


1987

Teaching in the Silent Way With a Focus on Idioms

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TEACHING IN THE SILENT WAY
WITH A FOCUS ON IDIOMS

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This project by Cynthia Wiseman is accepted in its present form.

Date 16 March 1987

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Acknowledgements:

Abstract:

This paper is one which in essence summarizes how one teacher is trying to rethink teaching in light of the common sense principles presented in the Silent Way. The focus is teaching idioms because that was our focus in the class which served as a point of departure. However, the paper is not limited to teaching idioms in the classroom. It is more an attempt to outline and thereby understand teaching as it is presented in the Silent Way, as is evidenced by the emphasis on philosophy and techniques used in the Silent Way.

Eric Descriptors

The Educational Process: Classroom Perspectives

Second Language Instruction

Learning and Perception: Silent Way

Classroom Perspectives: Class Activities

Language and Speech: Idioms

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Introduction

Purpose

My purpose in writing this paper is to show how one Silent Way teacher has approached implementing the principles of the Silent Way in a class of intermediate to advanced speakers of English. I shall describe some of the principles of the Silent Way which I have been working on. This account is by no means a complete overview of what the Silent Way is but is rather a tool which I am using in my own attempt to understand this approach. Of most importance and use to others is a list of idioms and a short list of techniques which I developed in teaching a class of advanced English speakers.

Audience

This paper is written for experienced teachers who have already been introduced to the Silent Way. The nature of my presentation in its incompleteness is such that one would need some familiarity with the approach and some experience in the classroom in order to understand the ideas that I am trying to express.

Background

This paper was written at the time that I was teaching a group of Japanese bankers who had already developed a high level of proficiency in the English language. The paper was written in an effort to understand how I could still consider myself a Silent Way teacher and at the same time accommodate the needs of students with more traditional expectations of what to expect in the classroom.

All of these professionals were well versed in English grammar; their vocabularies were diverse; they had all taken the best courses offered in Japan. However, these students had limited time, energy and interest for English. They were in the class because they wanted to learn English and since they were living in the United States, it was expected of them.

In addition, they felt that for each class their time would have been well spent were they to leave with some kind of worksheet that included a given number of new expressions. These students were not comfortable with the sound/color chart. The exact nature of their experience with the chart was never clear to me, but they requested that we work more on content than on "pronunciation." As a Silent Way teacher, I then had to structure my classes to meet their needs in a way that would be consistent with my own beliefs.

After some exploration during the first classes, we agreed to concentrate on idiomatic expressions. We began working with the word charts after a brief introduction to the sound/color chart. We used those word charts to generate idiomatic expressions to be studied in class. We used visual dictation, brainstorming, cloze exercises, articles from current business magazines, videos and discussions to introduce new expressions in class. We used these techniques in such a way as to force the students to rely on their own resources. Whenever possible, I asked them to use their past experience and knowledge to define and use the new terms. In this way, I encouraged them to rely upon themselves to find out what they didn't know by using what they did know and what they all have--intelligence. We also used logic in determining the meaning of expressions and how those expressions were to be used.

I found my heavy reliance on cloze exercises to be a mistake. I would attribute that reliance in large part to my own laziness. I finally realized that a heavy reliance upon any technique borders on abuse. One can use any technique effectively and even in the spirit of the Silent Way; however, too much of anything can become stifling and dull. We fell into a pattern in class that resembled that routine approach to the exercises in a drill. It is therefore necessary to seek some variety in one's approach to any technique.

The Paper

The following paper deals with two aspects of teaching based upon my own experience with these bankers. The first part is my attempt to understand certain principles of the Silent Way. This part is more a general discussion of the Silent Way--the philosophy, techniques and tools used in this approach. The second part focuses on my experience teaching this class, including examples of materials I developed in this course, using Silent Way tools as well as more conventional ESL materials, sample techniques and lists of idioms taken from Word Charts I - XII.

I. The Silent Way

Philosophy

In this chapter, I describe a few key theoretical principles of the Silent Way, which is a useful and effective approach in teaching ESL. The principles are basic, sound ideas that any teacher might come to apply after years of teaching. The tools of the Silent Way have been developed with those principles in mind and are designed to meet the requirements for fluency in any second language. I have chosen to describe those principles which have been of the greatest significance and utility to me during a particular period in my development as a teacher of the Silent Way. Those principles concern the role of memorization, the key part that perception plays, educating awareness, the development of criteria for decision-making, the discipline of learning, the idea that we are to treat students as intelligent beings and the differentiation between the tasks of the teacher and those of the students. I have provided examples of the application of these principles.

The Role of Memorization

Out of several key principles outlined in the Silent Way which serve in the process of learning another language, one which I have focused on in particular is the de-emphasis on "memorization" and the role it plays in learning a new language. The tools such as the word charts and sound/color chart are used precisely to achieve this shift in emphasis.

Contrary to the protests of many students, using the charts requires very little memory work, in the traditional sense of the word. As I understand it, the charts relieve the burden of the memory by always being there in front of the students for reference. The process of learning which sound each color represents is one by which the students can see that "memorization" is really a process of reconstructing the past, beginning with the original presentation

of the sound and its color and using noted reference points along the way. For example, in learning the vowels using the sound/color chart, the teacher can remind the students to think which area of the chart they had been working in, top or bottom? Whether the teacher has pointed it out or not, someone will have noticed either subconsciously or consciously, that vowels are on top and consonants are on bottom. The teacher's asking them which are the vowels is enough of a clue to give them the idea that the sound is a vowel and puts them on the right track in locating it on the chart. If the students can recall the sound but not the color, the teacher may ask them if they can recall which blocks they know the sounds for or which blocks they have been working with that day. Then the class reconstructs, step by step, those associations already made until finally someone recalls the one needed. In this way the teacher is trying to re-educate students regarding their own approach to problem-solving and learning. Those processes are enhanced if we understand that we do not have to rely on memory but rather that we must attend to the small details of what goes on around us.

Perception as a Key

A key factor in the process of "memorization" as the conscious reconstruction of the past is developing an attentiveness to what is going on around us. As teachers we want to teach the students how to be more aware of what they perceive, as well as to demonstrate the importance of such an awareness. Students must understand that reality assumes its meaning through the cognitive processing of what we perceive. For example, we see someone extend his hand, say something we don't understand and then leave. Then later another person says the same before leaving. We may conclude that in this culture to take one's leave, one extends one's hand and says that particular utterance.

As I have observed with my own children, it is through perception that the infant begins to understand the world. The baby cries and Mommy comes; she cries again later and Daddy appears. Soon she notices the correlation: each time she is hungry and cries, someone comes. Once she observes this, she just may cry to see what response her cries will get. At first she was crying out as an involuntary response to a need. As she saw the reaction that those cries brought, she concluded that she could use her cries to get a response.

What I have thought to be important in class is to help students realize that in everyday life, we as adults use the same procedure in understanding the world around us. We use what we perceive as the criteria for understanding what we experience in our daily lives, and eventually for manipulating situations to serve our own purposes. In the Silent Way as I have tried to use it, we rely on the creation or simulation of situations in order to gain the meaning as perceived in those situations.

In order to establish that in the classroom understanding will depend on watching and listening, translations should be avoided from the very beginning and class presentations and activities should be designed so that students may pick up the meaning of new utterances through their perception of the situation.

Using this approach the teacher encourages the students to be more attentive to what they perceive. The teacher may direct the students to rely on perception by electing to structure an entire question/answer session on what the class has observed someone doing or she may ask for descriptions of what the students see. Another alternative technique would be to structure role plays which require choices based on what is perceived, e.g., practicing introductions. One student extends his hand and says something. Although a second student may not understand what the first student said, the second student knows what to do from seeing the extended hand and he will probably

understand vis à vis his experience in his own culture from which he knows that that is his cue to say something. The teacher can then ask all students to role play after having observed similar model role plays, presented either by the teacher and a student or by two students who can do it. Through these types of activities, the teacher can indirectly establish the significance that perception will play in learning. Applying this approach consistently will offer the students needed practice in learning how to be consistent in attending to their own perceptions.

The Education of Awareness

Besides the efficiency of this approach, this reliance upon perception for meaning is a practice that sharpens the senses and heightens the awareness of the students. This is important because the degree of awareness determines the depth of understanding in any situation. It is with this knowledge that the Silent Way demands that the teacher "educate the awareness" of the students.

As just one example we might take the student who keeps making the wrong sound for a particular color on the sound/color chart. A Silent Way teacher will try to bring the mistake to the student's attention by structuring a situation in which the student can see his mistake himself, thus educating the student's awareness. One way to do this might be in the sequence used in a "drill." After a student has repeatedly voiced the wrong sound for a particular color, the teacher may immediately go to another student. If that student makes the correct sound, the teacher indicates that the entire class repeat the sound. Then the teacher returns to the student who was having trouble to see if the student has gotten the sound. By going to another student for the same information, the teacher will have implicitly communicated that the first response was wrong--she is still looking for the correct answer. By returning to the original student after the class has

repeated what was finally correctly modeled, the teacher is implicitly reinforcing the original perception of the student that he didn't have it right the first time but someone else did and now he needs to change something to get it right. If the student tries, but still does not catch the sound, the teacher may go to another student who obviously doesn't have the sound either and when that second student fails to say the correct sound, the teacher will immediately proceed to another student. So long as a student makes a sound that is unacceptable, the teacher will not use that sound as a "model" for the others but as soon as one student makes the correct sound, the teacher will then indicate that the entire class is to make the sound. The teacher is trying to give the students the "answer" not by saying "Yes, that's right" or "No, that's wrong" but by proceeding to another sound only when what is correct has been given.

Each point that the teacher makes lies not in what she says but rather in what the teacher does (i.e., that which takes place within the reality of the classroom as it is structured by the teacher). In this way, the teacher is establishing that understanding the point of the class will come not by intellectual second-guessing what the teacher wants, but by close observation of what is happening in class, which requires being aware of what is happening in class.

As another example of an exercise that illustrates how the teacher could structure a class to encourage being aware, we can look at a role play used in the presentation of meaning of the expression, "Give me that." When one student says, "Give me that" to another who is holding a rod and the second student doesn't know what "Give me that" means, he doesn't have to be completely stumped. The teacher can hold out the hand, palm up, of the first student as that student is speaking. The second student will see the hand and his primary instinct should be that of someone responding to a demand for

something. He just may well give the student the object without any further prompting. Even if he doesn't do anything, the teacher can take the hand of the student with the rod and shake it into the outstretched hand. The meaning becomes clear when the students see the exchange. This is another example of a technique that a Silent Way teacher can use so that students can learn to get the meaning from a situation simply by being attentive to their own perceptions.

These examples illustrate what is meant by "educating the awareness" of students. The teacher hopes that by making perception essential in "getting the point in class," she is training the students to do the same in everyday life. Attention to detail and the language that attaches itself to that detail is the key to break the code of any language.

Decision-making: Developing Criteria

The fruit of greater awareness is clearer criteria for making decisions. It is hoped that the students will learn the importance of listening, watching and testing what they have heard or seen in order to make a judgement of their own about what is right and what is wrong. Teachers must try to establish that it is perfectly acceptable and even desirable to test ideas for their accuracy; therefore, it is the teacher's responsibility to provide opportunities in which to use perception to gather information that will serve as criteria for making a language choice, and subsequently, to provide situations that will afford the students the opportunity to test their conclusions about the way the language works.

The Discipline of Learning

Central to the role of awareness in the classroom is the part that discipline plays in the learning process as well as that of innate intelligence. Students and teachers both must understand that to learn any new body of knowledge requires the discipline of yielding to the demands of

that knowledge. It is this kind of discipline of which the Silent Way speaks.

One example is the practice of making new sounds. The tongue is a muscle just as is the forearm. No one would think of entering a tennis match without having practiced those serves. Making new sounds requires a physical workout. Perhaps the hours required in language lab were not so crazy after all--so long as practice is done consciously and not as dull repetition. One was to ensure that practice making sounds is not lapsing into dull repetition is to use the sound/color charts or the word charts. Practice building words with the sound/color chart and reading unfamiliar words on the word charts affords practice that requires thought. I found the most challenging element of this was to find enough different exercises for adequate practice. Students tire of practicing sounds very soon, but as teachers who recognize the need for developing a facility in making new sounds and new sound combinations, we must try to develop different exercises which work the appropriate muscles.

Another example of yielding to the discipline of new knowledge might be found in learning syntax. We may decide that the way to learn the new language is to do parallel translations. "This is the way we say it in our own language, so I'll put the corresponding parts of speech in the same order to say the same thing in another language." However, were we to truly yield to the discipline of the language, we would make decisions based not only on logic but also on what it is that we've heard native speakers say. We would yield to what we hear, not to what we think we should hear. For example, in Spanish people say, "Damelo" for "Give it to me." The negative imperative would logically be the same; however, it changes, "No me lo des." These kinds of differences should be studied but a more efficient approach is to first listen, discover what people say for a particular purpose and then try it out. If what we say gets the appropriate results then it is right or nearly

correct. At that point, we should turn to studying the language academically, for we now have what we have perceived as real criteria for understanding the rule.

Students as Intelligent Beings

Underlying the application of any of these principles is an understanding that students are intelligent beings, and that a function of intelligence is the ability not only to figure out the most efficient and economic way in acquiring knowledge, but also the capability of recognizing what makes sense and what doesn't, hence, "the common sense of language." If as students we are allowed to fall back on our innate intelligence, we will ensure that what we do is efficient and effective, regardless of the "method" used.

The Task of Students Versus That of the Teacher

The Silent Way requires the active participation of the students themselves in the learning process. One aspect of this principle is the idea that teacher and students have different tasks and it is the student who must use the language. The Silent Way teacher recognizes that students learn a language only by actually relating to and practicing the new language themselves.

No doubt there are many teachers, who, lacking a facility in the target language themselves, feel compelled to do the students' work for them. They model every utterance, not just once but four, five and six times; they present a page of exercises based on a formula and do enough examples so that the student no longer has to do anything but apply the formula—enough so that the students no longer have to use their intelligence to figure it out, just their memories; they even go so far as to read entire sentences in a fill-in-the-blank exercise, pausing only long enough for a student to supply

the answers for each blank. To what avail? Speaking a language requires the practice of making new and old sounds in unfamiliar combinations. If the teacher does all the speaking, the students miss the opportunity to practice the language.

As teachers we must see that our responsibility is not to learn the language as we teach our class. If we see this as our task, we in essence rob the students of their opportunity to learn. We must remember the discipline of our own tasks, that of educating the awareness of our students so that they may approach the new language with as much clarity as possible. This requires that we subordinate our self-interest in either learning or perfecting our own performance in the language to that of the students, in whose interest it is to learn by practicing the new language.

The principles discussed above are aspects of the Silent Way which I have been exploring in my own experience in teaching. The method encompasses much more but these have been my focus in the classroom.

II. Tools and Techniques

Introduction

In this section we shall look at the tools designed to be used in the Silent Way. These tools include the pointer, the sound/color chart, Guisenaire rods, word charts and the Fidels. As I worked with these charts, I began to see how they are designed to be of aid to the students in the learning process as it was described previously, particularly in regard to the role that perception plays in language. For instance, the use of color as triggers (after the primary association between the color and its respective sound has been made) is one very obvious way in which a principle has been integrated into the design of the charts.

The Silent Way techniques, just as the tools, rely upon perception. Certain of these activities, such as visual dictation, have been described in The Common Sense of Teaching, but there are other techniques which a teacher develops moment by moment in the process of teaching the class. The best way to get an idea of how to improvise and create new techniques is to observe a demonstration of the Silent Way. It is much more difficult to describe techniques in such a way that others may learn something regarding the implementation.

To help teachers in fulfilling these responsibilities, the special tools mentioned above have been developed. These tools have been designed in keeping with the principles upon which the Silent Way has been founded. As noted in The Common Sense of Teaching (p. vii), students must relate to the language in order to learn it. They need to use it, speak it, write it. It is only through repeated application of newly learned expressions that they can come to feel comfortable in the new language--and fluency is born out of this feeling. The Silent Way tools have been developed to aid in this process. The word charts, the sound/color chart and the Fidels are Silent Way

instruments which have been developed by organizing the elements of a language in such a manner as to provide a tool that aids in the efficient and effective teaching of a language. These tools serve to reduce the students' dependency on memorization and to sharpen the students' awareness, because their use relies on the students' visual, oral and tactile perceptions. Each bit of knowledge about the new language may be perceived through the senses, the most direct path in acquiring language.

Perception and Awareness

One very important aspect in the design of these tools is the use of color. In class, the process of working with the colors wakes students up, both to the sounds and to what they are doing themselves. Through color the students are forced to rely on their perception in the learning process. When the students see two different colors and hear another student make only one sound when either color is indicated, they listen more closely; when the class hears one student catch a phrase that flew right past the others, they straighten up in their chairs and think, "If he could do it, why can't I?" and they begin to watch more closely. By the same token, when the class sees that one student can point out a phrase, they attend. It is not just a sense of competition nor an emotional reaction triggered by the interpersonal relations in the classroom that prompts this sudden attention to what is happening in class, although some may be immediately moved to act because of these kinds of sentiments. It is rather a heightened sense of awareness of the present.

This greater degree of awareness in a Silent Way classroom is kindled because the tools and the techniques required to use them are such that one must be present to catch what happened. This heightened sense of awareness is like that which results from meditating on one's breathing. By concentrating on each individual step in breathing one begins to collect one's wits and the focus heightens one's awareness of those things that are occurring around and

about. The meditator is aware of the noises and activity around him but because he is concentrated on that one point at which the breath goes in or comes out, he lets the other distractions go.

The same level of concentration found in meditation is required in working with the Silent Way tools. The language has been dissected and any activity using the tools focuses on one point of language at a time--one minute detail at a time. The activities demand that one meet the details with the same degree of concentration as when meditating.

The quality of concentration required may be seen when we examine the process of learning the sound/color chart. One example of this aspect of the tools lies in the introduction of the sounds using the sound/color chart. The teacher may initially model a sound, point to a color and indicate that the students are to make the sound. The teacher may then ask another student to repeat the sound as the teacher points to the color. Even if the first few students don't catch on there will eventually be one who finally makes the association through perception, some rational thought and more than likely a little guessing. Those who catch on in the beginning will have done so by watching what the teacher does, listening to what she says, conjecturing about what she wants from the indications that she gives, drawing a hypothesis about what is happening (in this case, the establishment of a sound/color association) and then testing that hypothesis by saying the sound when the teacher points to particular color. Once someone makes the correct association, the teacher may ask the students to come up one by one and point to colors as other student call out the sounds indicated. As a student points to a color, he should be mentally repeating the sound he wants. He is also integrating that mental association into his being through the physical movement of pointing to the color and through the physical movement of the eye searching and finding the appropriate location of that color in the chart. As

the students see the color, hear a sound or say it themselves, they are also integrating that sound into their being through the physical response of their perception of the color. Thus, these tools permit students to relate actively to the target language in the spirit of the Silent Way.

To use any of these tools requires a high degree of concentration and a sharp awareness on the part of both teacher and students. To use the sound/color charts, the word charts or the Fidels, the teacher calls upon the students to focus their attention on what has been pointed to, on what color represents which sound or on what someone else has asked a third person to point out. In using the rods both the teacher and the students must learn to focus on what occurs while manipulating the rods and they must also learn to coordinate body movements with new language. Even the series of pictures that serve as visual aids demand a great degree of concentration, for in the apparent simplicity of design of these pictures, anyone can overlook the wealth of language that may be generated, even the teacher. The expressions on the faces of each member of the family tell a story in themselves. The book lying on the piano bench can lead students into the immediate past. The cat easing silently through the crack in the door opens up a number of stories.

We use our intelligence every day as we assimilate the bits and pieces of reality perceived in each moment. As children the only way we know how to relate to what is new is through our intelligence. However, as "educated" adults, we sometimes forget that what we know is what we perceive; years as students in traditional classrooms in which teachers trained our memories have dulled our intelligence. Those of us who have not lost that certain innocence which permits us to relate to something new through our senses and not through our intellects will be able to appreciate the genius of these tools and the

efficiency of their use in the classroom. The Silent Way tools have been created so that we may become aware of that mental process of assimilating perceptions and it is for this reason that they are invaluable in their revolutionary approach.

The Will of the Student

But the sharpening of the awareness in the Silent Way classroom is not enough for the student who is learning a new language. It only brings him to a very important point in the learning process. The situations created in the classroom through the activities with these tools force students to use their wills--something they sometimes don't learn in traditional classrooms where they are discouraged from actively responding to what is happening around them. But with the tools and exercises responses are rewarded and students learn that by choosing to do something and doing it, they can gain knowledge--either by selecting the "correct" response which is rewarded with an appropriate response or by making a mistake from which the student must backtrack in order to discover just what was inappropriate about his decision and what would be appropriate. The students thus learn that by changing something within themselves and focussing their attention on something that they can hear, see, or feel, they may gain new understanding about that which surrounds us. Thus in the Silent Way, students learn that it is necessary to act upon themselves in order to learn something new.

Pointer

The pointer is the tool that is used to indicate colors on the sound/color chart or words on the word charts. It is also effective when the teacher is using a picture. With the pointer the teacher can indicate a certain area which may suggest an utterance with the advantage of giving a clear view to

all students. The teacher stands at a distance from the visual aid and the physical distance gives expression to the principle that demands that the students deal directly with the materials and generate language on their own.

Many complain about the pointer, teachers as well as students. It is perhaps because the fear that many students have for their teachers is manifested in the image created by the teacher walking around with the pointer. She suggests the teachers of eras past who used a stick in disciplining unruly students. A teacher may help to eliminate such feelings by keeping the pointer closed for part of the time, especially when walking around the room. Another way would be to periodically relinquish the pointer and the power it represents to the students, giving them each a turn to indicate a word, phrase, or something in the visual aid.

As far as teaching rhythm with the pointer, the teacher taps out rhythms. Here again the teacher must remember to address one element at a time. When tapping out the rhythms, we should make that the focus of attention. We can make an entire lesson one in rhythm, practicing different phrases in order to teach the concept of rhythm. "Do it now;" "Do it again;" "Put it back;" "Let it go;" "Give me that;" etc. The phrases should be simple so that students are not distracted with trying to understand the content, at least not in the beginning--the teacher can give them the meaning afterwards by means of a demonstration. The teacher taps out the rhythm of each phrase as she repeats it or she taps it out as she indicates either the word or phrase on the sound/color chart or the word chart. Then one by one the students tap out the rhythms on the chart or on the board.

In teaching stress, the pointer once again proves to be a useful tool. With the pointer that is used to indicate the colors or the words on the charts, the teacher can differentiate the stress in one sound from that in another or the stress among the words in a phrase. By striking that color or word more forcefully, the teacher indicates where the emphasis falls.

With the pointer the teacher can indicate rising and falling pitches in an utterance, either in the air or on the board, along a line drawn to indicate the intonation pattern or just along the board.

Dr.. Gattegno has also used the pointer when working on these elements of the language in a quite surprising and very effective way. When he wanted to show that a syllable or a word is supposed to be drawn out somewhat he would open the pointer very quickly at that point in the repetition of the phrase and then close it again at the end of that word. His gesture was totally unexpected. Whether it was the surprise value or the efficiency of the gesture in capturing that which we do when we speak, this gesture was very effective in communicating to the students the idea of drawing out a sound.

Sound/Color Chart

The sound/color chart is useful at the beginning stage to introduce different sounds and combinations of sounds within the target language system. Sounds are pointed out on the sound/color chart and words are built sound-by-sound. The students are thus creating and practicing these new words. In order to learn to use the sound/color chart the students must rely upon their perception of the colors and the location of those colors and whatever other associations they themselves make in order to establish each respective relationship between color and sound. In this way students are learning that "memory" is really something of a mental process in which we reconstruct the past and what we did at a certain point in time when an association was made. These new words, which at this point are nothing more than strange combinations are integrated within the body visually and/or kinesthetically. Thus, with the use of the charts, the students are relating to the language in several different ways: aurally, visually, kinesthetically, orally and they must use their intelligence to synthesize all the information thereby gained and their wills to do so.

Using the sound/color chart and point, the teacher first wants to establish which sounds represent which colors. This may be done by modeling the sounds as they are indicated on the chart. After it is clear which sound a certain color represents, exercises in which students point out sound dictated to them or build words or phrases using the pointer and chart are helpful in laying that firm foundation in the sound system which will enhance the study of grammar and vocabulary later on.

Sound: The Door in Another World

This work in pronunciation is crucial to future ease in learning a new language; unfortunately, it is held to be of secondary importance by many. Teachers should be convinced of the importance of knowing how to recognize and reproduce the new sounds and they should try to help the students understand the roles that each play into the language, e.g., /s/, /z/ or /iz/ at the end of a noun tells someone that you are talking about more than one. Sounds are not viewed as incidentals but as the stuff that language is made of: the variation in sound alters the meaning of the utterance. This attitude is a practical one and the approach is one which regards sound in the way in which one can put it to use in the language. It is important that teachers realize how fundamental this work with sound is. Not until the teacher holds work with sounds to be vital will the students begin to appreciate the value of it.

As the students are learning to reproduce the sounds, the focus should turn to grammar, but it should be on establishing a facility in using patterns rather than on the memorization of rules. The point is to try to aid students in developing a facility in saying certain structures, e.g., am going to (do), used to (be). This is where ALM uses choral repetition but Silent Way tries to give meaning to each utterance by focusing on some aspect of the language that is being used--either by making rhythm or stress or pronunciation or intonation or speed the objective in the repetition of the sounds.

Once the students know the sound/color chart and thereby have learned the sounds in the new sound system, it can be used to introduce the new words or expressions or distinguish one sound from another. The expression is built sound by sound, using the pointer to indicate the sequence of sounds, the stress and even the intonation. If a student is having trouble with the pronunciation of a word or expression, the correct pronunciation of that one sound can be clarified by indicating the color of the spoken sound and then that of the desired one, and asking the student to make the distinction. When the students see two sometimes completely different colors and hear only one sound, the students realize that something is not "right." The students will be building the new expressions through an active process in which they must use knowledge that is already theirs. When the teacher asks them to repeat an expression, they will not simply be imitating a model but searching within themselves for the construction they have already built.

Rods

The Cuisenaire rods provide a perfect tool for creating exercises that again rely upon perception to convey meaning. They represent nothing else in our lives; we have no emotional or personal attachments to them. We are thus freed to focus on what people are doing with them or on what they represent in their physical shape, size or color. The rods are especially valuable when we introduce meaning. After an utterance has been presented to the students using the sound/color chart, using the rods a teacher can create a situation in which there is a perceptible and unambiguous need for that language. It is through the perception of a situation which can mean only one thing that the language used assumes meaning for the student. Using the rods is a much more economical way to give meaning to new utterances than something like translation or some other intellectual exercise. Demonstrations like this further encourage the students to use their intelligence. They look at the situation created using

the rods, comprehend that situation, and then repeat the language. After the second or third application in a situation which suggests the same meaning, the students are then encouraged to test their understanding of what the words mean by using them in other situations that they create themselves.

The next phase of presentation comes with the introduction of meaning. The rods lend themselves to this task, especially for multi-word verbs such as "give back," "take back," "put back." A simple exercise would involve one student asking others to do certain tasks with the rods. Rods can be used to demonstrate the meaning of some phrases such as "back into" or "get out of," one rod representing a car backing into a parking space or another rod being a passenger descending from the train. The rods could also be used to demonstrate such expressions of quantity as "not the half of it," "quarter of the way through," "half-over" or "half-way up the wall." Expressions containing prepositions are another set of idioms easily illustrated by rods: "up a tree," "on top of it," "under the weather," etc. In these cases, the rods are used merely as triggers to suggest the key word in those expressions of quantity: "half," "up," "on top of," etc.

Rods can also be used to create stories in which idiomatic expressions are used. Scenes are constructed with the rods and these scenes serve as triggers for the sentences that contain new expressions. Students can construct or re-construct a story as suggested by the rods. The topic could be assigned, with the students given the task of making up the story using certain expressions, or the story could be acted out by the teacher as she manipulates the rods: "Mr. Green got off the train at the last stop. It was raining but he didn't have on a rain coat. As he crossed the street a taxi almost backed into him. The driver yelled, "Get out of the way!" Make a train, a car, and a street of rods and have Mr. Green, a green rod, walk from one place to another. The taxi cab driver could be a yellow rod. It is important to

remember that the rods serve as triggers. The imagination will go a long way with the right suggestion and the freedom to use it. The rods can also be used to make a clock to trigger idiomatic expressions related to them (see The Common Sense of Teaching, p. 70).

In teaching rhythm, the rods can be used as visual triggers that represent the different beats: the white ones for the short syllables, the red ones for those that are a little longer, etc. The teacher can simply place the rods, one after the other in a row according to the rhythm of the utterance.

The rods can be used to show where the stress falls in a sentence and even used to demonstrate the four different types of stress. Rods may be placed in a row, one for each word in the sentence or phrase. To indicate stress in a sentence a longer rod may be placed vertically where the stress occurs in that line of rods. Rods of varying lengths may be used to represent the word that gets the primary stress, the one that gets the secondary, etc.

The rods can be used again to graphically illustrate the intonation pattern, e.g., a long orange with a short green inclined downwards at the end of the orange would indicate the intonation pattern for a declarative affirmative sentence.

Word Charts

There are also the word charts. The charts can be used to introduce expressions, but instead of sound by sound, the expressions are given word by word (Appendix I). The expressions are presented through what is called visual dictation. The teacher or another student points out the new expression word by word. Students repeat the expression as it is pointed out and perhaps one student can write it out on the board. For variation restrictions could be placed on what the students are to do. They may repeat the expression only once for the student who is writing. That student may not look at the charts but must simply write what he hears. Later the students go

over the list that is written on the board, looking for errors. This exercise will show some student where they have trouble with pronunciation. Some teachers might think this exercise to be part of the presentation, but it must be recognized that at this stage students are already in the application phase: they are using the language and thus familiarizing themselves with the new expressions. At this stage attention can also be given to stress, intonation and patterns of native speakers can be indicated, explained and practiced.

Through the word charts the students are introduced to the written word--both writing and reading. The use of color and the teacher's direction to read the colors and not the words helps in deciphering what is written. These charts include about 400 words--a basic vocabulary which people use every day in every imaginable situation. Following the vocabulary as it is presented in the charts, one can structure an entire curriculum, because the vocabulary is built upon a linguistic analysis of the language. The point is to get students first to be able to recognize and pronounce correctly these words in the functional vocabulary and then to actually learn how to use those words as easily as the native speaker uses them.

The word charts can be used to introduce writing, after the students have practiced reading the colors. At the end of a class students can practice writing sentences they have formed in class, just by copying the words as they are written on the charts. Later they can go back to practice reading what they have written--this is the test and the needed practice that will make the language the students' own.

Fidels

The Fidels are another instrument in the Silent Way. These charts are lists of all the different orthographic combinations of each sound. They can be used at any stage in the writing phase when working on spelling. For

example, the teacher can stage a spelling bee, giving students words that are increasingly difficult to spell because of the discrepancy between how they are pronounced and the way they are spelled: e.g., different /difrent/, pneumatic/numaetik/, chamois /ʃaemi:/. They are most useful later in the intermediate phase.

Reasonable Challenges

It is important to remember that in using these tools we must try to create exercises which are challenging yet reasonable. We must make it clear that as the teacher we will ask the students to discover only that which may be deducted from what is perceived and from what is already known. We as teachers should try to structure the class activities in such a way that one bit of knowledge is learned at a time and in such a manner that all of that which has been learned may serve in the process of learning that which is new.

III. Designing and Implementing Silent Way Lessons

Introduction

In this particular course with the Japanese bankers, I decided that we would concentrate on idioms and idiomatic expressions. Thus, I tried to find as many different sources of idioms and as many different ways we could practice using them. These sources included both Silent Way materials and other books, techniques and even the elements of other approaches.

Lesson Organization

Teaching a course on idiomatic expression in any language is probably in many ways no different from teaching grammar or vocabulary. As far as the application of Silent Way principles, the objectives are no different whether teaching idioms or the present tense or whether teaching advanced students or beginners. In all cases, there is first the presentation of the material, which includes some kind of explanation or demonstration from which meaning becomes clear. The presentation phase is followed by application of the new material, repeated review of the material and finally testing of some sort. This plan seems to be a more or less standard one whether the teacher has ever heard of the Silent Way or not.

The difference however in one teacher's class and that of another's lies in the emphasis placed on the various phases. In the more traditional, academic setting, I daresay that presentation and, subsequently, testing receive more attention in class than does presentation; whereas, in the Silent Way a greater emphasis is placed on application.

What is perhaps a difference of more importance, though, is that in the Silent Way as teachers we are trying to educate the awareness of students, freeing them to be able to use themselves more efficiently. We rely on the

students to be the "intelligent beings" and imaginative thinkers that they are, and we try to create activities in-class that call on the students to use these resources.

If we were to observe the learning process of a young child, we would note that he soon begins to say strings of sounds that rise and fall in certain patterns that fit certain purposes. When he talks about something, his discourse rises and falls as though he were saying sentences. He also responds to certain patterns of stress and intonation in what his parents say. They can ask him a question, the contents of which he will never have heard before and he will answer, either in the affirmative or the negative, depending on the intonation of the question. If the parent goes so far as to somehow test that understanding, he or she may find that the child really understood nothing more than that Mommy or Daddy was using a certain pattern of intonation and that he should make a few sounds when they do that particular pattern, so he uttered a response.

In second language acquisition we would do well to start in the same place as children do in learning their first language. Children know instinctively what to do with what they see, hear, feel, taste and it is in this way that they find out about the world around them. It is through these perceptions of sound in conjunction with visual images and physical contacts that language has its first impact upon us humans as the sensory beings that we are and it is these bits and pieces of the language that provide the vehicle for comprehension later on in the process. Once the older student of a second language recognizes and can repeat those melodic patterns that occur in the second language, the acquisition of grammar and vocabulary is greatly aided. With this in mind, as teachers we want to create learning situations that will permit the students to get meaning through the reality that they perceive.

Equally important, Silent Way teachers seek to give assignments that permit the student to test what he knows about the language. The teacher seeks to create assignments that will let the student use the language as he has concluded it should be used. Such activities at the same time give the teachers the freedom to observe and attend to the students--their actions, their conceptions and the quality of their attention. This approach in lesson planning is in contrast to the approach of the teacher in creating assignments in the traditional classroom. There, students are frequently assigned lessons which serve as nothing more than drills that dull the mind or ask for the rote application of a formula. The Silent Way teacher tries to design class activities that stimulate the students and motivate them to heed their curiosity as it is aroused by perceptions.

As teachers coming out of the traditional classroom setting, we undoubtedly have had experiences with inattentive students, which underscore the importance of the student developing the discipline to attend. We have more than likely found that idle repetition, however perfect or accurate the sounds may be reproduced, is no proof that the student will retain what he/she repeats. Even if he can repeat an utterance accurately, we are not always sure that he has really understood what he said. We have all had students who could repeat a word, phrase or sentence beautifully, but could not begin to use the utterance in an appropriate situation. The teacher therefore chooses to work on helping the students develop their ability to concentrate.

The Silent Way teacher works on helping the student to learn to concentrate by breaking down the language into individually discernable parts, each of which becomes evident as the class unfolds. The student must concentrate on following the succession of events in class--the sequence of actions as they may be perceived--in order to understand how the parts fit together and thus how the language is structured. In this way, the teacher

aims at teaching the student not the subject per se, for that is what the student learns by attentive exploration, but the teacher is educating the awareness so that the student may use his consciousness as a tool whereby he will be able to learn the new language, as well as anything else he may set his mind to.

Educating the awareness of her students, a teacher must determine how much a student has understood by observing his response and behavior. She does this to see whether the students are indeed aware of what is happening in class. She then creates exercises and activities that demand a more refined degree of awareness and concentration. She doesn't ask the students to simply repeat a phrase she has modeled for them, but she asks them to piece together for themselves knowledge that is already theirs in order to come up with that which is new. For example, she may ask her students to make sounds of their native language to arrive at similar sounds in the target language. Those sounds are already a part of the students' knowledge and they have to spend no energy in learning something new, but rather they invest their energy in understanding that these sounds belong to the new language as well.

As another example, a teacher might ask her students to simply "put 2 and 2 together," giving them all the components of a new word or utterance and then simply asking them to string those components together. Introducing a new word with the sound/color chart, she might point to all the colors, giving them the entire word, sound by sound and then indicate each individual sound with marks on the board, upon which she taps out the rhythm and stress. The students only have to make the correct sounds implementing the indicated rhythm and stress. She is not asking them to make any inferences, any guesses, nor in any other way supply knowledge that they don't know. She is

actually giving them all of the elements and just asking them to piece them together into new language. In these examples, she is relying on the students to use their intelligence and not only their memories in working with the language.

The Silent Way teacher does not stop there however. She goes one step further and tries to bring the students to an awareness of what they are doing to arrive at the new information and to understand that that same process may be used to gain new knowledge in another situation of similar dynamics or like elements. She may do this by giving the student a new opportunity to use elements of what they have learned in a different way or in a different situation. She tries to make it obvious to the student what it is that is transferable knowledge through the application of the same concepts in several different situations. The teacher is working on the students' awareness by asking them to be conscious of what is going on and to apply that which is applicable in other situations.

Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced

At the beginning levels the teacher is more concerned that the students enter the target language not by imitating what they hear but by understanding that they must enter the new language consciously. They must begin to put new sounds together to describe realities already familiar to them, and they must learn how to discern which sounds are appropriate for certain conditions and which sounds are not: for example, as in the case of /t/ or /d/ or /id/ which are added to the end of certain verbs when speaking of something that happened in the past. A student must come to understand these characteristics at least through an intuition, then form the hypothesis for that understanding and then apply the knowledge himself in order to reach true fluency in a language. For

example, working with idioms, the students would have to learn that, depending upon the situation, some transformation from the original idiom may be required: "What's-his-name" become "What's-her-name" when the character changes from male to female.

With some modification the same exercises may be used with all different levels. Once the charts have been introduced in a couple of lessons, we can use them to introduce new structures or to emphasize the correct pronunciation of a troublesome word. We can clarify a grammatical structure using the rods. Or we can use them to simply practice the language in a conversation game using the visual dictation technique. Or the teacher may structure a question/answer session in which she poses questions to the students via the charts. Also, transformation exercises using the charts can be used to practice a structure. Visual dictation is another good technique when presenting multi-word verbs and expressions, such as "get back," "go away," "come off it," "get out of here," etc.

Once familiar with the charts, student can also use them in a brainstorming session in which their assignment is to find all the expressions they can or to find all the expression studied.

In the higher levels, however, the charts can be used to supplement work with texts. Advanced students seem to need a class that has a more substantial theme or one with more content--idiomatic expressions can perhaps be presented in the context of an article or a story or even a discussion.

One other difference that the teacher should make in the use of the word charts with advanced students and its use with beginners is the choice of expressions to present. Multi-word verbs are excellent beginning stage material as well as elementary common expressions that students are likely to hear each day. The less common expressions and ones that may require detailed explanations to communicate subtleties in meaning and use should be reserved for the upper levels.

It would be desirable as well to group new material to be presented according to the appropriate cultural/social make-up of the class. As an example, in my case I had to select expressions that the students would be able to use on the job. Bankers in general are not interested in learning an expression like "the blues."

The Willingness of the Players

Gattegno very briefly mentions one point which I have found important to remember. He says that the students must be willing to play the game with the colors and charts. If the willingness is not there and the teacher encounters only resistance, nothing gets off the ground. As the saying goes, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink." To think that we can force students to do something that they don't want to do is a mistake. This can be a hard-learned lesson.

When I began teaching Silent Way, I felt that to be a Silent Way teacher was to adhere rigidly to the application of the principles and to the use of the tools as prescribed in the various publications by Educational Solutions and as demonstrated by Gattegno in workshops. Such an attitude is not realistic. First, of all we are not Dr. Gattegno and second of all, we are not perfect. Nor do I think that it was intended that the Silent Way tools should be the only resource or that rigid adherence to the principles should replace human compassion or understanding of what is needed in a situation nor the creativity that provides a solution.

The Silent Way, in fact, encourages that kind of freedom. A teacher should not hesitate to use whatever works in the classroom in response to the students' needs. The trick is to be discriminating in determining the effectiveness of a technique.

The Silent Way is more appropriately called an approach rather than a method. It is an attitude that one adopts when using various techniques. The Silent Way is not a prescribed method or a set curriculum. What is important according to the Silent Way is the subordination of teaching to learning and anything which serves that purpose is to be encouraged.

Techniques

In choosing a technique what is essential is considering how that technique will be used in class. The teacher should be more concerned with the necessary elements in learning, for the Silent Way is the subordination of teaching to learning. What students do in class is not determined by what the teacher wants to do according to his own whim or fancy, but rather what the process of learning the new discipline requires. Also, learning requires doing. We cannot expect to acquire new knowledge without "doing" something. Students must be provided a structured activity that affords them the opportunity in which to do something. That structure must also provide the students with an opportunity to act independently of the teacher. This is important because we must motivate ourselves in order to learn. Knowledge cannot be imposed on an individual from the outside; knowledge is not something that can be drilled into a person. It is rather something which is acquired through a process that begins within when we willingly turn our attention to something that is new. Thus, we must have the will to learn--and the will to do anything comes from within. In structuring class activities we must allow students the "space" to choose to act so that they begin to understand how to take the initiative in learning. Teachers however are not to assume a passive role. As teachers we must remain active but concentrated on that which is our task as teachers--we must educate the awareness of the students which will free them to work on the language in such a way as to get the most knowledge for the time and effort they invest. Thus we must remember

that we have to provide a flexible structure in which the student are thrown back upon themselves to work. The activities that we teachers plan must be such that students are helped in their efforts to yield to the discipline of their respective tasks in learning a new language. All of these underscored tasks are objectives that a Silent Way teacher must seek in structuring her class.

These objectives are considerations in selecting activities for class. Such activities include, but are certainly not limited to, games and exercises using the Silent Way tools. A teacher can and should use any exercise that affords students needed practice using the second language--whether it be written or oral practice. Other techniques such as crossword puzzles or matching games or brainstorming or role plays are not Silent Way techniques, per se, but can be used.

Conclusion

I used many different techniques, some of which may not seem to be "Silent Way." I have found that what is important is that the techniques serve the purpose of providing a structured practice in which the students may use the language. The manner in which a technique is presented is also important. Classes must be structured so as to afford students the opportunity to develop their own criteria for making decisions about what language to use in a situation and the freedom within the class to test choices. They must learn how to work independently, which involves developing trust in their own judgment. They learn this trust by coming to understand the power of their own intelligence and the potential in their own abilities. They realize this when they can use language to get what they want or to express themselves accurately. The Silent Way teacher must approach planning a class with this in mind, and knowing also that students must be provided with these opportunities over and over again to practice the process of decision-making

and actual speaking in order to develop the fluency which is the ultimate goal.

It is important to remember that how techniques are classified is not the bottom line in choosing what to do in class. What is important is how we do what we choose to do. We have to remember to structure any activity we choose to do in class so that the objectives necessary to learn the language are enhanced. Students must be encouraged to work independently, to take initiative on their own to work, to want to do something for the sake of learning something new, to recognize the necessity for attending to what they perceive and consequently to attend. Teachers must seek ways to bring students to a greater awareness of what they must do to themselves to acquire the new knowledge that is a new language and teachers must encourage the decisions necessary for a student to choose to make those changes within themselves to gain that new knowledge.

IV. Techniques for Teaching Idioms

The techniques described in this section are those that I have used to teach in the Silent Way. As stated previously, many of these techniques could be found in the repertoire of any language teacher; they are not specific to the Silent Way.

To restate the key guiding principles that I follow when I use these techniques:

- Always allow for student decision-making;
- In the presentation of material, present challenges that demand the application of principles already understood;
Create lessons which rely upon perception to illustrate the meaning I wish to convey;
- Encourage the students to develop within themselves the desire and motivation to learn;
- Encourage the development of an attitude of respect for the language and of discipline in one's own approach to learning that language;
- Respect the students as intelligent, imaginative beings and design lessons to appeal to that innate intelligence;
- Re-educate the students regarding memory: remembering is actually reconstructing the past;
- Respect the present attitude of the students, giving them adequate space to accept or reject what is before them.

DISCUSSION

- Purpose: To provide an opportunity to use the idioms in an appropriate context.
- Procedure: Bring in article or story. Ask general questions that are related to the article and questions which will generate discussion.
- Variations:
- 1) Let the students break up into groups or pairs and give them specific topics to discuss related to the hand-out. Then let them present their thoughts to the class afterwards.
 - 2) When the article lends itself to it, ask people to take the pro/con sides of the issues and argue the point in a debate.
 - 3) Set up a role play in which different students may present the varying points of view.

How I Used This Technique:

I have found this technique to be the most popular among students but the most difficult to direct. It is the activity the most ideally suited to maintaining the status quo: those who like to talk and do it well usually "hog the show;" those who are shy and have not developed their speaking skills wind up sitting by speaking little, if any--and they like it because that's more comfortable. I have yet to come up with a solution with which I am satisfied. One variation is a debate-like structure in which all must speak for a certain number of minutes. Another technique would be to appoint an MC or have the teacher assume that role herself.

PRESENTATION OPTIONS

Purposes: To give the students a source from which to get new expressions, a record of expressions studied, or to provide them with a worksheet for in-class activities.

Procedure: Prepare a simple list beforehand (which may include definitions) and distribute it. If the Silent Way charts are to be used, the list may be taken from the lists of expressions as they appear on the charts. Lists may also be generated from the dictionary or taken from an article or story or they may be made up from an illustration. A series of cartoons may also serve as a kind of visual list for the students to generate the written lists of expressions in-class. Lists of expressions can also be generated in a brainstorming session.

Presentation and further discussion of new expressions follow with the opportunity for application.

Variations:

1. Lists With or Without Definitions

Prepare a simple list beforehand, either including the definitions or not and distribute the lists, preferably after the initial presentation of the expressions. If the Silent Way charts are to be used, the lists may be taken from the lists of expressions as they appear on the charts. Students may use the lists to check their own spelling if they have written the expressions down in a visual dictation exercise or verbal dictation.

2. Written Text

Copies of a text are distributed at the beginning of class. Articles may be copied from newspapers, magazines or a short story or paragraph may be written by the teacher in which a number of given expressions are used. Student read the text, underlining or otherwise noting unfamiliar expressions. Students are otherwise noting unfamiliar expressions. Students are encouraged to deduct the meaning of these expressions from the context. Presentation and further discussion

QUESTION/ANSWER SESSION

Purpose: To give students opportunity to "drill" new expressions.

Procedure: Ask one of the students to stand in front of the room and direct the others to ask him/her questions that require an answer using the particular structure that has been presented. The questions may be of a general nature or may be limited to the visual aid or other props that have been used in the presentation.

Variations: Have a weaker student answer the questions. This way he gets the practice.

How I Used this Technique:

This technique gives the students the opportunity to use what they have learned in a context. The structure of the exercises is such that the students are forced to fall back on their own intelligence. They must use what they have learned to best answer a question that has been posed to them on a topic that is familiar to them after having studied it. This exercise creates a need to communicate, yet the structure of the exercise is so minimal that it allows for adequate self-expression. This zeros in on the key motivations in learning a language.

REALIA

Purpose:

To provide props that are immediately perceptibly meaningful, thus avoiding translation and paving the way for making the needed association between meaning and language or giving the students the chance to test what they have perceived to be the meaning of given expression.

Procedure:

A number of items which will lend themselves to given expressions may be collected for drills in the classroom. One after the other they are held up or pointed out with the understanding that the students are to make similar sentences using those objects.

Variations:

- 1.. Use objects that are relevant to what the students do every day. If they are office workers, use telephones; if cafeteria workers, dishes, etc.
2. Realia may be used to set up role plays.
3. Objects may be used to drill commands, such as "give me the __," "take this __ back," etc.

How I Used this Technique:

I used this technique more to stage role plays than for anything else. We would set the scene for an interchange between management and clerical worker or between one banker and an American colleague with a telephone or a desk setting or whatever. Students then role played an interchange using the appropriate idiomatic expressions.

ROLE PLAYS

Purpose: To reproduce a realistic situation in which students might practice how they would handle the problem and what they would say.

Procedure: Teacher sets up the parameters of the situation, e.g., "You're in a supermarket. You are the vendor and you are the customer. You want to know where a certain department is." Students are then divided into pairs or small groups and either write a dialogue or ad lib it. After working in small groups, each group presents a dialogue to the class.

Variations: Students ad lib the situation in front of the class.

How I Used this Technique:

This technique offers everyone the chance to speak, to use their imaginations and to interact with one another. It affords the teacher the structure needed to allow everyone to speak and the possibility of limiting the subject matter under discussion.

SMALL GROUP WORK

Purpose: To provide students the opportunity to speak freely among themselves.

To afford each student a greater time in a communication interchange.

Procedure: Students are given an assignment, divided into groups and allowed to work among themselves to accomplish a given, definite task. After the group session it is encouraging to have each group present what they have done in class.

Variations:

1. Students may work in pairs.
2. Students may work in teams to prepare for a debate.

How I Used this Technique:

I used this technique in every class. It is always helpful. More students get to speak; students must act independently of the teacher; students must interact; and if the students are of different nationalities, they have to use the target language. This technique also affords the teacher the opportunity to work with individual students or to check the progress of a greater number of students.

STORY IN SEQUELS

Purpose: To provide reading and writing exercise.

Procedure: A short story is presented in a 2-, 3- or 4-part sequel. Each student must write his own version of the last chapter and then they can compare the different endings in class.

Variations: Each sequel may be a cloze exercise.

How I Used This Technique:

This technique allows the students the opportunity to use the language they have been studying in a creative way.

VIDEOTAPES

Purpose: To provide a topic for discussion or debate.
To challenge the listening skills and comprehension of the students.

To provide variety.

Procedure: Let the students view a broadcast that presents an issue that may be discussed or debated.

Variations: Structure a debate after a simple question/answer session to clarify any confusions.

Pro side has 3-5 minutes to present its arguments; con side then has the same amount of time to answer; finally, the pro side may respond to that answer. Then, vice versa.

How I Used This Technique

I thought this technique was one that presented a welcome challenge to the students. As I said these students were advanced and the videos were of Nightline and included some controversial segments of current issues. The students felt that these were issues that were worthwhile discussing and the medium was one which befitted them--it was easier for them to visualize how practicing listening to a video would benefit them in their daily lives than to see how they could use what they learned from the word charts.

VISUAL AIDS

Purpose:

To provide a context in which the meaning of the new expression becomes clear and one which generates language using the new expression.

Procedure:

Mount the visual aid on the wall or board in front of the classroom. Using the pointer indicate an area which suggests language using the given idiom. The idiom may be written under the picture. Students then make sentences about the picture.

Variations:

1. Display a series of pictures which suggest a story. Students then make up the story. Students then make up the story. The students can do this together by taking turns making up sentence. One student may serve as scribe and record the story on the board, sentence by sentence or each individual student may be responsible for writing his own sentence.
2. Collect a few pictures that illustrate one structure and hold them up one after the other in a drill of that structure. Students in a free-for-all format make up sentences about each illustration. Encourage each student to try to create their own sentence whether they have the floor or not.

How I Used This Technique

This technique is one way of presenting lessons that rely upon perception, in this case visual perception of pictures or drawings which suggest situations and generate language.

VISUAL DICTATION

Purpose: To introduce new expressions

To bring to the attention of students the need to make a clearer distinction between certain similar sounds, e.g., the /l/ and /r/ among the Japanese.

To demonstrate how such "insignificant" distinctions can hinder expression.

Procedure: Teacher points out expressions, word by word. Students read and then practice repeating the expression several times.

Variations:

1. Students take the role of teacher and point out expressions for their fellow classmates to say.
2. Teacher points out the phrases as students in class say them. Another student is writing what his fellow classmates have dictated to him. The student who was writing the phrases will then read what he wrote and he and the class will correct the phrases.
3. Other students verbally dictate phrases for a classmate to point out.

How I Used This Technique:

We used this technique in the presentation phase of a class to introduce new expressions and generate ones similar to those expressions we were studying.

Working with the charts the students had to use the language while stretching their arms and moving their bodies. This kind of physical activity helps in the assimilation of the new language.

In using variations of this technique the students were forced to rely a great deal on their senses and there was immediate feedback regarding their understanding. By having the class watch as one student wrote what another student said they could see for themselves how misunderstanding could occur.

APPENDIX I

List of Idioms

Charts I - XII

Chart I

as	as it is as to
back	back another back-to-back take it back
black	in black and white black-and-white black out
blue	black and blue get the blues feel blue
brown	brown it (turkey)
color	color me blue
do	do me dot it in red do what?
end	end it put an end to end to end
give	give back give to give and take give it to
green	be green (with envy)
his	his and hers
put	put back put it to (someone)
take	take back take to take two This is his <u>take</u> . take it
there	There it is. There, there. back there
yellow	be yellow (= cowardly)

Charts I-II

be	be back be done with let it be	many	That's one too many.
		mine	what's mine is yours
done	let's be done with be done for what's done is done	name	be named for
		no	That's a no-no. no end to
dark	in the dark	on	put on
does	That does it.		take on on and one on end
different	same difference be different	out	give out take out put out
get	get on get to get out get on with get out of get it on get red get his/hers		take it out of a blackout out and out outdo white it out take it out on me out of it
in	give in (to) back into do in take in put in in the end	red	in the red
		so	so-and-so so so
		with	do with get with it
have	have out have on the haves & have-nots have it in for	which	which is which
		what	a what-not what for? do what? what? what of it? so what?
let	let on let out let me in on it		
light	give me a light	who	who's-it
		you	here you are there you are

Charts I-III

at	let at have at get at be at one another at all	like left	like it or not left to your liking be like left out on your left take a left
apart	take apart		
all	all in all end it all all for one & one for all all together	long much	long for you're too much can't take much
by	put by do by get by by the by	 right	 take a right have a right on your right right on right and left right you are
can	in the can		
come	come out of come at come in come out come, come come to an end coming's and going's on come apart	 short tell	 have a short get the short end of the long and short of tell apart tell on tell it like it is tell all
given	it's a given		
go	go on go into let go of go back on go out go out for go right in go with go get 'em gogetter have a go at go at it on the go go all out no go get going go to all ends	together told who were	get together all together all told who's-it as it were

Charts I-IV

behind	get behind behind one's back	top	on top of
between	few & far between between you and me	up	be up to light up give up get up do up end up come up with on the up and up what's up higher-ups be up be up on get one's back up higher-ups
beneath	beneath one		
down	get down to back down down and out ups and downs be down on someone showdown come down with		
easy	easy does it easy going		
first	at first	under	go under
front	up front front (money)		
from	take from come from		
more	more or less what's more		
now	from now on		
next	get next to		
show	show and tell put on a show show up		
speak	speak out speak on speak for speak up speak up for not to speak of speaking of speakeasy		

Charts I-V

away	put away take away come away go away do away with It's a giveaway	good	good for you up to no good get the goods on do one good as good as new good enough for me
ask	ask out one after the other	goes	that goes without saying how goes it?
after	take after after all is said & done take after be named after a before-and-after	hard hold	be hard put hold out hold on hold onto get hold of take hold of hold back be a little short
again	again and again		little by little you have to give a little be a little short put back a little the little man the little woman left to oneself
big	bigger than the both make it big talk big be big on	little	
box	box him in		
better	get the better of so much the better	left	
best	do your best get the best of him it's all for the best	lid long	put a lid on before long
bad	That's too bad! go bad	new	new at something no news is good news
before	before long put before	pick	take your pick pick apart pick at pick on pick out
each	each and every one		
either	either one or the other		
enough	good enough you've said enough enough said enough is enough	said say	I've said it before & I'll say it again You said it! You can say that again! have a say in say-so
far	as far as far and near gone far enough far out so far, so good so far fargone	Self	Be yourself beside oneself everyone for himself further yourself better yourself

Charts I-V (Cont'd)

worse	get worse and worse
wish	wish on wish for wish away
way	every which way get out of the way out of the way have one's way by the way where there's a will there's a way underway
young	young ones
gone	let bygones by bygones gone by
every	every now and then

Charts I-VI

about	go about take about ask about no buts about it no two ways about it	look	look high and low look after look out for look in on look into look to look up to look at look on
across	get across put across		
answer	answer to answer for	lengths	go to some lengths
been	a has-been	see	see to see after see out see about see red see a lot of
count	count to count up count on count out countdown under the counter count me in/out	tell	tell about
		slow	be slow
close	close up get close to that was close listen closely close behind	thing	do my thing
		talk	talk up talk down talk low tall talk talk about backtalk talk into talk out of talk above give a talk on give a talking to a talker
drop	drop in drop out take a drop let drop drop by have the drop on		
ear	box one's ears		
feel	fee high feel low feel out feel up to feel for have a feeling feel towards feel small feel one's way get the feel of	throw	throw up throw away throw out throw in throw on thow to throw at
		we	speak well of
		word	give the word as good as one's word give one's word on my word
listen	listen! listen in on listen up		

Charts I-VIII

already	ready made alright, already	often	as often as not more often than not ready to go
bring	bring up bring on bring out bring in bring about bring forward bring something off bring someone to bring to light	own	be on one's own hold one's own own up to something
		sure	a sure thing make sure for sure sure enough
choose	pick and choose be choosey	touch	touch and go get in touch with make a touch out of touch with touch off
else	or else		touch on touch up touch to the quick be touched by
know	know what's what know a thing or two know-how in the know let someone know		
least	to say the least not in the least it's the least you could do	use	get used to be used to use up make use of used to have no use for
life	for the life of me not on your life bring to life that's life	zero	zero in on a zero
mean	by all means by no means means to an end mean well be mean to have the means		
meant	not meant to be		
move	move on move in move about move up a mover move on out move over on the move		

Charts I-IX

buy	buy out buy something (be convinced)	shut	open and shut shut up shut off shut down
equal	be equal to an equal	spell	spell out spell someone
keep	keep out keep out of keep on keep up with keep to keep in keep back keep away keep at keep doing something in keeping with keep one's word keep your end up for keeps	through	go through with through and through be through with
		write	write for write in write down write up write out write in
kept	a kept woman		
man	man of his word as one man be one's own man to a man many a man be a man		
meet	make both ends meet meet your match meet up with		
open	open on to open up to		
read	read another person read aloud well-read read into read over read up on read off		

Charts I-X

plus	That's a plus.
ten	bet ten to one
fifty	fifty-fifty
million	thanks a million feel like a million he's got millions
six	six of one; half-dozen of the other
twenty	catch 22 20/20
seven	seven-up
second	secondhand second to none second-rate seconds
Four	four eyes
dozen	a baker's dozen

Charts I-XI

Monday	Monday morning blues
season	be in season
holiday	be on a holiday
family	be in the family way it's all in the family keep it in the family be a family man
mother	mother someone
April	April fool's April showers
March	March winds
August	August Dog Days
June	be a June bride
Friday	Thank God it's Friday
Saturday	Saturday night fever
father	be a father to someone

harts I-XII

night	make a night of overnight nighty-night goodnight night-night night people one-night stand	soon day	sooner or later call it a day that'll be the day for many a day one of these days take the day off see the light of day all day long not to give one the time of day
time	some time ago		
half	six of one; half dozen of the other		
tomorrow	tomorrow's another day		
morning	' Morning.		
date	go out on a date to date have a date at this late date date something		
late	it's never too late		
hour	hours on end		
while	give it a while while away my time once in a while		
noon	high noon		
year	year in and year out all year round		
yesterday	born yesterday		
week	week of Sundays		

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Charts I-XII

night	make a night of overnight nighty-night goodnight night-night night people one-night stand	soon day	sooner or later call it a day that'll be the day for many a day one of these days take the day off see the light of day all day long not to give one the time of day
time	some time ago		
half	six of one; half dozen of the other		
tomorrow	tommorrow's another day		
morning	' Morning.		
date	go out on a date to date have a date at this late date date something		
late	it's never too late		
hour	hours on end		
while	give it a while while away my time once in a while		
noon	high noon		
year	year in and year out all year round		
yesterday	born yesterday		
week	week of Sundays		

APPENDIX II
SAMPLE HAND-OUTS

SAMPLE LIST OF IDIOMS

Give back	1) Return
Take back	1) Return; 2) Retract
Put back	1) Replace
Take to	1) Feel friendly toward; 2) To develop as a habit or steady practice
Put it to someone	1) Tell or explain
Put an end to it	1) Finish it
In black and white	1) On paper; 2) Not in color but rendered in black and white
Give and take	1) Exchange on equal terms; 2) Practice of compromise
To be yellow	1) To be cowardly, without courage
The blues	1) Depression; "got _____"
To be green	1) To feel envious
Back me	1) Give me support
There, there.	1) An expression used to comfort someone who is upset.
Black and blue	1) Bruised and beaten
Take it	1) Understand; 2) Be submitted to abuse
Take	1) (n.) Share, E.g., This is his _____.
Back-to-back	1) One right after the other; 2) Seated not facing each other but with the back of one person against that of the other

CLOZE EXERCISE: DIALOGUE

Fill in each blank with one of the idioms below:

A—Hey, that's a great car! Where'd you get it?

B— _____! It's a used car and it was a great
buy! I _____ it _____ at a used car lot in
my neighborhood.

A—Well, the guy wanted \$5,000 but I _____ until he _____ to \$4,500.

B— _____! Congratulations!

A—Well, there's no radio, but I decided to _____ for the moment.

It's not that important. That can wait.

way to go
hold off
let it be
hold out
pick up
You said it!
come down

CLOZE EXERCISE:
SENTENCES USING EXPRESSIONS GENERATED FROM THE CHARTS

Give and take
Better and better
Again and again
Take a break
Hold out
That's the long and the short of it
Give me a break
Have your pick
Put (them) away
Take on

1. I've told you everything I know and _____.
2. Are you going to buy that used car for \$7,000? No, I'm going to _____ until the dealer lowers the price.
3. We have soda, vodka, rum, scotch or beer. Whatever you want, _____.
4. Whew! I'm tired. We've been at it since nine this morning. Let's _____ until 3 p.m. and then start work again.
5. Son, this is the second time I've told you to pick up your clothes. Oh, Mom, I've been doing my homework. _____!
6. Would you please make a note of it this time. I've had to tell you _____.
7. How are you feeling? _____. Soon I'll be my old self again.
8. Look, your toys are all over the place. _____ them _____ right now.
9. He's the best speaker that I've ever heard. I would never want to _____ him _____ in a debate.
10. Marriage is 50/50. It has to be a _____ relationship to last in this society.

CLOZE EXERCISE:
SENTENCES USING EXPRESSIONS GENERATED FROM THE CHARTS

1. Guess who? He was an actor in grade-B cowboy movies; now he's President. That's a _____. Anybody can guess who you're talking about.
2. Excuse me, sir, I saw your ad in the paper. --Yes, would you like to _____ in the paper?
3. Hello, is this The New York Times? I'd like to _____ a classified advertisement _____ the Sunday edition.
4. We want to buy a coffeepot for the office. If everyone _____ a couple of dollars, we can get a Mr. Coffee.
5. I'm his mother; I _____ to say where he's going to school.
6. She's the owner of the business; she _____ to know what is going on.
7. Honey, would you _____ the cat; he wants to use the bathroom.
8. School _____ a week for Christmas holidays.
9. As the man approached her on the dark deserted street, she _____ a scream.
10. The mafia usually _____ anyone who betrays their code of secrecy.
11. They frequently _____ by throwing the body in the river.
12. _____ the car. Let's take a ride.
13. That teacher is very critical; she _____ everything anyone ever does.
14. That candidate didn't have one good thing to say about the other. He _____ the policy of the other one.
15. _____, in spite of the family disagreements, holidays are great.
16. _____, there's no better place than home.
17. I was wearing the same dress as his wife. He _____ me _____ her.
18. That man asked me how much this book cost. He _____ me _____ a salesperson.
19. If you don't _____ when you ride the subway, you'll fall.
20. They don't make \$2 bills anymore. You'd better _____ to that one.

21. Hello? Can you _____? Mr. Brown will be with you in a moment.
22. I never win an argument with my husband. I always _____.
23. Neither the Russians nor the Americans have _____ in the Arms talks. They are both holding out for what they want.
24. I'm tired of fighting. I _____.
25. Oh, hi. Won't you _____.
26. (Knock, knock, knock) Who is it?
It's your neighbor, Judy.
Oh, _____
27. Mrs. Smith? --Yes, Tommy. --Can Johnny _____ to play?
28. I went to a seminar on computers and _____ as confused as I was before I went. I didn't understand a thing.
29. This was free; they were _____ these things with the purchase.
30. This has _____. I can't let this go on. Stop it right now.

after all is said and done

come away

come in/out

do away with

get in

give away

give in

gone far enough

have a right

hold on

let out

pick apart

put in (an application)

take someone for someone else

CLOZE EXERCISE: SENTENCES
EXPRESSIONS GENERATED USING THE CHARTS

put an end to it	on top of it	get on with it
in the dark	back to back	in the red
in the end	back me up	let's be done with it
in black and white	in color	That's that. That does it.
How goes it?	Way to go!	Give me a break!
white it out	Same difference	in the middle of things
I've had it.	Let me in on it	Let it be.
It's all the same to me.		It's the same any way you look at it.

1. If I present the boss with this new plan, will you ____ me up as to its feasibility?
2. This kind of spending has gone far enough. We have to ____.
3. This is our brightest salesman. He's ____ everything.
4. These photos are not in color; they're in _____.
5. I have a very heavy schedule today; I've got appointments lined up ____.
6. That company has spent more than it's made. Right now they're ____.
7. This is the final page of that report. ____! Now we can go home.
8. You made the sale? Congratulations! _____!
9. He made a mistake on that report. Would you _____ with this liquid paper?
10. Ok, ok, so I made a mistake! _____, will you?
11. My wife and my mother have been arguing about the children and I'm caught _____.
12. Whether we go to a French restaurant or an Italian one, _____!
13. Do you want Chablis or Soave? Either one. _____.
14. Don't bring up the subject again. You know he doesn't agree. Just _____.
15. Hey, what are you guys talking about? _____.
16. I don't want to keep working on this same issue. Let's _____ and go home.
17. He doesn't know a thing about it. We've kept him _____.

CLOZE EXERCISES: WORKING WITH THE DICTIONARY

by a head get it through your head
come to a head give him his head
go to her head head and shoulders above
out of my head over his head

1. The other day things _____ at the office and George's boss let him have it.
2. Since Allan got that promotion and took on more responsibilities, he has let all that power _____. He thinks he is a lot of more important than he really is.
3. His work is far superior to anyone else's; he is _____ above everyone else in his performance; no one matches him.
4. He still doesn't understand the problem; he can't seem to _____.
5. There is so much to do that I'm going _____: it's so confusing around here.

¹head ¹'hed\ n [ME *hed*, fr. OE *hēafod*; akin to OHG *houbit* head, L *caput*] (bef. 12c) 1: the upper or anterior division of the body (as of a man or an insect) that contains the brain, the chief sense organs, and the mouth 2 a: the seat of the intellect: MIND (two ~s are better than one) b: natural aptitude or talent (a good ~ for figures) c: mental or emotional control: POISE (a level ~) d: HEADACHE 3: the obverse of a coin — usu. used in pl. (~s I win) 4 a: PERSON, INDIVIDUAL (count ~s) b pl head: one of a number (as of domestic animals) 5 a: the end that is upper or higher or opposite the foot (the ~ of the table) (~ of a sail) b: the source of a stream c: either end of something (as a drum) whose two ends need not be distinguished d: a horizontal passage in a coal mine 6: DIRECTOR, LEADER: as a: HEADMASTER b: one in charge of a division or department in an office or institution (the ~ of the English department) 7 a: CAPITULUM 2 b: the foliated part of a plant esp. when consisting of a compact mass of leaves or close fructification 8 a: the leading element of a military column or a procession b: HEADWAY 9 a: the uppermost extremity or projecting part of an object: TOP b: the striking part of a weapon, tool, or implement c: the rounded proximal end of a long bone (as the humerus) d: the end of a muscle nearest the origin — compare ORIGIN e: the oval part of a printed musical note 10 a: a body of water kept in reserve at a height; also: the containing bank, dam, or wall b: a mass of water in motion 11 a: the difference in elevation between two points in a body of fluid b: the resulting pressure of the fluid at the lower point expressible as this height; broadly: pressure of a fluid 12 a: the bow and adjacent parts of a ship b: a ship's toilet; broadly: TOILET 13: the approximate length of the head of a horse (won by a ~) 14: the place of leadership, honor, or command (at the ~ of his class) 15 a (1): a word or series of words often in larger letters placed at the beginning of a passage or at the top of a page in order to introduce or categorize (2): a separate part or topic b: a portion of a page or sheet that is above the first line of printing 16: the foam or scum that rises on a fermenting or effervescing liquid (as beer) 17 a: the part of a boil, pimple, or abscess at which it is likely to break b: culminating point of action: CRISIS (events came to a ~) 18 a: a part or attachment of a machine or machine tool containing a device (as a cutter or drill); also: the part of an apparatus that performs the chief function or a particular function b: MAGNETIC HEAD 19: an immediate constituent of a construction that has the same grammatical function as the whole (as *man* in "an old man", "a very old man", or "the man in the street") 20 a: one who uses a drug (as LSD or marijuana) b: DEVOTEE (chili ~s) — by the head: drawing the greater depth of water forward — off one's head: CRAZY, DISTRACTED — out of one's head: DELIRIOUS — over one's head 1: beyond one's comprehension or the point of being competent (liked pictures but art criticism was over his head) 2: so as to pass over one's superior standing or authority (went over his supervisor's head to complain)

²head ²adj (bef. 12c) 1: of, relating to, or intended for the head 2: PRINCIPAL CHIEF (~ cook) 3: situated at the head 4: coming from in front (~ sea)

³head ³vt (14c) 1: BEHEAD 2 a: to cut back the upper or terminal growth of (a plant or plant part) — often used with back b: to harvest (a cereal grass) by cutting off the heads 3 a: to put a head on: fit a head to (~ an arrow) b: to form the head or top of (tower ~ed by a spire) 4: to act as leader or head to (~ a revolt) 5 a: to

CLOZE EXERCISES: WORKING WITH THE DICTIONARY

get on with it get it over with
get over something get something over with
keep on your toes pull the wool over someone's eyes
keep your chin up I'm scratch your back if you'll scratch mine
make a clean sweep of it
go to bat for someone

1. We can't continue to discuss this; let's _____ the next topic on the agenda.
2. The boss pops in every once in a while to _____; he doesn't want us sleeping on the job.
3. Don't be so glum; there's only a little more work to do and then we can go home; _____.
4. You certainly fooled me; _____.
5. My superior told me that he would present my proposal to the board; he said, "_____."
6. Let's start afresh; we'll _____.
7. Let's get started so we can hurry up and go home. Yes, let's _____.
8. She just broke up with her boyfriend; she's very depressed. Don't worry. As soon as she finds a new one, she'll _____.

MATCHING EXERCISES

Match the idiomatic expressions in the left-hand column with the definitions in the right-hand column.

put up with

to impose on

put over

to tolerate

put on

to carry to a successful end

put in

to explain effectively

put out

to achieve

put across

to dress oneself

put aside

to offer for consideration

put forth

to insert; submit

put through

to save for later

put upon

to disburse

CREATIVE READING/WRITING

Robin's mother had been very clear. There was no way for Robin to take it any other way except that she was to stay home. In fact, it couldn't have been any clearer if she put it in black and white and tacked the note to the door. As she put the milk back in the refrigerator, the phone rang. "Hello. Hi, Susan. No, I can't go. Mom won't let me."

"How can you take it?" Susan asked. "Your parents don't know how to give and take. They just want to order you around. Come on, don't be so yellow. Give it back to them. You're old enough to decide for yourself whether you can go out or not."

Sorry, Susan, but they would beat me black and blue if I went out. But, you have a good time. I'll be green with envy thinking about what fun you're having. Maybe next time."

"Ok, so long."

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

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