Viking Press, 1976) p. 123

PRINT, OR TRANSCRIPT FROM TAPE:

4. Life Without Work
(from Newsweek) p. 125
5. Tim Devlin
(from Working, by Studs Terkel, Avon,
1974) p. 127
6. Steve McQueen's New Love
(from National Enquirer) p. 130
7. Worrying about the Bomb
(from the Anchorage [Alaska] Daily News) p. 133
8. Nuclear Protest
(from ABC-TV News) p. 136
9. Bangladesh/Tropical Vacation
(from Atlantic Monthly) p. 138
10. Jonestown
(from CBS Radio News) p. 142



WOMAN WASHING DISHES:*

1. What do you see? Describe --
2. Tell me about this woman -- tell me about her typical day, as you imagine it --

 Do you think she is happy?

If so, what are some reasons why she might be happy?

If not, what are some reasons why she might be unhappy?

 Many Americans believe that it is unfair for women to have to stay at home and do housework while men can go out into the world and work.

More and more American women in the past twenty years have left their roles as housewives, to have careers -- to be doctors, lawyers, soldiers, executives, truck drivers.

-- What effects do you think these trends might have on American society?

In what ways do you think these trends might be good for America? In what ways do you think these trends might be bad for America?

3. Are those two statements above true for your culture as well as for America's? How much are they true? To what extent are they true?

Do you think that the trends they describe

are
would be

 a good thing for your culture? Or not?

Why? Why not?

4. What do you think --

-- Is a woman's place in the home? Or, should women have the same opportunities that men have in the world?

Why do you believe what you believe?

5. (Language instruction based on the discussion of steps 1 through 4)

*NOTE: The language used here may seem quite difficult for low-proficiency ESOL classes; but if questions were spoken very slowly, and repeated, paraphrased as necessary for student understanding -- see page 102 -- then their use could be quite effective with low-proficiency classes.



CHILDREN WATCHING TELEVISION:

1. What do you see? Describe --
2. Tell me about these children -- describe their typical day, as you imagine it --
(What time do they go to school? What time do they get home from school? What might they do then? What time do they probably eat dinner? Tell me about dinner . . . What might they do in the evenings?)

The average American child spends a large part of his day and evenings watching television (an average of 4 to 6 hours per day).

In what ways do you think that watching television might be a good thing for these American children to do?

In what ways do you think that watching television might be a bad thing for these American children to do?

In general: In what ways do you think television might be a good thing for American society? In what ways do you think television might be a bad thing for American society?

3. What about the effects of television on children in your culture? Are they the same as those we've come up with for American children? Or are they different? If they are different, how are they different? Why are they different?

What about people in general in your culture? How does television affect them? In what ways is this effect good, do you think? And in what ways is it bad?

4. Do you watch television?

In what ways do you think that TV has been good for you as a person? In what ways has it helped you?

In what ways has TV been bad for you as a person, do you think? In what ways has it hurt you?

-- How do you think television has shaped you as a person?

Would the world be a better place if there weren't TV? Or, if TV were different? What do you think?

5. (Language instruction based on the discussion of steps 1 through 4)

from The American Family: A History in Photographs,
Jeffrey Simpson. New York: Viking Press, 1976.

The agony of children torn between parents who want nothing to do with each other lies in the split feelings the child must have. Here, after a custody case, a weeping child clings to the mother with whom she must leave, rejecting her father, who has not been awarded custody.



DIVORCE SCENE:

1. What do you see? Describe --
2. Using your imagination and what you know about American life, tell me the story of these people --

Why is the child hugging her mother? Doesn't she like her father? Why not? What's going on here?

In America, the rate of divorce has gone up decade after decade in the past century. Why has this happened, do you think?

- Life is faster, less settled than it used to be?
- People are unhappier than they used to be?
- Women have a different idea of themselves than they used to have?
- More women are working?

Why?

3. Is divorce common in your culture? Is there more divorce now than there was in the past? Why is this happening, do you think? (Or, why isn't it happening? How is your culture different from America?) For the same reasons as in America? Or for different reasons? What do you think?

What about the family? In America, some people have said that the family is dying as a way of life . . . Is this happening in your culture, do you think? Do you think that it will happen in the future in your culture? Why? Why not?

4. Back to the picture -- imagine a photograph of your own family, taken when you were very small. Look at each person in the photograph in turn:

What are their expressions? Their positions? Where are you in the picture? What do you see of yourself?

(Due to the personal nature of this step, it might be preferable to simply do it and move on, rather than attempting to engage in subsequent discussion.)

5. (Language instruction based on the discussion of Steps 1 through 4)



LIFE WITHOUT WORK

BERNARD LEFKOWITZ / MY TURN

One night, ten years ago, my father was complaining about his job. After 40 years of selling women's hats on the same street in Manhattan, the pay was still lousy, his boss didn't give a damn about him and nobody bought hats anymore. I had heard it all many times and had never known what to do except listen silently. That night, I wanted to do something because I knew time was going out, that every morning he had to stick a nitroglycerin tablet under his tongue to get it up the subway steps with his sample book. So I offered him some money and asked he take time off to relax and perhaps think about another job. Secretly, I hoped to coax him into early retirement. "I can't quit," he said.

"Why not?" I asked, impatiently. "Because I'd miss it," he said. About a year later, he died. For a long time after his death, I wondered what kept him from thinking when he knew he was dying. I think about it now that it was the sense of community, and his position as a tribal elder in it, that drew him to The Street even when his heart was failing.

As a kid I'd sometimes go with my father when he went out selling, and he had always seemed happiest when he was shmoozing—shmoozing about politics or sex or the price of a hat with the counterman at the lunchette, the black woman who sewed the hat bodies at the back of the shop, the kid who ran the boutique in the East Village or the hit man up for a contribution to the Annie Hoffman bail fund. He cared for the people who populated his work world.

PATTERNS: In his life, work was a seamless cloth that stretched from his childhood to his death at the age of 64. Today, the pattern of work in America is much more uneven and irregular, a patchwork of frequent shifts in jobs and even occupations. In a two-year national study supported by the Ford Foundation, I interviewed more than 100 men and women who had stopped working for a minimum of two years. Almost all of them were in their 30s, 40s and early 50s. The point of the study was to find out how their lives had been affected by their disengagement from work and how they reassessed their position in society from their vantage point outside the factory gates.

The sense they were all conventional. They had begun their working lives with high hopes and swelling ambition. Like my father, they had proceeded along a traditional path: first you found a job, then you married, raised a family, achieved a meas-

ure of economic security and earned the respect of your colleagues and neighbors.

Now they had veered off onto uncharted ground. At first I thought that their most difficult adjustment would involve finding the money to survive and filling up the time that had been occupied by their work. But most of the people made the transition without great trauma. They put together a basic economic package which consisted of government assistance, contributions from family members who had not worked before and some bartering of goods and services. When they couldn't meet a mortgage payment, they sometimes took a temporary off-the-books job or rented out a room. Generally they seemed to be living almost as well as when they were drawing a salary.

For my father independence from work was a luxury, certainly not a right.

Unlike the Depression-era image of the man who crumbles when he doesn't have a job, these people found plenty to do. When they were working, they had daydreamed about other interests and enthusiasms. Quitting gave them the chance to live out their daydreams. The aeronautics engineer who was laid off by Boeing in 1971 after twenty years on the job never went back to work. Instead, he builds magnificent, high-power electronic telescopes in his basement. The government economist who was never quite certain of the purpose of the programs he was analyzing does not doubt his purpose today; it is to take moving, richly evocative photographs of the people who live in his neighborhood in Boston.

At work, my father had found a community that recognized and respected both his craft and his qualities of character. This was not so for these people: they had doubted the value and meaning of their labor. Test a new jet engine, add a new wrinkle to a state tax plan—they woke up in the morning asking themselves the fatal question: what difference does it make?

On the corporate organization chart, their positions were called slots and after a while they had begun to think of themselves as slots. If they quit or died tomorrow, somebody else would fill the slot. The common theme, which surfaced again and again

in their histories, was the need to find a new social connection—to reassert control over their lives, to gain some sense of freedom. As the economist-turned-photographer told me, "I worked to buy fine cognac and I bought fine cognac to keep working. Now the cognac's gone, but I understand what I'm doing and why I'm doing it."

Some were brilliantly successful in their pursuit of personal efficacy and community. I remember with great fondness the Yale architect who became the unofficial mayor of a houseboat community in California. He hasn't worked for fifteen years but nothing that affects his constituency escapes his scrutiny. There were also the woman who sold her farm and devoted herself to rescuing a bankrupt cooperative of black farmers, and the former keypunch operator who led a campaign to force state legislators to disclose their private sources of income. But they were in the minority. Most of the people I spoke to wanted to rejoin the intimate circle they felt they had neglected in their years of work. They are represented by the pilot who grounded himself because he realized he had become a stranger to his teen-age daughters.

AN ALTERNATIVE: The difference between them and my father was their belief that they were entitled to freedom and independence. For my father, who grew up in a cold-water tenement and suffered through the Depression, independence—especially independence from work—was a luxury and certainly not a right. In my father's time, a family breadwinner who left his job would be condemned by everyone as a bum. The people I interviewed came largely from middle-class backgrounds. They were educated, self-assured, articulate and, with a few exceptions, white. They were sure they could talk themselves back into a job if need be. And that belief licensed them to explore an alternative to the American idea of success.

My father was born too early. It makes me sad that he could never exorcise the demons—those economic and social anxieties that always haunted him. I'm not saying he would have died happy and fulfilled if he had been secure enough to investigate the world beyond work. But I believe he would have come closer.

Bernard Lefkowitz

Lefkowitz's book, "Breaktime: Living Without Work in a Nine-to-Five World," will be published this month.

LIFE WITHOUT WORK:

1. What have you just read? Outline it paragraph by paragraph --

What about these people described by the article who have decided not to work: From what the article says, why have they decided not to work? How have they survived without working? What have they done with their lives after quitting work?

How does the author seem to view these people?

2. What do you think about all this?

If leaving work becomes a large-scale trend in America, in what ways might this be a good thing for America? In what ways might it be a bad thing?

Overall, would it be good or bad for America? Why?

3. Could any of this occur in your culture?

Do people in your culture quit work to pursue their own aims? If so -- what do you think about this trend? If not -- why not? How is your culture different from American culture in this respect? (Which society do you prefer in this respect?)

4. Do you like your work? Would you rather work or not work? Why? If you didn't have to work any more, what would you do with your life? (What prevents you from taking such a step?)

5. (Language instruction based on the discussion of Steps 1 through 4)

TIM DEVLIN:

1. What have you just read?
From the text: Who is this person? What is the story of his life, as he tells it? Why does he view himself as being "a flop"?

2. What do you think? Is Tim Devlin a flop? Why? In what sense? If he is a flop, do you think it's his own fault? Or is it the fault of America's culture, the culture that molded him? Or is it a combination of the two? How? Explain --

What is 'the system'? What does it mean to say that Tim Devlin is a product of 'the system'? Is he? Or is this view too simple? Why? Explain --

Why is Tim Devlin so unhappy? What could happen to him that would make him happy again, do you think? Would he then be completely happy? Or not? Why do you think that?

3. Could Tim Devlin's account be an account of a life from your culture? In what ways could this account take place in your culture? In what ways is it uniquely American?

Is there a 'system' in your culture? In what ways is it like America's system, as we have described it? In what ways is it different?

4. Imagine that you have been introduced to Tim Devlin in a restaurant, and imagine that he tells you his story and asks you for advice -- "What should I do?" -- What would you tell him?

From what you've read, and from what you've imagined of your meeting, do you like Tim Devlin? Or do you dislike him? Why?

How are you and I different from Tim Devlin? Why are we different?

Do we have more will, more character than Tim Devlin? Or, were we simply more fortunate in the circumstances of our cultural molding?

If you and I were born in Tim Devlin's shoes, subject to all the exact influences that shaped him -- would we be like Tim Devlin? Would we be Tim Devlin? Or, would we still be essentially different from him, due to our innate characters -- who we are at root?

Continued . . .

TIM DEVLIN (cont.)

- (4.) Take any person on the street: any millionaire, prostitute, bum, ... If you were born in their shoes, subject to all the exact influences that molded them, would you essentially be like them -- would you be them? Or would you be different: you . . . ?

Who are you? And -- to what do you owe who you are?

5. (Language instruction, based on discussion of Steps 1 through 4)

Steve McQueen's New Love Has Turned Him Into Tame Pussycat

Steve McQueen has fallen head over heels in love with an eye-popping beauty barely half his age — and she's leading the macho superstar around like a kitten on a leash.

"It's really amazing! I can't believe it's the same person," exclaims a source who's close to McQueen.

"She tells him what to do and he jumps. He's like a tame pussycat."

The 49-year-old McQueen has been living with top fashion model Barbara Minty, 25, for nearly a year — and suddenly he isn't smoking, getting drunk or carousing until all hours. Even his scruffy beard and pot belly are gone.

Amazed coworkers can't get over the change in him.

"He's in good shape. The belly's gone. And the scruffy beard's gone too. He's obviously been forced to think things over and decided to take better care of himself," says one worker on a recent McQueen film, "Tom Horn."

And another adds: "Not long ago McQueen was being ribbed about being overweight. Today he looks really great for a man his age — he's going on 50."

The change that's come over the star is nowhere more apparent than in his relationship with Barbara, according to the source close to McQueen.

"It started off as your basic romance with this macho screen idol calling the shots and laying down the law," the insider told *The ENQUIRER*.

"But that's all changed now. He always looks to her for approval and he acts like an affection-starved kid. The irony is that McQueen behaves as if

he's finally found a mother — in a woman half his age."

Barbara, a 5-foot 9-inch brunette who earns \$1,500 a day modeling, has succeeded where other women have failed by refusing to put up with McQueen's wild shenanigans.

"It's obvious that she wears the pants in that relationship," says the insider.

"The other women in his life — from his first wife Neile to his last wife Ali MacGraw — stood by as McQueen went on drinking sprees and generally behaved like a Neanderthal man.

"But he can't do that with Barbara. She won't take it. She knows she's gorgeous and talented and Steve knows it too.

"McQueen phones Barbara constantly from wherever he may be, letting her know what he's up to and when he can be expected home.

"He's always in bed by 9 p.m. and up at 5 a.m. — and Barbara is there to make sure of it.

"She doesn't approve of any exceptions to these rules.

"She even controls what he eats. If she sees Steve reaching for a cream puff she just gives him a dirty look and that's all it takes. Steve puts his hand back in his pocket and shuffles off with his head hanging down and a guilty look in his eyes.

"McQueen is in really great

By PABLO FENJVES

shape now, thanks to Barbara. He has given up cigarettes. He keeps his drinking and eating under control — thanks to Barbara. He exercises daily. He's quieted down a great deal.

"He still drinks beer and chews tons of tobacco. But at home he walks around with a big spittoon in his hand. When he's on the road his spittoon is a Dixie cup.

"That obnoxious and loud-mouthed ruffian I knew a year ago has disappeared. He's no more than a kitten.

Many others who know McQueen agree that he has become a new man since he became involved with Barbara.

"McQueen's in really good shape and he's quit all his bad habits," says a source who worked on the movie "Tom Horn," which McQueen recently finished filming.

Said an actor: "On the set, he'd go straight to his trailer where Barbara was waiting.

"She was there all the time during shooting. And there was no trouble (with McQueen)."

Another acquaintance adds: "He's friendly, polite and soft-spoken now. Before, if anyone recognized him and spoke to

him, he would give them a dirty look and then ignore them. Now he'll take the time to say a few words."

But there are some things about the old McQueen that haven't changed — and even Barbara won't tamper with them.

He's still got his 138 motor-cycles in the mammoth garage of his Malibu beach house and he still has an antique motor-cycle parked in the living room of his Beverly Wilshire Hotel suite. And he's still as much a daredevil as ever.

"His new hobby is flying," says the insider. "He still hasn't got his solo license but he's out almost every weekend with his instructor.

"Recently he flew over Ali MacGraw's house — which is less than half a mile down the road (from his) — buzzed it a few times to bring her and the kids outdoors, then flipped the plane to impress them."

From all appearances the relationship between Barbara and McQueen suits them both.

"Barbie is the stabilizing force in his life. She's the woman he's been looking for.

"They cuddle and kiss a lot. When they walk around she's always putting her arm around

from National Enquirer

his waist and he strokes her long, beautiful hair.

"They smile at each other from across the room and there's that certain electricity that tells you they are very much in love. Their love is something out of a fairy tale.

"Barbie is the woman McQueen has been looking for all his life. Sensitive, beautiful, proud, independent and —

above all else — she won't take any grief from him. They make a beautiful couple."

Even McQueen's son from his first marriage, Chad, 18, who now lives with his father and Barbara in the Malibu house, agrees.

He said: "My dad has been with Barbara for almost a year now. She's really great. I get along with her really well."

STEVE MCQUEEN'S NEW LOVE:

1. What is this article about? What, exactly, does it say?

How does the article view the McQueen-Minty relationship?
How is this view an ambiguous one?

(McQueen is presented in turn as 'macho superstar being led around on a leash by a woman half his age', and as newly young and filled with vitality because of what his relationship is doing for him.)

2. The way the article views that relationship might be seen as reflecting two predominant male views in America of how romantic relationships should ideally be: (1) The man should dominate the woman, be the master in the relationship (McQueen is being mocked in the article because his lover has mastered him); and (2) The man and the woman should be equal partners in the relationship, and equally and mutually in love (McQueen is newly alive because of his deep love for his partner).

What do you think of these two views? Do you agree with either of them? Do you disagree with either of them? Which do you prefer?

3. In your culture -- how are romantic relationships generally viewed? Is the man supposed to be the master of the relationship? Or, is the woman? Or, are men and women supposed to be equal?

(Who asks who out on a date? And who pays -- the man, the woman, or each for his or her self? What about [careful here!] premarital sex? -- Is the man who engages in it viewed as being 'bad'? Is the woman who engages in it viewed as being 'bad'? What about love? Is 'falling in love' something which is highly valued in your culture? Or is it viewed largely as foolishness?)

What about marital relationships in your culture? How are they generally viewed -- Do most wives work, or stay at home while their husbands work? Do women do the housework -- the cooking, the cleaning, the laundry -- or do husbands and wives, men and women, share equally?

Is this the way it should be, do you think? Why? Why not?

4. What is your view of the ideal man-woman relationship?

Continued . . .

STEVE MCQUEEN'S NEW LOVE: (cont.)

2. What kind of publication do you think this article comes from?

Why are American people interested in such information -- the private lives of celebrities? Why do people read articles such as this? What function do they serve?

3. Are articles of this kind to be found in your culture? Why do people of your culture read them, do you think?

4. How is this item we've just examined different from the other items we've examined? We've discussed why people are interested in items such as this -- but why are people interested in any of the items we've been looking at?

Looking back on all the items from media that we've examined -- why do people spend their time reading or listening to media? What function does it serve? Of what value is it?

(Why are we in this classroom examining these items from media, discussing them at such length? What are we trying to achieve?)

5. (Linguistic instruction based on the discussion of Steps 1 through 4)

Worrying about the bomb...and much more

BOSTON — The girl is worrying about The Bomb. It is, a friend assures me, a passing thing. It is, he says, just a symbol of childhood feelings of impotence in a wider and scary world.

But I think it is a symbol of her fear of the bomb. I saw her staring into space when the idea goose-bumped across her body. She shivered and said simply, "I was worrying about the bomb."

I wanted to say the right thing to her. We always want to say the right thing and end up telling them to brush their hair. So, about the bomb, I said: "It is worth worrying about?" That was dumb. She asked for a second opinion. It's what resourceful children do when the first answer is dumb or the source is as historically unreliable as a parent. She looked across the table and questioned a friend of ours: "Do you think I will die from old age, disease, or the bomb?" My friend was taken aback, but

he is congenitally reassuring. So, of course, he told the girl that there wouldn't be a nuclear war because it would be disastrous for everyone. People were too sane to drop the bomb.

The girl, however, has had a good deal of experience with the use of ultimate weapons on school playgrounds. She is not convinced that the reasonable human mind is a deterrent to violence.

So it was my turn again. This time the best I could do was wryly point out one of the values of living in Boston, one which goes unadvised by realtors. In the event of a nuclear war, anyone this close to M.I.T. will never know what hit her.

Double dumb. What I wanted to be, of course, was both honest and reassuring, both accurate and comforting. But it is sometimes impossible to be both. Ground Zero is not a great comfort, especially if you are 11 years old. This isn't the first time I have



ellen goodman

flunked my own self-administered, self-corrected, take-home parenting test. Maybe I'm a tough grader, maybe we all are, or maybe the world has raised the standards over our heads.

When we were young, most of us were fed three square meals of certainties.

We didn't hear much about bad times, bad marriages, bad wars. The survivors of the Depression didn't talk much about it; the survivors of World War II were proud; divorce was a secret scandal.

Most of us grew up expecting a stable world. I don't think we were betrayed; at worst, most of our parents believed they could build us that world. They thought we needed to be assured instead of prepared. Instead, we were surprised.

And lurking in the background is the epitome of human foolishness and insecurity: The Bomb.

All these things cannot help but affect the way we live with our own children. I suspect that they, too, want a stable, secure world. They want consistency; they want answers to questions and solutions to problems.

I don't know whether they are learning insecurity and fear, or learning how to cope with insecurity and fear. But I suppose we do what parents always do: our best. We try to share what we know of the world and what we assume they will need to know. With any luck we will have been too pessimistic.

WORRYING ABOUT THE BOMB:

1. What is this article about? What does it say, exactly?
2. What is your reaction to the article?
(Does what it says surprise you in any way? Does the fact that it appeared in a daily newspaper surprise you?)

What does the article imply about American culture?

- about parent-child relationships?
- about fear: fear of the bomb, and fear in itself?
- about the change in generations in America?
- about the way sensitive Americans think?

The author says that American children of her generation were brought up to expect a stable, secure world, and were taken by surprise when they found that the world they'd grown up in wasn't that way; but children today grow up feeling insecure from the very start of their lives. Why this change, do you think? What's happened in America, to the world, over these past ten, twenty, thirty, forty years, to create this change in the mind of the young?

3. Would this article appear in your culture? If not, why not?

How is this article uniquely American? And how does it reflect the plights, minds, hearts of all of us in the world?

The change, as described in the article, in America's children of today and their knowledge of the world and insecurity in the world -- do you sense that this is true in the children of your culture too? Is this a good thing or a bad thing, do you think?

4. The Bomb:

Do you think about that at all? Does the possibility of nuclear annihilation ever enter your mind?

Due to the bomb's threat -- and, as well, to innumerable other elements of modern life -- it's been claimed that people today (not just children) are much more nervous and insecure than ever before in history -- and that perhaps we've lost that sense of joy about being alive that our predecessors felt.

Continued . . .

WORRYING ABOUT THE BOMB (cont.)

- (4.) Does this make sense to you? Do you think it's true?

Think of our lives in comparison to the lives of people living in a small village long ago, laboring in their fields, knowing of no world beyond . . . Stretch your imagination -- beyond all those obvious material differences, how might that basic feeling of joy about life compare?

What's going to happen to the world? Where are we headed? Are we going to blow ourselves to bits? Or, are we in the future going to become, out of necessity, as skilled in living harmoniously with one another as we are now in building machines and weapons?

What do you think is going to happen?

In 100 years? 200? 500?

5. (Language instruction based on the discussion of Steps 1 through 4)

NUCLEAR PROTEST
(TV Transcript - ABC News)

People filled the Taunton Green this afternoon and listened to speeches by opponents of nuclear waste sites in residential areas. Activist Dick Gregory condemned the Taunton site, while Congresswoman Margaret Heckler was also there. Heckler is looking into a recent study that contradicts an NBC report which lists the Taunton Dump as having low levels of radiation. When the rally broke up, the protesters marched to the dump site. Heckler says she's also looking into ways that nuclear wastes might be converted into a substance called ethanol, which produces gasohol -- instead of simply dumping the wastes.

In Oklahoma today, anti-nuclear demonstrators made it to within several hundred yards of the reactor core site of that state's first nuclear powerplant. About five hundred members of the Sunbelt Alliance marched on the Black Fox Station construction site near Tulsa; heavy rain kept others away. All the protesters were arrested and charged with trespassing, and then carried off in police vans. Among those picked up were television reporters and their camera crews.

In the Boston area, the cry is similar this weekend:

[Fragment of a guitarist's song: "A politician's mouth
don't worry..."]

Armed with banners and petitions, demonstrators gathered near the Draper Labs in Cambridge today, protesting that company's making of guidance systems used in nuclear missiles. The demonstrators stressed that there is a link between nuclear power and nuclear weapons, and called on Draper to put their resources into such things as housing and education.

In Rome, Massachusetts, twenty-one protesters were arrested at the main gate of the Yankee Atomic Powerplant today. About two hundred people staged a sit-in at the plant; it's all part of what anti-nuclear activists are calling International Nuclear Protest Weekend.

NUCLEAR PROTEST:

1. What did you just hear?

What is it that the protesters are protesting?

What's happening to many of the protesters? Where are they being sent?

2. Why are the protesters protesting? What does it seem the protesters believe -- about nuclear power? about their own personal power to influence the large-scale course of events? about the relation of their beliefs and their consciences to the law?

Do you think that such protests are a good thing for America? Or a bad thing for America? Why do you think what you do?

3. Do protests occur in your country? against nuclear power? against other things? What? Are such protests a good thing for your country, or a bad thing? Why do you believe what you believe?

4. An American philosopher named Thoreau once said:

"In an unjust society, the only place for the just man is in prison."

Do you agree with this statement? ...

-- What is justice? How is one to know for sure when one's society is being unjust? After all, don't we, as individuals, obtain our conceptions of justice from our cultural molding -- so, how can we ever know for certain what justice is? . . . But, on the other hand, isn't it clear, in each of our hearts, what justice is -- that it's wrong to murder, to steal, to lie? . . . Or, is it not so clear what justice is? What about something like war? When is war just? And when is it unjust? Are you sure? On what basis do you make this judgement of yours -- How do you know? . . .

 Would you ever protest? Say that your country did something that you know in your heart was wrong -- say, started an unjust war. Would you protest? How far might you go in protest? -- Use your imagination --

Continued . . .

NUCLEAR PROTEST (cont.)

(4.) Would you:

- talk to friends?
- write letters to newspapers and officials?
- engage in peaceful demonstrations?
- break the law?
- blow up buildings?
- kill people?

How far might you go, if you knew that you were right? How far can you imagine yourself going?

5. (Language instruction, based on the discussion of Steps 1 through 4)

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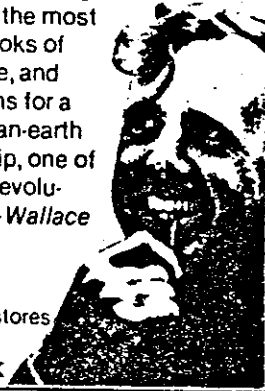
Greentown, Pa. 18426

Wendell Berry

"is our contemporary Isaiah" (Edward Abbey), "a very hardy growth indeed; he may bend, but he will not break as long as the land upholds him" (James Dickey), "a prophet of our healing, a utopian poet-legislator like William Blake" (Donald Hall, N.Y. Times Book Review).

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BANGLADESH

fuel he uses leaves and twigs. He has, of course, no lavatory or running water.

It was late in the dry season when I visited the village. One of the barber's children, his seventh, was lying naked on the floor of pounded earth in the hut, her stomach swollen like a soccer ball, her legs finger-thin and wasted. The mother appeared reluctantly with two other children. Her neck bulged hugely with goiter. Her eyes indicated anemia. The two other children, including the latest arrival at her breast, suffered like the third child from advanced malnutrition.

Walking on with a twenty-four-year-old paramedic named Eva Banergee, who came from a village like this and now heads a small team of barefoot doctors, I saw many children who had never known what it was like to have a satisfactory meal. "They need everything," said Eva Banergee. "They need more food. They need green vegetables. They need medicines."

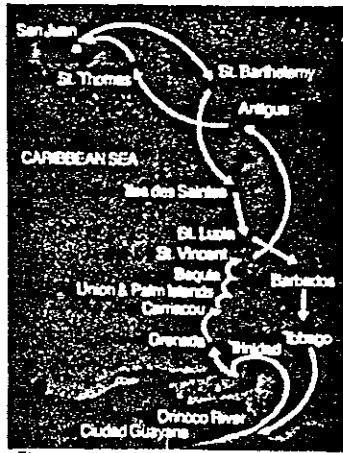
Rural despair

For Shapmari read Bangladesh. For this is a land of farmers and grinding rural poverty. Almost 70 percent of all farmers own only two acres of land or less. Yet the smallest economically viable farm is about three acres. Around 40 to 50 percent of the rural people are landless or semi-landless, owning a third of an acre or less. Another 20 percent have one to two acres and, like the landless and semi-landless, are below the subsistence level. Unless the present trends can be reversed, they have nothing to look forward to but malnutrition, constant hunger, disease, and early death.

"Nowhere in the world is there anything like so much poverty shared by so many squeezed into so little land area," said a 1976 government report. About 60 million of the 84 million people have a per capita income of less than twenty-five cents a day. Millions live like the barber of Shapmari. Only one person in ten can read and write, and perhaps one in five knows how to write his name. Grandiose plans for education ignore the fact that a family on the starvation line cannot do without the extra hands of the children to pick up sticks and grass and mind the richer neighbor's cow. Schooling is a luxury the desperately poor cannot afford. A shoeshine

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BANGLADESH/TROPICAL VACATION:

1. What do you see here? What is your immediate reaction?
2. Is it morally wrong for a rich person from America (or any wealthy nation) to go on a luxurious vacation when there are people in the world who are starving?

Or, is it all right?

Or, does it depend upon the person and the situation? If this is the case -- when is it right? When is it wrong?

Or, is it impossible (or unnecessary) to make any such judgements? . . . Why? Aren't some such judgements necessary to make, given the fact that we're alive and a part of this world? Or, isn't this true?

What is the responsibility of America, and of the people of America, towards the poorer nations and people of the world?

3. Is your nation's responsibility different from my nation's responsibility? Why? Is your responsibility different from my responsibility? Why?

What should we do?

4. The phrase "all men are brothers" -- is this a fact? an ideal? a delusion?

Let's interpret the phrase to mean "one should view a peasant from Bangladesh in the same that one views one's relative or neighbor" . . . What do you think about this meaning?

- is the phrase a fine ideal, impossible to realize, perhaps, but important to bear in mind?
- or, is it a poor ideal to bear in mind, since its effect, given all the world's misery, is only to make us feel wretchedly guilty? (and there's nothing we can do . . .)
- or, is it simply untrue, in that there is no basic link between one's relatives and neighbors and a peasant from Bangladesh?
- or, what? . . .

Continued . . .

BANGLADESH/TROPICAL VACATION (cont.)

(4.) Given what we've just concluded --

What responsibility do you and I have (as people who are intelligent and well-off) towards the poor in the world?

If we do have a responsibility, then how are we to meet it? Should we give money or time to some concerned organization? Or, simply stay aware of the world's situation? Or, pay our taxes? Or, not interfere at all, but simply live our lives as best we're able where we are? . . . Or, what?

What can/should we do?

5. (Language instruction based on the discussion of Steps 1 through 4)

JONESTOWN
(Radio Transcript - CBS News)

Some Americans have returned from Guyana following a horrifying weekend at the Jonestown commune. This is Doug Polling, reporting on the CBS Radio Network.

The Americans arrived in San Francisco Monday night, and were questioned by the FBI. They had gone to Guyana to try to convince other cult members to come back. One of them was at the Jonestown airstrip Saturday when the shooting broke out. Harold Dow has the report:

"James Cobb, Jr., arrived in San Francisco a few hours ago, and told for the first time the story of how he stayed alive. He says that when he heard the first shots and saw people fall to the ground, he didn't think what he was seeing was real:

'I saw people fall at close range, and I knew it was real -- and so I just turned around and ran into the jungle for about two hours. It was too dark, I couldn't see, and so I climbed up a tree and spent the night there. There were tigers and cheetahs in the woods; I was lucky to get away from there ...'

Cobb and seven others who came home are being heavily guarded. The FBI has already conducted interviews with them -- they're trying to ascertain if the People's Temple Church violated any laws in the United States. (Harold Dow, CBS News, San Francisco)"

About an hour ago, a U. S. military plane arrived in Charleston, South Carolina, carrying the bodies of Congressman Leo Ryan and three American journalists who died in the hail of gunfire. Authorities in Guyana say that more than four hundred cult members died, either from taking poison or from gunshot wounds; among them was cult leader Jones. Another six hundred to eight hundred cult members fled into the jungle and are being sought

JONESTOWN:

1. What did you just hear?
2. Do you know about the event the broadcast is referring to? Tell me what you know --

Why did it happen? Why did all those people kill themselves?

- were they crazy?
- were they hypnotized by their leader?
- or, what? . . .

Do you think that they were relatively normal people, like you and me? Or, were they essentially different from you and me? How?

Again: Why did it happen?

3. (The instructor briefly describes the cult phenomenon in America)

Are there cults in your culture?

If so, why do people join them, do you think?

If not, why not? How is your culture different from American culture in that people don't feel the need to join cults?

Can you imagine an event like Jonestown taking place among people of your own culture? If you try very hard -- can you imagine such a thing taking place?

It has been said that cults in America are a symptom of people's loss of faith in traditional religion in America: Young people especially often don't believe in the religion of their parents and grandparents, and so they may feel a lack of meaning in their lives -- cults, for a few of them, provide such meaning . . .

Is this loss of faith occurring in your culture? Or, is traditional religion holding strong? What do most people now believe in your culture? What faith do they hold? Do children and parents and grandparents generally share the same faith, and the same strength of belief? Or, are younger people less religious than their elders?

Continued . . .

JONESTOWN (cont.)

4. What about you? What do you believe, in an ultimate sense? (careful here . . .)

How do your beliefs help you to live your life?

Once more: Why did those people at Jonestown kill themselves?

5. (Language instruction based on the discussion of Steps 1 through 4)

Summary

Aside from the two basic criteria for materials selection and use discussed in earlier chapters -- (1) items should be from American media, and (2) items of a pictorial nature should be used with low-proficiency ESOL classes, with items in print or on tape used as classes progressively gain the ability to understand them -- there is a third criterion to be considered, one which is the most important of all: items to be examined through the questioning process should be interesting to students. If a given ESOL class is in America, one way to meet this criteria is to have students themselves select items from American media for use in the questioning process; if the class is abroad, the instructor would do well to have gathered, in xerox and cassette form, a collection of items from American media from which the instructor or students may select particular items for use in questioning as befits class interest.

While the broad steps of the questioning process are best generally adhered to in questioning process' course, the particular paths of inquiry that the questioning process may take with a specific instructor, a specific class, and a specific item, are highly variable -- each instructor will likely evolve, through thought and classroom experience, his own particular way of directing the questioning process's inquiry.

APPENDIX

THE QUESTIONING PROCESS IN THE ESOL CLASSROOM --
A SUBJECTIVE ADDENDA

In the preceding two chapters, we have examined the techniques, procedures, and materials to be used with the questioning process in the ESOL classroom. Our examination has been objective in tone -- the objectivity of our examination has been essential to the clear communication of its points; but, in fact, the questioning process as an approach to ESOL did not simply spring fully and objectively conceived onto these pages. Rather, it is the product of much thought and slow trial-and-error in the various ESOL classrooms in which I have taught over the past year: in Toluca, Mexico, last winter (January - March 1979), and at Yale University's ESOL Program last summer (June - August 1979). In the pages that follow, I set forth a subjective addenda to the objective delineation of the questioning process as applied to ESOL -- an addenda which adds to that delineation the suggestions and insights that I have come to in the course of my past year of using the questioning process in the ESOL classroom. These suggestions and insights that I have come to will, I think, be of benefit to other ESOL instructors who may utilize the questioning process -- perhaps to you who read this.

The appendix is organized as follows: First, we will look at materials -- I will discuss the sources for materials

that I have found valuable, and will describe my attempts to use items from foreign media in the questioning process in the ESOL classroom. We will then look at linguistic instruction in the questioning process's steps -- I'll briefly discuss some of my techniques in such instruction -- and then turn to an in-depth examination of the facilitation of the questioning process's inquiry: I'll tell of my techniques with low-proficiency ESOL classes, of my experiences and insights with high-proficiency ESOL classes, and of my present concept of my role as facilitator of the questioning process's inquiry. I will then discuss my idea of where the questioning process and its direction might ultimately lead a class; and I will conclude this appendix and this project by citing two incidents from my classes of the past year that reveal how deep the questioning process might go in its facilitation of awareness and of communication.

Materials Selection and Use

Ideas for Sources

It might seem that the collection of materials advocated on page 114 would be a very time-consuming process; but it need not be so -- if you who seek to gather such a collection keep in mind your collector's function when you read a newspaper or a magazine, you will within a few months possess an extensive collection of interesting clippings (or, if you read in the library, of xerox copies). Satisfactory tapings

of radio and TV broadcasts may be somewhat more difficult to obtain than clippings or xeroxes -- but, here too, if in an evening's watching or listening you have a cassette recorder on hand, you will likely come up with a number of interesting items on tape, of a sound quality not great, but usable. If you know of anyone with a combination radio/cassette player, borrow it and use it for making radio tapes -- for the sound quality of recordings made from such units is far superior to those made using a hand-held microphone.

Pictures too are not nearly as difficult to collect as might be supposed; there are all kinds of sources from which pictures may be found: National Geographic has photographs of people and places from Harlem to Honolulu; People has pictures of all the celebrities you'd ever want to see; Psychology Today carries wonderful graphics, illustrating the problems of modern life; Life and The Saturday Evening Post are loaded with pictures on all kinds of American topics; Saturday Review and The New Yorker have fine cartoons; newspapers have their news photographs and comic strips; and picture books dealing with American history and geography are to be found in most every library. If found in a library, items from such sources will of course have to be xeroxed (which isn't so bad, since xeroxes of pictures generally compare in clarity with their originals, and since xeroxes tend to have a longer span of use than pictures clipped from magazines, which rapidly become worn and crinkled); but, often, such sources of

from *Working*, by Studs Terkel (editor), New York: Avon 1974

TIM DEVLIN

He suffered a nervous breakdown and was in the hospital for three months. He's been out for a year. "I'm thirty years old and I sometimes feel fifty." (Laughs.)

Right now I'm doing work that I detest. I'm a janitor. It's a dirty job. You work hard. When I'm at work I wear a uniform, gray khaki pants and a gray shirt. It's baggy pants. It's what you see a lot of janitors wearing. This is the kind of work I used to think niggers would do or hill-billies or DPs. You don't associate with people like that. Now I'm one of them.

"You're a bum"—this is the picture I have of myself.

I'm a flop because of what I've come to. There's five of us at work here. It's a housing project. Three can barely speak a word of English. They're DPs. They work very hard and don't complain. They're perfectly content, but I'm not. It's a dead end. Tonight I'm gonna meet a couple of friends at a bar. I haven't seen them for a long time. I feel inferior. I'll bullshit 'em. I'll say I'm a lawyer or something.

When you meet somebody at a party they ask, "What do you do?" I bullshit 'em. I tell 'em anything. Their minds are like a computer. "I'm a CPA." Oh, he's gotta make at least eighteen-thousand a year. He's a success. If I said I was an electrician, they'd think I make nine dollars an hour. If you say, "I'm a janitor"—ooohhh! You get this feeling that you are low. It's a blow to my ego. Who wants to be a janitor? They even call them maintenance engineers.

I don't have any interest in furthering myself, but I just can't see myself doing this the rest of my life. I almost get to the point that I ought to be on welfare. I ought to chuck it all and just not do anything. My whole outlook on work is different than it was. I'd be free if I could say I'm a janitor . . . If I could only say, "I'm Tim Devlin and I enjoy what I'm doing!"

I've had college training and I'd been in sales almost eight years. I was right off the assembly line: In life you become a success to get ahead; money is the key to judge people by. That was my childhood thing—the big office, the big car, the big house. I was doing as good as I wanted to be. I could have done much better.

I fell in love and thought it was the most beautiful experience in the world. Shortly after I was married I found out that my wife—I'm not blaming her—was interested in money. She was judging me against other people my age. Was I a financial success? I put in long hours. I got this feeling I was just a machine. I felt at the end of the week, Here's the money. Now do you love me? Am I a better man?

I was selling a photocopy machine for \$1,250. My commission was \$300. The total value of the machine was \$480. I thought, Jesus Christ, there's something wrong here. If it costs \$480, why can't it be sold for \$480—for a small margin of profit as possible, not for as much

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profit as possible? I'm looking toward a utopian society, ain't I? I didn't feel proud of myself.

I was one of their soldiers. I read the sales manuals. If the customer says this, you say that. Turn him around, get him in the palm of your hand, and—boom!—get him to sign on the dotted line. You give him bullshit. You wiggle, you finagle, you sell yourself, and you get him to sign. Pow! you won a round. The next day is another round. What the hell am I doing? I don't enjoy it. My marriage is turning sour. I'm making good money. I have a company car. This is what my wife wants, but I feel bad. I begin to question things. It blew the whole marriage.

I never talk about it to anyone. People would think I'm a communist or I'm going crazy. A person that's making money shouldn't question the source of it. I always kept it to myself. This was the American Dream. This is what my father was always pounding into my head.

I learned this angle thing from my father. He was always trying for some gimmick to make a lot of money. He didn't want to spend the rest of his life as a tradesman. He was always trying to open up a business or a franchise. He lost every dime he made. He believed in the American Dream. We should examine this dream. If I sell a machine that's worth \$480 for \$1,250, is that the American Dream?

When I got divorced it hit me bad. I went through a crisis. I blamed the system, I blamed the country, I blamed God. This is where the nervous breakdown came in. I just didn't give a shit any more. I didn't want to see anyone any more. I didn't want to hear someone tell me, "Yeah, next week I'm gonna get a promotion to district manager." Big deal. I don't give a goddamn if he's gonna be President of the United States. I'm cynical. This is what I'm carrying around with me.

When I was selling, my friends looked up to me. One worked in a bakery. Another was driving a cab and delivering pizza. They were thinking, "Maybe I ought to go into sales." A salesman! You wear a suit every day, you drive a company car. Now they call them account executives. A CTA bus driver may make more money, but you have a white shirt, a tie . . . My sisters are all married to white-shirts.

A lot of people are considered failures but it's not their fault. I don't know exactly what I want to do. I don't want to go back in the rat race. Will it be the same thing

again? I've had offers to go back into sales—to be a con artist. But I've gotten turned off. I think I missed the boat. If I could do it all over again, I would have gone into the field of mental health, really finding out what makes people tick. I would love to find out why people think it's important to be a success.

I do want to make it financially. But the only thing open for me would be sales work again. I'm not twenty-one any more. My God, I'd have to start off with maybe a hundred and a quarter a week. That really isn't any money. That's just enough to put a roof over your head. If I do apple polishing, I might make assistant manager in ten years—and maybe a lot of titles along the way. I'm afraid that's the only way open for me now. I guess I could buy stock, get remarried, and be part of what the system's all about. But I really question the system . . .

pictures may be found for the taking: Used bookstores and Salvation Army stores frequently have huge piles of old National Geographics lying around, on sale for a quarter or fifty cents a copy; from such a haul, hundreds of pictures may be found, for use with ESOL classes and with ESOL's questioning process.

The most valuable sources I've yet come across for use in the questioning process, and in teaching American language and culture in general, are Studs Terkel's books, Working, Division Street, and Hard Times (all currently in print as paperbacks published by Avon). These books consist of verbatim transcripts of hundreds of conversations that Terkel has had with a wide variety of 'typical' Americans ("Tim Devlin", on page 127, is an example of one such transcript); they are of value for the ESOL classroom, not only in that they show how contemporary American language is actually used by its speakers, but as well because Terkel has such an astonishing gift for bringing those with whom he talks to open themselves up, to reveal their hearts and minds. The books reveal how Americans think and feel. They are thus ideal for use with the questioning process -- for examination of students' selves based upon the examination of a self of another culture about which they have read. For ESOL classes of relatively high proficiency, Terkel's books -- particularly Working -- are, as far as I am concerned, essential texts.

The Use of Items from Foreign Media

While the items from media whose collection we have been discussing are obviously of real and multiple benefit to the ESOL classes which will utilize them, I am not happy with the idea of using exclusively items from American media with the questioning process in the ESOL classroom -- to use exclusively such items in a process aimed, in part, at the facilitation of growth in self and cultural awareness in students smacks, to me, of cultural chauvinism. To avoid such chauvinism, it seems preferable to, say, alternate items from American culture with items from students' own culture(s) for use in questioning -- students could translate items from the media of their own culture into English, and then perhaps lead the ensuing questioning.

Unfortunately, such an alternation has never yet worked well in any of the classes in which I've tried it. In Mexico, I tried having each of my students in my advanced classes translate and bring to class an item from Mexican media, to subject to the class's analysis; and at Yale, I had students scour the New Haven newsstands in search of articles either from their country or about their country, which I'd then xerox and distribute for the class's questioning, to be led by each student in turn. But neither of these experiments worked: In Mexico, my students seemed to have great difficulty with their translating, and at Yale, most students seemed to be unable to find articles from or about their country . . . and in general, it seemed that students were

quite wary of taking the initiative in their English class, in gathering their own material and facilitating its examination through questioning. What my students wanted to examine was material from American media and culture, material that I had found, and the examination of which I would facilitate. And so, such material is what I provided them with, and such material is what we examined in the questioning process.

In future classes, I'll continue to try to broaden, culturally, this materials base for the questioning process, in the ways I've referred to above, but without unduly pushing students. It seems to me that such broadening could be very important to the questioning process's pursuit of growth in self and cultural awareness -- but if students are not interested, as mine thus far have not been, then it would seem that the questioning process can only continue on its basis of, largely, if not exclusively, American media.

Language Instruction

The area of language instruction has, I feel, been sufficiently covered in Chapter Three; but my subjective impressions and experiences in the classroom may serve for the reader to clarify that examination. I will present what I have learned in step-by-step order.

Step One

The techniques for explicating items from media in the ESOL classroom discussed on pages 91-95 are techniques that

I have used in ESOL instruction and found to be successful. The only activity suggested there that I have not successfully utilized is that of using pictures in the course of step one to explain grammar points or to engage students in various language activities apart from the straightforward procedure of the questioning process. I have found that such use of pictures tends to sidetrack the questioning process, so that it does not fully get started: by the time students -- particularly younger students -- have been looking at a picture, utilizing a picture for twenty or thirty minutes, they may be tired of it, and unenthusiastic about examining it further. I prefer to confine comprehensive language instruction to step five, when the questioning process is either well underway or has completed its course, rather than giving such instruction before the process has begun. (This question may lead to the larger question of priorities in low-proficiency classes: Which comes first -- language instruction or questioning? Presumably the former, but each class and instructor will have to decide that for themselves.)

Steps Two, Three, Four

Language instruction in steps two, three, and four was, in Chapter Three, left somewhat problematic -- a matter for each teacher and each class to work out as it will; this is because I myself have been unable to come to any firm conclusions.

When I first began using the questioning process in Mexico, I tried to avoid having to listen for students' language misuse while facilitating discussion, by taping all discussion in my two relatively proficient classes, listening to it at home, and teaching students their mistakes in the subsequent class session. This technique quickly proved to be impracticable for me (perhaps it wouldn't be impracticable for an instructor more hard-working than I) due to the sheer volume of discussion taking place -- I just didn't have time to monitor it all; and so, I switched to the technique of transcribing student errors onto paper as I heard them and subsequently giving language instruction based on those errors. This technique has proven to be satisfactory with high-proficiency ESOL classes, which don't make many mistakes; but for voluble but not-so-proficient ESOL classes, it has not proved to be so satisfactory. -- In such classes, simultaneously following and facilitating discussion, and noting and transcribing students' language errors, becomes an enormous task. At this point, though, transcription, augmented by brief tape recording for use in class, seems to me to be the most effective way to monitor language usage by such classes. As for low-proficiency classes, classes in which student errors are frequent and discussion is fairly slow in pace, I have found both cassette recording and transcription to be effective means of monitoring language usage: I have found the former to be better when I want to comprehensively monitor

students' speech, and subsequently comprehensively instruct them; I have found the latter to be better when I want to more unobtrusively monitor students' longer discussions. Accordingly, I use these two techniques in conjunction.

The biggest problem I've had in using discussion and its monitoring as a means of teaching ESOL is that often correction doesn't seem to stick -- students will make mistakes in discussion, and will subsequently be taught the corrections to their mistakes, and will seem to understand . . . and then, in the next discussion, they'll make the same mistake over again . . . and so on. The solution to this problem, I've found, is to make a point of interrupting students in the course of their contribution to discussion if they make a mistake that they've been taught not to make. We discussed this technique in Chapter Three (page 103), and decided that interruption may be called for if a student makes the same mistake over and over again, or otherwise makes language mistakes that he knows much better than to make. This may seem like a rather insensitive practice on the part of the instructor -- interrupting and thus perhaps destroying some student's heartfelt utterance about God or love or war because he left out a 'do' or used a wrong tense -- but I've found that it is the best way, and sometimes the only way, to make English correction and instruction stick in students' minds. I will interrupt simply by saying "stop" . . . and generally the student will immediately recognize his mistake, correct himself, and continue;

if he doesn't, the other members of the class will help him with his correction, or, if absolutely necessary, I will help him with his correction. This technique seems to work -- students rarely continue to make the same mistakes over again (though they generally find no shortage of new mistakes to make).

Step Five

Step five of the questioning process is, as we've seen, not necessarily a separate and discrete step from the questioning process' other steps -- with low-proficiency classes especially, it may be interspersed throughout those other steps; whenever a pause in discussion is reached, brief language instruction may take place. Initially I did not like this idea: It seemed to me that the questioning process' discussion and language instruction should be kept apart, in accordance with their separate goals. But I rapidly saw -- and was indirectly told -- in the classroom, both in Mexico and at Yale, that such separation is often not fair to students, who want to be corrected and taught their language errors soon after making them, instead of waiting for that indefinite time at which discussion ends and language instruction begins. Accordingly, I have now learned that language instruction and discussion should be interspersed as much as students want -- not only will such interspersion provide students with immediate feedback as to their language usage, thus enabling them to learn English more effectively,

but it may, as well, provide them with the security they need in order to fully pursue, in a foreign language, growth in awareness through questioning. With my low-proficiency classes, there has generally tended to be enough natural pauses in discussion to allow interspersed instruction to take place without disrupting the course of the questioning process' inquiry; with higher-proficiency classes, finding such natural pauses in discussion has proven to be more of a problem -- I've found that I must be on the alert for such pauses in inquiry, to take maximum advantage of them for language instruction when they occur.

Step five, as we've seen, is a step especially open to innovation: This is the step in which the questioning process may be linked with CLL, or Silent Way, or any number of methods of ESOL instruction. I myself have always been fairly conservative in this step, teaching students the points of the English language they need to learn through straightforward blackboard explication and student response. My feeling has been that the questioning process, with its emphasis on self-exploration, is so different from most students' expectations of what an English class should be, that I will at least keep its English instruction within the bounds of the familiar -- but perhaps this is simply an idiosyncrasy on my part. Perhaps you who read this will explore these possibilities as I have not.

Facilitation of the Questioning Process' Inquiry

Let us now turn from our examination of linguistic instruction in the questioning process to an examination of the questioning process' inquiry and discussion, and the instructor's role in facilitating such. First I will discuss how I have found the questioning process to be most effectively facilitated with low-proficiency classes. Then we will consider the questioning process and its inquiry in higher-proficiency classes; I will recount several of my classroom experiences in facilitating the questioning process, and will then make a brief statement, based on my experience, of how I define my role as the facilitator of students' inquiry in the ESOL classroom. Lastly, I will describe my conception of how the questioning process might ideally evolve with an ESOL class.

Low-Proficiency ESOL Classes

In my experience, facilitation of discussion with low-proficiency ESOL classes (as discussed on page 102) is an extremely tricky matter -- in some low-proficiency classes, discussion in the questioning process works incredibly well; in other such classes, it is a dismal failure (I have experienced both over this past year's teaching). Success or failure is at least partly a product of each particular class and its unique interpersonal chemistry; but the instructor can do much to augment the chances for success. The key strategy to encourage such success has, I've found,

been this: The questioning process should be implemented very gradually with low-proficiency ESOL classes, so that by the time they are asked to engage in discussion, they are ready for it -- both in terms of their linguistic confidence and their trust in the instructor and in one another. Practically, what this has meant for me is that in the initial few days or weeks of teaching a low-proficiency class I will simply teach English to the class through the use of pictures (along with other methods and techniques of language instruction), rather than trying to pursue the questioning process -- I will ask students to describe what they see in pictures, and perhaps to imagine and tell a story about what they see . . . and leave it at that, until, perhaps after a week of class, I will ask: "What does this picture tell you about America? . . . Could this happen in your culture?" After a week or two more of relatively undemanding cross-cultural comparison, I will begin asking students more personal questions: "What do you think about this? What does this mean for you?" -- and we as a class will then be engaged in the questioning process in full. The exact timing of this gradual introduction of the questioning process to low-proficiency classes I have found to be a highly intuitive matter, different for each different class I've taught; but the general principle of such gradual introduction is, in my experience, worth adhering to.

Occasionally, one may come across an ESOL class that simply will not talk, due less to lack of knowledge of English than to insecurity with the English that is known. Such classes, I've learned from experience, can be incredibly frustrating for a teacher trying to implement the questioning process. A technique I've used with such a class in Mexico -- a class of near-beginners, the bottom 20 students of a public school class of 100 -- involves writing as a substitute for speaking: I would show a picture and ask a question about it, making certain that students understood, through repetition and paraphrase (and, if absolutely necessary, through translation into students' native tongue). Students would then write out their answers -- one, two, three sentences -- using their imaginations and their dictionaries. I would check each student's response as he finished; when everyone had finished, the class would form a circle and each student would read his response aloud as I listed all new vocabulary on the blackboard.

Generally speaking, I don't think that this is a good technique to use, for it encourages dependence on the written word rather than on spontaneous speech in the new language; but for a class that is, for whatever reason, unable to use their new language in speech in any creative or personally-involving way, this technique may serve as an initial step to such personal involvement with the language, and thus to discussion. In fact, the class with which I used this

technique was, by class's finish, engaging in brief but meaningful discussion, in accordance with the questioning process's steps and goals.

High-Proficiency ESOL Classes

With high-proficiency ESOL classes, the facilitation of the questioning process's discussion is not so obvious a problem as it is with low-proficiency ESOL classes, since students possess the language ability to speak their minds with relative ease; nonetheless, as I've learned, great care must be exercised in that facilitation. The biggest mistake I've yet made in the course of using the questioning process for ESOL instruction was to try to immediately embark upon that process full-bore, in my first days and weeks of teaching a class of English teachers in Mexico; I thereby came very close to losing that class, which was simply not prepared to engage in deeply personal exploration in English, as opposed to learning points of grammar. The lesson I learned from this experience was that, even with proficient ESOL classes, the questioning process must be introduced very carefully -- for while such classes may possess the linguistic ability to express fully in English what they think and feel, they may not yet feel the interpersonal trust necessary for such expression -- and they may deeply resent any effort on the part of the instructor to force such expression. Accordingly, the questioning process with such classes should initially be facilitated so as to cover

only very safe ground -- students may be initially led through the steps of questioning to share of themselves in a non-revealing or threatening way, or to exchange personal opinions on a relatively mild issue; but potential controversy or potentially uncomfortable self-exposure should be avoided. Later on, deep personal sharing may take place -- but it can take place only of its own accord, as trust in the classroom sufficiently grows to allow it to happen. By the time the aforementioned class had run its course, we were discussing, through the questioning process, our views of romantic love, political revolution, right and wrong, our religious beliefs, our memories and hopes and fears . . . but this depth of sharing could come about only when the class was ready for it to come about.

The Necessity for Authority

The questioning process, thus, cannot be forced upon an ESOL class, whether of low-proficiency or high-proficiency, but only embarked upon as a class is ready. This does not mean, however, that the instructor may relinquish his direction of the questioning process -- for too little direction by the instructor of the questioning process's inquiry may be just as negative as too much instruction. Such was the mistake I made with my other advanced class in Mexico: That class, consisting of five voluble young men of the state tourism office, was open and eager to discuss all kinds of topics, and I, wanting that class to define its own direction

in questioning, stopped directing the process beyond the examination of an item and its implications for American culture -- the remaining steps of inquiry I left for the class to formulate as it would. The result was drifting chaos -- discussion in those remaining steps disintegrated into series of anecdotes and asides having nothing to do with one another. When finally I reasserted my authority in directing all steps of questioning, the class was enormously relieved: "Finally we're doing something!"; and from this, I learned that, just as I cannot force the questioning process on an ESOL class that is not ready for it, so too I cannot simply sit back and expect a class to take upon itself the direction of the questioning process. Here is the position I have come to, based on the trial and error of my experiences in directing the questioning process's inquiry in the ESOL classroom: I must direct the questioning process in such a way that it meets students where they are, both linguistically and interpersonally, and does not force them into a direction that they do not want to take; but at the same time, I must not relinquish my direction, to let students try to define that direction for themselves -- for such relinquishment may well mean that the class goes nowhere. Perhaps in the future I will teach a class in which this latter restriction does not hold -- certainly future classroom experiences may change my views; but for now, I see my role in the facilitation of the questioning process's

inquiry as being that of a 'sensitive authority' -- I will be sensitive to students' needs, but I will also be in complete control of what happens in my classes, and in the direction that those classes may take in the course of questioning.

The Potential Evolution of the Questioning Process

Despite the above conclusion, and despite my classroom experiences thus far, I can envision a situation in which students take over for themselves the questioning process in their ESOL class, in which student initiative evolves to become the rule of the class. Such an evolution might work itself out as follows. At first (as I tried, without success), such initiative would take place in steps three and four of the questioning process -- the instructor presents an item and directs its examination in terms of American culture, and then students take over, direct its examination in light of their own culture and in light of themselves, ourselves, as people. Later, the entire process could be directed by students, with the exception of step five -- students bring in items from their own culture's media, either in English or translated by them into English, and direct the item's examination and questioning from start to finish, with the instructor acting as linguistic and cultural informant as needed -- as requested -- but providing no facilitation, no direction; rather, simply listening, and participating as appropriate. Only in step five,

the step of language instruction, would the instructor formally act as instructor.

As I have indicated, such an evolution has never yet even begun to occur in any of the ESOL classes I've taught; and perhaps it never will. All the same, I continue to believe that such an evolution is possible, with a certain kind of chemistry in a class; and while I won't hold my breath, I hope to teach such a class someday. Such a class would, for me, represent the questioning process at its ultimate best -- a process in which students themselves direct their pursuit of growth in self and cultural awareness. The instructor in such a class would teach students a new language, and teach them of a new culture -- and pursue his own growth in awareness as students pursue theirs: pursuit, growth to be shared in the classroom by teacher and students as simply people, people engaged in a common endeavor, the most important endeavor of all.

In the meantime -- though I've had my full share of close calls, momentary failures -- all I can say is that the questioning process seems to have worked in the ESOL classes I've taught, both in its instruction of English and its facilitation of growth in self and cultural awareness; such, anyway, has been the feedback, written and oral, that almost all of my students in my classes in Mexico and at Yale have given me. Certainly I have much more to learn about the questioning process and how to facilitate it in the ESOL

classroom; but I am very happy with the way in which it has thus far worked in my classes, and I will continue to use it, and refine it, in the foreseeable future.

Two Classroom Examples

The foregoing account has discussed the questioning process in the ESOL classroom from a subjective point of view -- the questioning process as it has been shaped in the course of my classroom experience. Having given that account, this project nears its completion; but I feel that I have not yet fully conveyed just how deep the questioning process may go in facilitating awareness and communication between people. In order to convey that, let me close this project by briefly telling of two incidents that took place in the course of my teaching over the past year -- incidents that, for me, epitomize in a personal way the unexpected breakthroughs in awareness and in communication to which the questioning process may lead.

Example 1:

I've been trying out the questioning process for three weeks with an advanced class in Mexico, and it's not going well. On this Thursday night, only three students show -- a brother and sister aged thirteen and fourteen, relatively fluent in English, and their English teacher from their high school; it's the sparsest attendance we've yet had in the class. I half-heartedly

begin the questioning process (with the picture of two children watching television you saw in the examples of the previous chapter); and then, somehow, through a progression I'm not sure of, Carlos and Maria are talking about their family: their workaholic father; their mother, from a rich family, who wants more and more; the screaming arguments at supper; the younger children, neglected and crying all the time . . . Carlos and Maria are their family's only stability; they're trying to hold it together in their way, but it's so hard. . . But what really got me was not so much the poignancy of their story as what they told me afterwards -- this class session had been the first time that brother and sister had ever really sat down and talked with one another, for as long as either of them could remember. (The class, incidentally, took an upswing in terms of attendance after that session, for whatever reason -- and had eight people in it by the time it came to a close.)

Example 2:

The final session of my favorite class at Yale: a conversation class, eight people of eight different nationalities. We'd spent the week discussing the future of the world -- xeroxes from The Next 200 Years and from The Limits to Growth -- and now, to bring it all back to ourselves and our coming departures from one another, I left the world's situation aside to ask about our own

futures: "Where are each of you going to be on this morning five years from now? . . . Shut your eyes, imagine, tell us . . ." Ten minutes later, a young Colombian was chattering away the story of his coming success, only to look up and see Wilhelm -- a blond and always-smiling German, middle-aged but seeming much younger -- sobbing his eyes out. We carried on as a class, in slightly hushed tones . . . until Wilhelm could rejoin, telling a tale of his future office life he couldn't have much believed.

I had an idea what was going on in Wilhelm's mind -- he'd had a heart attack two years before, he'd told me; in his vision of his future, he probably had seen another, and this time with no more arising to carry on. I saw him the next day at lunch, briefly, a few hours before he was to board a train to New York and a jet back home to Berlin; I didn't want to embarrass him, but felt bound to acknowledge what he had done for me. I told him as quickly and as matter-of-factly as I could that what had happened in our class the day before had made me remember some essential things -- I'd found myself crying my own small share that evening. He said nothing, put his hand on my shoulder; we looked at one another until both our pairs of eyes started getting watery . . . then smiled at one another,

smiles knowing and self-conscious at once . . . shook hands . . . parted.

Such occurrences are, needless to say, hardly typical of what generally occurs between people in and through the questioning process -- breakthroughs in communication such as these do not happen through procedure and plan, but only through serendipity -- the play of serendipity on a foundation of common trust. Nevertheless, it is these kinds of occurrences which confirm my faith in the questioning process, not simply as an approach to ESOL instruction, but as an approach to growth in awareness, a path to understanding and touching other people -- which is, after all, what these lives of ours are all about.