

ELTWeekly

India's First Weekly ELT eNewsletter

Vol. 3 Issue#82

ISSN 0975-3036

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Choral repetition

Choral repetition is when the teacher or a learner models language and the group of learners repeat it together.

Example

The class are practising the pronunciation of the schwa sound. The teacher models words from a list and the learners repeat them together.

In the classroom

Choral repetition is not a very common choice of activity, but it can contribute well to learning some aspects of language, especially pronunciation of connected speech and formulaic language such as classroom language. It is also an activity that many learners enjoy.

[retrieved from <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk>]

Video: Shaping the Way We Teach English: Module 12, Younger Learner

Younger learners are from 4-10 years of age, and from kindergarten through 5th grade.

Younger learners are active and creative. They learn through doing. They are social, they like to play, and they have the ability to develop the rules of language themselves, as they play with different language content and input. They also have a short attention span, and they need repetition and clear direction.

An innovative offering from the Office of English Language Programs, Shaping the Way We Teach English, is a 14-module teacher training video series developed and produced in cooperation with the University of Oregon.

Watch the video at <http://www.eltweekly.com/elt-newsletter/2011/02/82-video-shaping-the-way-we-teach-english-module-12-younger-learners/>

Susan Ryan's Tip: Using Content, Focus & Function Words in Spoken English

When English speakers talk they emphasize the content and focus words in a sentence. That's because these words are the most important for meaning. Function words are said quickly because these words, while needed for structure, are not always key to meaning.

In spoken English each sentence or phrase contains:

A Focus word-the most important word

Content words-very important for meaning

Function words-not important for meaning

Content Words and Focus Words

The most important words in English sentences are content words and focus words. Content and focus words are pronounced a bit louder and with a higher pitch than the other words in a sentence.

Content words are usually nouns, main verbs, adjectives, adverbs, question words, negatives and numbers. The focus word is usually, but not always, the last content word in a thought group or phrase.

Look at the example sentences below and read them aloud emphasizing the content and focus words. Stressed syllables are capitalized.

1. SUSan is HAPpy with her poSItion.
2. She teaches ENGLISH at the UniVERsity.

In longer sentences, there is a focus word in each phrase or thought group.

3. If you PLAN to become a TEACHER, you need to have exPERIENCE with RESEARCH.

Function Words

The unstressed words in a sentence are called function words. Function words are important to the grammatical structure of a sentence and they are pronounced quickly with a reduced pitch.

Stressing Function Words

In certain situations, speakers may choose to stress a function word rather than a content or focus word. For example, when someone presents you with a choice and you want to choose both items, you should stress the structure word.

Student A: Are you taking phiLOSophy or linGUIStics?

Student B: Actually I'm taking phiLOSophy AND linGUIStics?

If you can emphasize the content and focus words in a sentence, while reducing the function words, your spoken English will be easier for native speakers to understand.

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Vol. 3 Issue#82 February 14, 2011

Susan Ryan is an American English pronunciation teacher and accent reduction coach. She currently lives in South Florida. Read more articles by Susan at <http://www.confidentvoice.com/blog/>

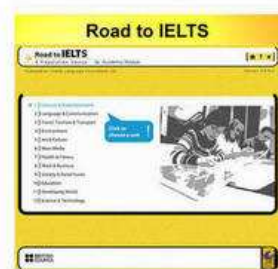
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Article: Using texts constructively: what are texts for?

“Text use may seem a dull topic after all the exciting matters that other guest writers have dealt with recently. However, language learning is, after all, learning language, not just doing fun things with it. And texts – by which I mean the relatively short spoken and written passages that come in textbooks and other teaching materials – can, if they are used properly, play an important part in the learning process. So here goes.

Three kinds of input

Let’s start by looking at the overall structure of language learning. It is useful to identify three kinds of useful input: extensive, intensive and analysed. Children learning their mother tongues receive massive extensive input from the cloud of language that surrounds them, some of it roughly attuned to their level of development, much of it not. They also receive substantial intensive input – small samples of language such as nursery rhymes, stories, songs, the daily mealtime and bedtime scripts, and so on, which are repeated, assimilated, memorised, probably unconsciously analysed, and/or used as templates for future production. And children receive analysed input: explicit information about language. Although they are not generally told very much about grammar and pronunciation, they constantly demand explanations of vocabulary: ‘What’s a ...?’, ‘What’s that?’, ‘What does ... mean?’”

Read the complete article at

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/think/articles/using-texts-constructively-what-are-texts>

Research Article: 'Types of Syllabuses in Language Teaching – ESL/EFL Context' by Shabnum Iftikhar

The aim of this article is to present and introduce those influential types of syllabuses which are feasible in the domain of ESL/EFL and provides a rationale for the integration of these syllabuses as well.

Etymologically syllabus means a 'label or 'table of contents'. The American Heritage Dictionary defines syllabus as outline of a course of study. Syllabus represents the expression of educational ideas in practice. Syllabus can also be seen as a "summary of the contents to which the learners will be exposed".

In the context of non-native countries, where English is taught as a second language, the selection of English syllabus requires a deep understanding, a comprehensive knowledge of various syllabus designs and a mature insight into the issue that which type of syllabus is indispensable to design, so that syllabus could fulfill learners' requirements with all the paraphernalia of pedagogical objectives. Syllabus presents the complete program of study to teach academic contents in a specific time period. To gain the maximum benefits of syllabus in a limited time, it is imperative that syllabus must be designed taking into account the learners 'needs and objectives, essential to require.

There are two major types of syllabuses, product-oriented syllabus and process-oriented syllabus. A good and valid syllabus is that covers more or less all aspects of both these types, therefore, proper and appropriate implementation of syllabus in language teaching is undeniable. Without proper implementation of syllabus, on

the one hand, desired objectives will be hard to obtain and on the other hand students will suffer from the lack of appropriate syllabus which could fulfill their immediate pedagogical requirements and sharpen their abilities in different areas of language. In this perspective, the characteristics of each syllabus are discussed in a nutshell. All these syllabuses will prove beneficial if carefully implemented.

Product-Oriented Syllabus: product-oriented syllabus focuses on what the learners will know as a result at the end of instruction session. The grammatical, situational and notional-functional are the examples of product-oriented syllabus.

Grammatical: This type of syllabus is designed when the purpose is to teach the systematic development of grammatical structures. Learners are exposed to these structures step by step and it is expected that they will enhance their grammar collection by memorizing different grammar rules. The internalization of these rules is considered a prerequisite to grasp the technicalities of a language.

Situational: The primary purpose of this syllabus is to teach the language that occurs in real-life situations. Here, the emphasis is on the learner, who it is expected will actively participate in different situations where L2 is being spoken. Examples of situations include, seeing the doctor, making an appointment, meeting people at the party, buying clothes and so on. One advantage of the situational approach is that motivation will be heightened, since it is learn-centered rather than subject-centered.

Notional-Functional: A notional-functional syllabus is a practical way of organizing language-learning syllabus, rather than an approach or method to teach and instructions are organized in terms of notions and functions. In this design, a 'notion' is a particular context in which people communicate. A 'function' is a specific purpose in a given context. For example, the notion of shopping requires numerous language functions, such as asking about prices or features of a product and bargaining. An important point regarding notional-functional syllabus is that the needs of the students have to be analyzed and explored by different types of interaction and communication; a learner may be involved in, hence, needs analysis is central to design such syllabuses.

Process-Oriented Syllabus: Process-oriented syllabus focuses on the pedagogical processes leading to the language outcomes. The task-based, skill-based and content-based types of syllabus are included in it.

Task-Based Syllabus: This syllabus is designed when the purpose is to complete some complex and meaningful tasks. Even though, the primary purpose is to complete tasks, however, language competence is developed through the very process of performing of the task. The language learnt comes out of the linguistic demands of the activity. Learners perform various tasks together in a co-operative environment. Task-based syllabus promotes and encourages collaborative learning. Since language learning is considered subordinate to task performance, therefore, language teaching also occurs as the need arises during the performance of the particular task.

Skill-Based Syllabus: The purpose of this syllabus is to teach some specific skills that are considered necessary or useful in using a language. Skill-based syllabus focuses on skills and gradual development of skills gives learners the confidence. This syllabus must be designed and implemented keeping in mind the learners' cognitive levels. Skill-based syllabus group linguistic competencies (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and discourse) together into generalized types of behavior, such as listening to the spoken language for the main idea, writing well formed paragraphs, specific purpose writing and so on.

Content-Based Syllabus: This syllabus is designed when the purpose is to teach some content or information in a language that students are also learning. The students are simultaneously the language students and the students of whatever content is being taught. In this type of syllabus, the language is enhanced through different contents and/or in the context of various types of information. Although the subject matter is of primary and vital importance, language learning occurs concurrently with content learning.

Conclusion

Each syllabus type is of great significance, keeping in mind the learners' needs, contexts and situations, so a subtle and pragmatic approach is required in the implementation of language teaching syllabus. In short, a language teaching syllabus involves a combination of two practical questions regarding subject matter (what to teach) and linguistic matter (how to teach). These two crucial questions can be answered satisfactorily by applying a viable syllabus design.

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

- 1. Papers / Articles:** All articles should be computerized using double-spacing, including tables, references and footnotes. Submission of manuscripts should be done in electronic more only. Electronic version of the article/research paper should be e-mailed to the Editor, ELTWeekly at info@eltweekly.com.
- 2. Abstracts:** An abstract in approximately 200 words should assist the article.
- 3. Abbreviations:** No stops are needed between capitals e.g. ELT, IELTS.
- 4. Figures and Tables:** Tables should be numbered sequentially with Arabic numerals.
- 5. Notes:** Notes should be consecutively numbered and presented at the foot of the page.
- 6. References:** References in the text should follow the author-date system. The complete reference list should be given at the end of the article. They should be in alphabetical order.
- 7. Book Reviews:** Book reviews must contain the name of the author and title / subtitle of the book reviewed, place of publication and publisher and date of publication.
- 8. For Event Submissions:** Please submit your event details at least 30 days prior to the event.
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