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Planning a Vacation in the U.S.: a Multipurpose Theme in the ESL Classroom

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School for International Training

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Planning a Vacation in the U.S.:
a Multipurpose Theme in the ESL Classroom

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts in Teaching degree at the
School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont.

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This project by Janet Lynne Entersz
is accepted in its present form.

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Abstract

By means of an in-depth presentation of twenty four activities based on the theme of planning a vacation in the U.S., the author attempts to demonstrate the advantages, for both teachers of English as a second language and students, of using a thematic approach in the classroom to achieve not only language proficiency but such goals as healthy student-teacher and student-student relationships, communicative competence and cultural awareness as well. Preceding the twenty four activities is a discussion of the author's assumptions about and personal insights into language learning and language teaching, upon which the activities and advocacy of using a thematic approach in the ESL classroom are based.

ERIC Descriptors

- 1) English (Second Language)
- 2) Second Language Instruction
- 3) Thematic Approach
- 4) Cultural Awareness
- 5) Communicative Competence (Languages)
- 6) Student-Teacher Relationship
- 7) Foreign Students
- 8) Language Proficiency

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I. Introduction

Purpose

There are actually three purposes in writing this thesis. The major purpose, and the most practical, is to suggest activities, which are described in detail, to readers of this thesis--other ESL teachers--for use both inside and outside their classrooms. These activities have not only linguistic competence as a goal, but also the goal or goals of an increased understanding of American culture, communicative competence in both the classroom and the "real world," and harmonious interpersonal relations among students and between students and teacher, based on mutual understanding and respect.

The second purpose of this thesis, on which the first ultimately rests, is to advocate, through the example of planning a vacation in the U.S., the use of themes in the ESL classroom, primarily but not exclusively as a vehicle to tie together in a relevant and meaningful way the activities that ESL teachers do with their classes, such activities as those mentioned above.

The third purpose of this thesis, which forms the basis for the first two, is largely personal. This thesis is meant, through its organization, to serve as a record of the process (and progress!) I experienced while a student in the MAT program at the School for International Training, gradually moving from theories of language learning and teaching to their practical applications. It is also meant to be an end product of that process. I would never have conceived or been able to conceive of Purposes 1 and 2 without having gone through that process.

The ESL Class

The class for which the activities described in this thesis are designed is composed of adult non-native English speakers at a high intermediate level

of English living in the U.S. Granted, this is probably close to an ideal class on which to theoretically test out the theme of planning a vacation in the U.S. However, in the interest of making the presentation clearer, it was felt that it would be better to choose a near-ideal class on which to "test" out the idea, rather than try to anticipate every conceivable variable actually faced by ESL teachers. It is hoped that the activities are flexible enough to be adapted to real-life situations in the ESL classroom.

Audience

As stated above, this thesis is intended to be read by other ESL teachers.

Organization

This thesis is organized into six parts:

- I. The Introduction
- II. The Background, which includes a discussion of certain insights and assumptions I have made this year as a language learner and as a student teacher, and how they relate to and determined my choice of:
a) themes in general as a framework for activities in the classroom designed to promote linguistic and other goals, and b) the specific theme of planning a vacation in the U.S.
- III. Planning a Vacation in the U.S., including the preliminary steps taken by the teacher in introducing the theme to the class, followed by the actual steps and skills within those steps that students will need to do in planning a vacation.
- IV. A Representative Group of 24 Activities, for 12 of the skills mentioned in Part III. These activities will be discussed in depth in regard to linguistic purpose--vocabulary and grammar to be covered, skill to be learned in doing the activity, how the activity is to be taught and what the ultimate goals of the activity are, whether communicative competence, increased understanding of American culture and/or promoting harmonious interpersonal relations among students and between students and teacher. Each activity is described in detail so that it can stand on its own without reference, in the majority of cases, to other activities. For this reason, there is some material which may appear in all of the activities, most notably in the section on ultimate goals.
- V. Conclusion

VI. Bibliography

II. Background

Insights About Language Learning

The insights I have made this year as a language learner primarily concern the importance to me of affective, as opposed to cognitive, factors in learning a foreign language. I can divide the insights that pertain to this thesis into two major groups. The first group I call "security." Although based on Abraham Maslow's pyramid model of human needs, I am using the term in a broader sense to include not only the second fundamental layer of security and stability, but also the successive two layers of identification within a group and esteem, both self-esteem and esteem from others. I experienced a feeling of security in my two language classes because, on the affective level, I had a feeling of belonging within the two groups of students and I had my need for self-esteem satisfied from both the teachers, the other students and myself. Feeling secure, I was then able to "invest" myself in learning the languages on a cognitive as well as other levels. As Jennybelle Rardin points out, security or a feeling of trust is all the more crucial for adolescent and adult language learners because they are generally uncomfortable in a situation where they are dependent on others in order to learn something, in this case, a foreign language.¹

I found several things in my language classes promoted feelings in me of identity and self-esteem, hence security. One was the physical environment itself. Fairly comfortable chairs, a comfortable temperature and a circle arrangement of students instead of the traditional rows all

¹Jennybelle Rardin, "A Model for Second Language Learning," in Charles A. Curran, Counseling-Learning in Second Languages (Apple River, Illinois: Apple River Press, 1976), pp. 105-106.

did much to create a relaxed atmosphere, which I consider very important for feeling secure. The second thing had to do with interpersonal relations with other students and with the teacher. I had never worked in pairs or small groups in a language class before and I found that, in doing so, I felt very emotionally comfortable in the class. I got to know other students as people and discovered that we all tried to help rather than compete against each other. The teachers, of course, were instrumental in creating this environment and by their relaxed, nonthreatening manner and patience with each student helped establish a feeling of mutual trust, certainly as far as I was concerned.

The second group of insights I have made that pertain to this thesis concerns student investment. Just as I found feeling secure to be a necessary prerequisite to investing in or committing myself to learning the languages, I found that student investment also had to be present for learning to take place and that the degree of investment had a great influence on the quantity and quality of learning. Knowing that my Farsi language course was only going to be a few days affected, to a large extent, my degree of investment in learning it. On the other hand, even though my beginning French course was a week longer, I know I still would have made a greater commitment to learning it if it had been the same length as my Farsi course because, among other things, I found it to be more relevant to my career at this point than Farsi and thus, worth a greater, deeper investment on my part. Taking the first few days of French, I found myself much more adventurous, willing to stick my neck out in that language than I was in Farsi during the same number of days. One of the reasons was, undoubtedly, my greater investment in French. From this point in time, too, I find that I have remembered a lot of vocabulary and grammar in French and

more important to me, still feel confident in attempting to speak it, whereas it is very hard for me to recall any Farsi. Earl Stevick's statement that "the 'deeper' the source of a sentence within the student's personality, the more lasting value it has for learning the language,"² (emphasis his), certainly holds true for my two experiences.

Assumptions About Teaching

Security

As with the insights into my own language learning which were discussed above, the relevant assumptions I have made about teaching primarily concern the importance of affective factors. I would say that my approach to teaching, if I had to sum it up, is to consider the "whole person" that is both myself, as a teacher, and each of my students, to deal with not only the intellectual components of which we all are made, but with the emotional, psychological, social and cultural components as well. Within the framework of my "whole person" approach, I have several assumptions. The first deals with security, as defined in the previous section. I assume, and my student teaching bore this out, that as a teacher, dealing with both my and my students' affective sides is my first priority, both in sequence and in rank. In regard to sequence, I found that until we all felt comfortable, secure with each other on an interpersonal level, the next step, that of student and teacher investment, could not take place. To paraphrase Charles A. Curran, I am speaking the "language of cognition" to my students when I am teaching English, while they tend to speak, at first, the "language of affect." If I do not understand the "language of affect," my students will not "[hear]

²Earl W. Stevick, Memory, Meaning & Method: Some Psychological Perspectives on Language Learning (Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House Publishers, Inc., 1976), p. 109.

back, and therefore, [be] able to absorb, compare, and understand" or invest in my "language of cognition."³ This is from the students' viewpoint. From my teacher's viewpoint, lack of interpersonal communication between us would adversely affect my morale, as indeed it did in the case of one of my classes, and I would not be able to delve into English on an intellectual level with any great enthusiasm until this problem was resolved.

As for giving the affective side of both myself and my students first rank, I found Jennybelle Rardin expressed it well in her presentation at the Community Language Learning Workshop held at SIT in Spring 1980. She said that although the cognitive side may be "up front" in a learning situation, the affective side is always present and ready to push the cognitive side to the back when it becomes involved. I would add that the opposite is far less likely to occur.

My insights as a language learner that a comfortable physical environment and working in small groups promoted a feeling of security within me became part of my assumption as a teacher concerning security. That is, I assumed that these two elements would promote a feeling of security within me and in my students. I would say that this assumption, by and large, proved true. In one case especially, I achieved dramatically positive results in both my own confidence as a teacher and in my students' feeling more at ease when I rearranged the classroom to create a more personal atmosphere.

Teacher Investment

Moving from the first step of security to the second of investment,

³Charles A. Curran, Counseling-Learning in Second Languages (Apple River, Illinois: Apple River Press, 1976), p. 26.

which I believe holds true for teachers as well as for students, one assumption I have made concerning teacher investment is that teaching what one likes or is interested in will generally have a positive effect on the quality of teaching. One is more likely to stick one's neck out, be more innovative, invest more of oneself, if the topic is interesting or pertinent. Consequently, one probably does a better job of presenting the material. Students are more likely, in turn, to invest themselves, which, in turn, encourages the teacher to continue to invest. I also believe that the converse is often true. If a teacher has no personal interest or cannot get interested in a topic that must be taught, chances are she or he will not teach it very well. Students will probably not be enthusiastic and there will be little chance for teacher reinvestment. I have experienced both of these situations in my own student teaching.

Student Investment

How do I, as a teacher, help students to invest? I am making an assumption here that the more student-centered my class is, the more inductive and productive the learning, as opposed to deductive and reflective, the greater the investment my students will make. The end result is that the quantity and quality of their learning will probably be greater than in a teacher-centered classroom where the students are dependent on the teacher for the right answer, which they parrot back rather than think through for themselves. Stevick's assertion, already quoted, that the "deeper" the source of whatever a student produces the greater its value for retention and assimilation certainly applies here.

Two factors which I consider essential in promoting student investment are the relevance of the material to their lives outside the language classroom and whether the goal of any particular activity goes beyond linguistic

competence into the realm of such things as communicative competence, an increased understanding of the target culture and healthy interpersonal relationships. I was always amazed, as a student teacher, how obviously interested my students became and how eager for vocabulary and grammar to express themselves in English whenever we were doing something that they could personally relate to. I also know that they never forgot certain things, such as greetings, because they had the opportunity to use them with visitors from the target culture. What we had done in class was not a meaningless exercise for them.

Use of Techniques

Compatible with my "whole person" approach is an assumption I have made about the use of many techniques in the ESL classroom. The approach emphasizes the uniqueness of every individual, both teacher and students. Therefore, it follows that not everyone will teach or learn in the same way. As a teacher, I favor for myself an eclectic variety of techniques because I like variety in and of itself. I have also found in my student teaching that there is more than one technique with which I feel comfortable on an affective as well as an intellectual level. I also favor an eclectic variety of techniques from the students' viewpoint because I assume that if they do not or cannot learn something one way, they might be able to learn it another way.

Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing

I assume, as a teacher, that these four skills are equally important and intimately related to each other. As such, I want to give equal attention to all four as much as possible in my teaching. From a "whole person" perspective, my students will not be able to communicate competently or project their personalities through English unless and until they are at least

somewhat knowledgeable in all four areas. If they speak English as it was meant to be read instead of spoken, because their knowledge of English is a reading knowledge, they will very likely fail to communicate what they want to say and more important, how they want to say it. On the other hand, if they read English with only a speaking knowledge background, a great body of writing will be out of their reach and they will be unable to express themselves in suitable written style. In either case, they will not have penetrated beyond the surface of English nor will they be able to project their personalities through English.

The Use of Themes in the ESL Classroom

The activities which I will describe in Part IV of this thesis I see as the practical application of the insights and assumptions I have just discussed. These activities are designed to promote feelings of security in and investment on the part of both teacher and students so that their goal of linguistic competence and the goal or goals of communicative competence, increased understanding of American culture and harmonious interpersonal relations among students and between students and teacher have a better chance of being realized.

At the same time, however, I believe that there needs to be a framework in which these activities can be sequentially and chronologically placed so that they make sense as a whole as well as individually to teacher and students, so that teacher and students can fill the very human need they have for an underlying sense of direction, of relevant purpose in what they are doing. This is especially important when dealing with adolescent and adult language learners. As mentioned earlier, they feel uncomfortable and even defensive when they are in the dependent position of learning a language from someone else, who is often a foreigner. No matter how well-intentioned the

activities are that the teacher presents, if they have little connection to each other and do not fit into a unifying whole, their goals will not be attained by the students. Instead, the students probably will experience a feeling of frustration on the affective level which will prevent them from not only attaining these goals but also the feeling of security and a desire to invest, which I consider basic to learning a language.

I believe that broad themes, such as a U.S. presidential election, used in the classroom serve very well the function of a framework for the activities the teacher then plans. The choice of a theme is absolutely crucial, for it must be relevant and/or of interest to both teacher and students. Otherwise, there is no point in using it. If well-chosen, however, a theme will provide teacher and students with a sense of direction because the activities it generates are all interrelated and logically and chronologically sequenced.

Besides providing the necessary framework for activities, perhaps its most important purpose, a broad theme has other purposes as well. It provides a tangible record of students' progress in both tackling the theme itself and the language they are learning. At any one point, students can look back and see what they have covered and look ahead and see, at least in regard to the theme, how much more of it remains. They would, hopefully, gain from this a positive sense of accomplishment, hence, of self-esteem and security. A broad theme also allows teacher and students a great deal of freedom because they can choose, to a large extent, how many facets of the theme they want to explore and at what level. The fact that the theme is relevant and/or of interest to begin with and that it does allow this freedom thus takes into account the importance of teacher and student investment. Because it is multifaceted, a broad theme can provide a natural excuse, if

one is needed, for small group work, based on common interests. Activities to promote healthy interpersonal relations through the use of small groups do not, therefore, have to be "artificially" introduced. A broad theme can provide students through its activities with a means for increasing their understanding of the target culture on several levels and for enhancing their communicative competence, if the theme is chosen with the view in mind of relating it to or putting it in the context of the target culture. There is no substitute for the experience of learning a language while in the target culture, but attempts still have to be made to make the target language and culture come alive on the affective as well as cognitive level. If this can successfully be done with Latin, the language of a culture students will never experience living in and therefore, may find hard to relate to, it can certainly be done with English, the native language of several contemporary cultures in which students may one day be living and which, ostensibly, they will find more relevant.

Lastly, because of its scope, a broad theme should be able to provide ample opportunity for activities in the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing and for using a wide variety of techniques.

Planning a Vacation in the U.S. as My Choice for a Specific Theme

Planning a vacation in the U.S. illustrates in more concrete form the purposes to which a broad theme can be put, as outlined above, in the ESL classroom. I chose it, first of all, because planning a vacation is of great interest to me and I am assuming of at least some interest to my adult students. Whether or not they have ever taken a vacation, chances are they have dreamed about doing so. Therefore, I can initially expect a large amount of teacher investment and at least some student investment. There are many ways my students and I could explore this theme, depending on our

personalities. I will be describing in Part III one possible approach. Being free to choose a direction in which to go will, I hope, further increase student investment, which, as I have previously stated, I see as crucial to learning another language.

Planning a vacation in the U.S. certainly provides a framework for activities I can design that will promote linguistic competence and other goals. The activities for this theme are ultimately parts of larger units, "steps," which because of their logical, chronological sequence, definitely provide a sense of direction. Too, students at any one point can look back at the steps they have covered and forward to those yet to be taken and get a sense of their progress. They will find that some of the skills they learned at an earlier step will be used again at a later one. If they learned that skill well the first time, they should feel a sense of accomplishment. If not, they have another chance to learn it. In either case, I would hope that their feelings of self-esteem and security are positively reinforced.

I can see this particular theme being naturally conducive to small group work, one way I would try to promote harmonious interpersonal relations and create a relaxed environment. Students can quite easily form groups in activities concerning where they want to vacation, what kind of camera they are interested in buying or what means of transportation they are going to use. Because I set the theme in the U.S., learning about the culture, which should increase understanding, is inextricable from learning English. My students' communicative competence should also increase (this aside from the fact that I have placed my theoretical class in the U.S. as well). Finally, this theme lends itself to activities using the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Reading travel guides, writing letters to chambers of commerce, speaking to travel and ticket agents,

whether students or real-life agents, and listening to radio advertisements are some examples. This theme also permits the use of all kinds of techniques--scrambled sentences, dialogues and role plays, actual "hands on" experience, such as using the library, to name a few.

III. Planning a Vacation in the U.S.

Introduction

The section that follows is a description of one possible approach to using the theme of planning a vacation in the U.S. in an ESL classroom. As it is arranged, this approach will involve a minimum of approximately 28-30 hours of instruction and a maximum of about 42 hours. A teacher, depending on how often and how long her or his class meets, can present it in 1-hour segments (except in Step 1, "Deciding Where to Go Through Using the Library," in which a 2-hour session in the library will be necessary, and perhaps in some of the other steps if visits to a travel agency and/or camera store are planned). Or the teacher can present it in longer segments at regular intervals. This flexibility makes the theme applicable to an intensive language course, such as that at SIT, or to a program of less intensity but longer duration. It is definitely recommended that, in either case, the theme be introduced early on in the course as students will be writing to chambers of commerce and possibly other sources for information, which it would be better if they received before the entire unit is finished. For the purposes of this presentation, my ESL class meets every day for two hours for a total of 15 weeks. I schedule work on the theme in a natural "rhythm" to allow students time in between sessions to gather information together outside of class.

The theme consists of six steps, which, for the most part, logically and chronologically follow each other. They are Step 1, "Deciding Where to Go Through Using the Library"; Step 2, "Deciding How to Get There"; Step 3, "Deciding on Accomodations"; Step 4, "Buying a Camera"; Step 5, "Planning the Budget"; and Step 6, "Planning the Itinerary." All of them, with the exception of Step 4, "Buying a Camera," I consider absolutely necessary when

planning a vacation. Step 4 may prove essential, however, in planning for a future vacation. Within each step is a series of skills, most of which anyone would need in planning a vacation. While specifically placed in that context, these skills have broader applications as well. Learning about payment by check, cash or credit card is an example.

I realize that certain of the steps and skills in some of the steps could actually be done at the same time. For instance, "How to Buy a Ticket" in Step 2, "Deciding How to Get There," could occur at the same time as "How to Make a Reservation" in Step 3, "Deciding on Accomodations," both taking place at the travel agent's. Nonetheless, as much as I would like to make this theme and its attendant steps, skills and activities (to be discussed in Part IV) as relevant and real to the students in an ESL classroom as possible, some arbitrary decisions for clarity's sake had to be made and probably are unavoidable anyway when teaching a language.

Teacher Sets the Stage for the Steps

Before actually delving into the procedure for planning a vacation, it is essential that the teacher prepare the students for what is to come, not only by providing them with the necessary background information from which to proceed, but also by encouraging feelings of security and a willingness to invest on their part. It is not my intention to describe in depth here what introductory activities can be done and how to do them, since my attention is on actually planning the vacation, but I would like to give general suggestions based on what I would do with my theoretical class.

I start with what my students know--discussing or in some other way getting them to talk about what they like to do on vacation or have done. We then move on to categorizing different types of vacations that they have taken and/or that exist, in order to open their eyes as to what taking a

vacation can mean to different people. This entire session can take as much as an hour, depending on how it is planned.

The next session focuses on a map of the U.S. Many of the students in my class may be unfamiliar with U.S. geography, so I will want us to relate what has been said in the previous session to the map. Two things we can do are to surmise what places students may be interested in or what students may be interested in certain places, based on their preferences for types of vacations; and name the different regions of the U.S. and describe them topographically, geographically and climatically. I also want to make sure that anyone who has visited, not only vacationed, in a particular place in the U.S. shares that with the class. This second session can also take an hour.

The third session I will spend in getting students to think about the steps involved in planning a vacation. We then generate them together. At this point, I tell them (perhaps as if I were springing a surprise on them, as indeed I might be!) that they will be planning a vacation in the U.S. over the next several weeks but that there are certain conditions they must keep in mind. A teacher can set any conditions she or he wants to and thus make it harder or easier for the students to devise a plan. For the purposes of this exercise, I am setting the following conditions: 1) Students must pick a place they have not been to, not even visited, 2) They must stay in a hotel or motel, 3) The length of the vacation is two weeks, 4) It is to be taken in June, 5) It is a vacation for two, 6) \$2,500 is available to be spent, and 7) Students will need to buy a camera. This third and final session before entering the next phase can take an hour, again depending on how it is planned. I do not feel strongly about whether these first three sessions should be taught separately or in one of several combinations. For

me and for other ESL teachers who have classes for more than two hours at a time, there can be a choice. For teachers who have 1-hour classes, there is no choice.

Steps in Planning a Vacation and Skills Within Those Steps

1. Deciding Where to Go Through Using the Library

Introduction

Here, again, I think it is important for the teacher to precede each step with a session designed to provide the students with necessary information and/or considerations. By working from what students may already know, the teacher can hopefully enhance their feelings of security and desire to invest as well. It is not my intention in these "introduction" sections to describe in detail activities that the teacher can do within them but rather briefly suggest areas that should or could be presented.

I have made an arbitrary decision in Step 1 to have my students use the library, instead of going to the travel agency or some other source of information because I have a broader application in mind. Many non-native English speakers in the U.S., of which my theoretical class is composed, are often unaware of the existence of libraries, in this instance, public libraries. Even if they are aware, they are often uninformed about all the services libraries provide. (This is also true of natives!) I would like to see my students become "hooked" on libraries as a result of this step, aware of the books libraries provide, through hunting for travel material, and of at least one other service, the reference service, by asking the reference librarian for the addresses of chambers of commerce in order to write to them for information.

In this introductory session, which takes about an hour of class time and which I do in isolation, I discuss with my students the purposes and

types of libraries in general and in the U.S. Students mention their experiences with libraries, if any. We then focus on the public library in the U.S., specifically the local library in the town we are in, discussing its layout and the duties of people who work there, especially reference librarians and circulation desk people. Together, we list the skills necessary to complete this first step. Vocabulary is provided as needed throughout the session.

Skills

- 1) How to ask for help in (using the card catalog, finding a book, obtaining addresses of organizations, etc.)
- 2) Learning pertinent parts of a catalog card and the different types of cards.
- 3) How to look up subject headings in the card catalog, specifically travel-related headings.
- 4) How to find the actual material--locating the travel section and then the book(s).
- 5) How to get a library card.
- 6) How to check out a book.
- 7) How to write a business letter, specifically to chambers of commerce.

Skills 1 and 2 are done in the classroom. We will be specifically asking the reference librarian for addresses of chambers of commerce at the library, but it is important for my students to realize that at any point while in the library, they should feel free to ask library staff for help. Not only should this lessen their intimidation, but it should also make them aware that libraries and library staff are public-service oriented.

While I will teach Skills 1 and 2 together in 1-2 hours, depending on how familiar my students already are with using libraries, Skills 3-6 will all take place at one time in the local public library and I will need at least two hours for them all. (I will probably have to make special arrange-

ments if my students can only afford a 2-hour block when our class usually meets). I will want my students to meet at least some of the staff, especially a reference librarian, and if the latter, through previous consultation, is willing and, in my opinion, is capable of presenting the material clearly, I will have him or her go through these skills with my students. As D. A. Wilkins points out, language students need to be exposed to hearing the language "as it is produced by native speakers for native speakers"⁴ (emphasis his). In this case, not only will they be getting exposure to another native speaker, but the librarian's presentation will not differ markedly from what it would be for adult Americans unfamiliar with the library. The workings of a library are mysterious to all initiates, whatever their native language!

Back to the classroom, armed with the addresses of chambers of commerce, we learn how to write a business letter in a 1-hour session the next day of class. Students make up their minds as to where they want to go anywhere between the time they were first given the assignment to plan a vacation and now.

Feedback Session

Before moving on to the next step, I recommend that the teacher have a 1- to 2-hour feedback session to round out the step just completed. This session can be based on a homework assignment discussed in class or something done only in class, but it should allow students to show what they have learned, in written and/or oral form, and let the teacher know what the students have learned. It can be a time for clarification of points, whether

⁴D. A. Wilkins, Notional Syllabuses: a Taxonomy and Its Relevance to Foreign Language Curriculum Development (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 79.

technical or broad in scope, and should indicate to the teacher whether the pacing of material needs to be adjusted. It can be cumulative, including previous material not in the immediate step. Teacher and students temporarily step out of actually planning a vacation to look at what they are doing from a loftier plane. They also get a chance to "touch base" with the entire class, if they have been working in small groups prior to this session.

For this first feedback session, I can ask my students to write up as a homework assignment, in time for me to review them before the session, any questions and/or suggestions they have about the previous classes, whether they deal with concepts, definitions of words, comments about the pace with which the material was presented or something else. I can then plan the feedback session based on their concerns. In this way, I start from where my students are at. If I find that there is a wide dichotomy between their concerns and what I think should be their concerns, then I know I must reexamine my teaching and the goals of the unit.

I can continue to do this for each feedback session with some changes as an atmosphere of mutual trust grows. I can make the written assignment optionally anonymous at first, if I feel that that will be less threatening. For later sessions, I can ask students just to think about, not write down, any questions and/or comments. I, as the teacher, have to be ready for anything at this later stage, but it might make for more spontaneity and interest on the students' part.

Something else I can do, instead or in addition, is to design an activity, such as a discussion, which will enable students to apply what I think they should have learned to a new situation, not only extending their understanding of English but developing further such things as their analytical and consumer skills and their understanding of American culture as well. In

this first feedback session, we can see how the library and other resources can help us find information on another topic of interest chosen by the students. We can discuss such things as the importance of currency of material as it pertains to the particular topic and the wealth of unexpected resources, including people, available on the subject. In so doing, I hope we will have delved into the nature of research itself.

2. Deciding How to Get There

Introduction

In our next session, lasting about one hour, my students and I discuss different means of transportation and things to consider--mainly, time, comfort and expense--when making a final choice. We discuss sources of information for prices of airplane flights, bus and train trips and car rentals. I ask my students over the next two days to cut out advertisements, relevant to where they want to go, from newspapers and magazines and listen to radio commercials, all for bargain transportation prices. Together, we list the skills necessary to complete Step 2. Vocabulary is introduced throughout as needed.

Skills

- 1) How to use the Yellow Pages, specifically for lists of airlines, bus companies, travel agents, etc.
- 2) How to request information over the phone, specifically from travel/ticket agents and/or car rental agents regarding prices.
- 3) How to comparison shop via information gathered from Skill 2, newspapers, magazines and radio.
- 4) How to pay by check, cash or credit card.
- 5) How to buy a (plane/train/bus) ticket.
- 6) How to rent a car.

Skills 1 and 2 we cover in a session that will last most, if not all, of my 2-hour allotment. Skill 3 may concern only some of my students at

this point, since there may be no choice involved either in the means of transportation or between competing companies within a certain type for the other students. However, I consider it an important skill and have to include all of my students in some way. It is during this 1-hour session that the advertisements they have been collecting and the radio commercials they have been listening to are made use of in some activity. Students make their choice of means of transportation by this point. The next 1-hour session is devoted to Skill 4, "How to pay by check, cash or credit card."

Skills 5 and 6, of which 6 may be optional if no one plans to rent a car, can be done in the next class, taking up about one hour. They follow the affirmative statement formula for asking for help (I would like....) covered in Step 1. (See Step 1, Activity 1, Section F, #2, p. 32-33)

Feedback Session (1-2 hours)

Besides or instead of asking students for questions and/or suggestions, I can, in this second feedback session, ask students either to write beforehand or be prepared orally to discuss in class the transportation system in their own country(ies), the role of travel agents and how these two factors and any others might affect how they would go about deciding on transportation for a vacation. The situation might be very different in countries which are politically and/or topographically distinct from the U.S.

3. Deciding on Accomodations

Introduction

My students and I discuss the factors involved in selecting a place to stay--price and what that includes, location, quality--and what sources of information exist for both lists of hotels/motels and ratings of accomodations. I ask them over the next two (or three) days to cut out hotel/motel advertisements, relevant to where they want to go, from newspapers and maga-

zines. As radio commercials are less likely to advertise accommodations, I do not ask students to listen for them. Together, we list the skills necessary to complete Step 3. Vocabulary is provided throughout as needed. Since Skill 1 (below) has already been covered in Step 2, albeit for another topic, I will either omit it or combine it with this Introduction, all of which will take about an hour. Without Skill 1, the Introduction will take less time.

Skills

- 1) How to use the Yellow Pages, specifically for a list of hotels/motels.
- 2) How to ask for recommendations, specifically from a travel agent, over the phone or in person.
- 3) How to comparison shop via information gathered from travel guides from the library, Skill 2, newspapers and magazines.
- 4) How to make reservations: by phone direct to the hotel/motel, in person through the travel agent and by writing a letter to the hotel/motel.

Skill 2 I see in one or two parts. The first part consists of an activity or activities that introduce the vocabulary and grammar necessary and give students practice in actually asking for recommendations. This is a 1-hour session and I may or may not add it on to the Introduction. I can stop here. However, I can also take my class to a travel agency the next day, if the size of my class is manageable and if I can line up beforehand some willing and able travel agent(s), and have my students put pertinent questions to the travel agent(s). At the same time, they can pick up brochures and other information of interest. I am devoting the entire 2-hour class period for this trip.

Skill 3 should reinforce certain principles which came out in the "comparison shopping" skill of the previous step. This time every student should be involved. If none of my students had chosen a travel guide when

we were at the library (which seems unlikely), I would make certain we have some to look at for this skill. Students, at this point, choose where they want to stay.

Skill 4 follows immediately after Skill 3, together taking about a 1½ to 2-hour session. My students have had experience up to this point in requesting things over the phone and in person, and in writing a business letter, so Skill 4 should present no major problems. I may decide to do only one activity concerning one of the ways to make a reservation for this skill.

Feedback Session (1-2 hours)

In addition to or instead of student-generated questions and/or comments, I can ask students for the third feedback session to be prepared to discuss how they would go about choosing accommodations in their own country(ies) and the role of guides rating accommodations, if they exist. The larger question of the importance of the travel industry in the students' country(ies) can follow.

4. Buying a Camera

Introduction

My students and I discuss types of cameras, costs, and sources of information. They then decide what their price range will be for the type of camera they want. I ask them to cut out camera advertisements from newspapers and magazines and make special mention of Consumer Reports, which I and perhaps some of my students volunteer to check. We list the skills necessary to complete Step 4. All essential (but not too technical, if possible) vocabulary is provided.

Skills

- 1) How to use the Yellow Pages, specifically for a list of camera stores.

- 2) How to request information in person, specifically about cameras from a sales clerk.
- 3) How to comparison shop via Skill 2, newspapers and magazines, particularly Consumer Reports.
- 4) How to buy the camera.

Since Skill 1 should be "old hat" to my students by now, although it still should be mentioned, I will either omit it or combine it with the Introduction, which will be about one hour.

As with Skill 2 in the previous step, I see this Skill 2 as a 1- or 2-part presentation. I can have one session with an activity or activities that introduce vocabulary and grammar and give students practice in asking questions from a sales clerk. I will, in this case, either add it on to the introductory session or have it by itself. Or I can make it into two parts with the next class at a camera store or camera department of a department store, if I have been able to line up willing and able salespersons to answer students' questions. I am using up my 2-hour class time to do this.

Skill 3 should involve everyone unless some of my students already knew prior to this exercise what camera they would like to buy. Again, they should be familiar with the principles involved in comparison shopping, having done similar exercises twice before.

Skill 4 is largely based on previous skills--requesting things beginning with affirmative statements, in this case, something such as, "I would like to buy...", and how to pay by check, cash or credit card. We can also discuss paying by installments in this session. I plan on combining Skills 3 and 4 into one session, using as much of my two hours as is necessary.

Feedback Session (1-2 hours)

For this fourth feedback session, I can, in addition to or instead of discussing students' concerns, ask students to think about how they would (or did) go about buying a camera in their own country(ies) and whether and/or how they would go about it differently, in light of what we did in Step 4. I am interested, as in the third feedback session, to know what sources, if any, exist in their country(ies) to rate items, such as cameras. I think it appropriate here to discuss consumerism in general and as it exists in the U.S. and in their country(ies).

5. Planning the Budget

Introduction

My students and I discuss the expenses involved in planning a vacation budget--transportation, entertainment, meals, souvenirs, accommodations, necessary purchases before and during the vacation, and unexpected ones during the vacation. We also discuss what will be brought in order to see what needs to be bought. We list the skills necessary to complete Step 5. Vocabulary is provided as needed throughout the session. This Introduction will be done by itself, taking about an hour.

Skills

- 1) How to estimate expenses.
- 2) How to make an inventory of things to be brought and things to be purchased, based on what extra money is available.
- 3) How to comparison shop for items that need to be bought, using skills learned in Step 4.
- 4) How to buy traveler's checks.

Skills 1 and 2 I will present in one session, consuming at least 1½ hours of my 2-hour class. Skill 3 may be optional, depending on whether any of my students needs or wants to buy any major items, such as luggage or clothing, for their vacation. If there is at least one student who does,

I will plan something either for one hour in class or as homework and possibly a follow-up session in class. In any event, I will devote some time, either with Skills 1 and 2 or Skill 3, in talking about suitable attire for my students' vacations. Skill 4 I plan on being a 1-hour session.

Feedback Session (1-2 hours)

Instead of or in addition to asking students in this fifth feedback session for questions and/or comments, I can focus on using money wisely (which relates to the discussion on consumerism in the fourth feedback session), the importance of budgets and the disadvantages as well as advantages of paying by check, credit card or installments.

6. Planning the Itinerary

Introduction

My students and I discuss what is involved in planning an itinerary-- both getting there (especially if they are driving) and what they will be doing once they arrive. We discuss where to get maps, both road and street, and the function of hotel/motel desks and other sources of information for things to do. We list the steps necessary to complete Step 6. Vocabulary is provided throughout as needed. I am allotting about one hour for this Introduction.

Skills

- 1) How to read a map, both street and road.
- 2) How to calculate distance in U.S. and metric measurements.
- 3) How to read bus and train schedules.
- 4) How to plan activities by the day/by the week.

Skills 1 and 2 will be done together in a session taking up as much of my 2-hour class as is necessary. Skill 3 is a 1-hour session and Skill 4 will be presented on the following day as a 1-hour session with perhaps a

homework assignment attached.

Feedback Session (Up to 2 hours)

The last feedback session should leave me and my students with a sense of closure on several levels. It is a time to tie up loose ends of a grammatical and informational nature as well as a time to look, from the vantage point of completion, at the entire fabric of the preceding weeks, seeing the threads of culture, both U.S. and my students' own, and the application of the skills they have learned to the "real world." I will certainly want to have questions and suggestions from my students for this session and I think a written homework assignment, in which my students discuss what they felt they have learned, if anything, and critique the unit, using guidelines I suggest, will greatly aid the discussion. I may or may not want to see the assignment before this session. Depending on the degree of security felt by my students in the classroom, I may decide that the assignment can be anonymous. I think that this session should be less structured by me to allow for spontaneity and last-minute questions and comments.

IV. Twenty Four Representative Activities

Introduction

The activities that follow are meant to be a representative sampling of activities that could be done for all of the skills outlined in Part III in that they deal with: 1) people and materials; 2) communication over the phone, in person and by letter; 3) speaking, listening, reading and writing; 4) a variety of techniques; and 5) being inside and outside the classroom.

I hope that other ESL teachers will find these activities useful. While they are meant to be cumulative, later ones building on skills developed in the earlier activities, they can also be used in isolation. I have tried to design one easier and one more difficult activity, in that order, for each of the twelve skills I have chosen, so that other ESL teachers can use an activity which more nearly coincides with the level of their actual classes. I have also decided to write the activities that follow in the third person (although it is definitely me doing the activities with my theoretical class), so that they read better should other ESL teachers want to use them for future reference.

Two activities I based on an activity described in An English Grammar for Teachers of English as a Second or Foreign Language (pre-publication version) by Marianne Celce-Murcia and Diane Larsen-Freeman and A Conversation Book: English in Everyday Life, Book Two by Tina Kasloff Carver and Sandra Douglas Fotinos. While they are duly acknowledged and fully cited where they appear in the text, I would also like to mention them here. The rest of the activities are my own creations although they certainly have been influenced by other, unfortunately obscured, sources.

Step 1. Deciding Where to Go Through Using the Library

Activity 1

A. Skill

How to ask for help (in using the card catalog, finding a book, obtaining addresses of organizations, etc.).

B. Description of Activity

Students write dialogues in groups of three and present them to the class. Dialogues are based on an exchange with a reference librarian concerning the use of the card catalog.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to ask for help in using the card catalog.
2. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
3. Improve students' communicative competence.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher presents necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher divides students or students divide themselves into groups of three.
3. Teacher distributes copy of the situation to each group.
4. Groups discuss the situation and write a dialogue. Teacher acts as resource person.
5. Groups present dialogues to class.
6. Teacher facilitates discussion based on the situation and/or dialogues.

Situation

"This is the first time you have ever been in the (name of local public library). You want to learn how to use the card catalog, so you ask the reference librarian to help you. The librarian is very glad to do so. However, when you are at the card catalog, the librarian begins to talk too fast and use library terminology, or jargon, that you don't know. What can you do? What do you do?"

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

card catalog, reference librarian, excuse me, pardon me, I'm sorry to (disturb/bother) you, but..., dialogue, jargon, terminology; affirmative answers to a request for help: yes, sure, certainly, surely, I sure can, I certainly can, I sure will, I certainly will, gladly, with pleasure

F. Grammar

Making polite oral requests by:

1. question

will you/would you/can you/could you/would you be able to/
is it possible for you to/do you think you could

On an informal-formal continuum, these expressions (not meant to be exhaustive) might look like this:

<u>Informal</u>							<u>Formal</u>
/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
can you	will you	could you	would you	would you	do you think	is it possi-	ble for you to
				be able to	you could		

2. affirmative statement followed by the question

I'm doing.../I need.../I'd like.../I would like.../I want...

On an informal-formal continuum, these expressions (again not meant to be exhaustive) might look like this:

<u>Informal</u>					<u>Formal</u>
/	/	/	/	/	/
I want	I need	I'm doing	I'd like	I would like	

3. use of openers with either of the first two

excuse me/I'm sorry to (disturb/bother) you, but.../pardon me

The informal-formal continuum might look like this:

<u>Informal</u>				<u>Formal</u>
/	/	/	/	/
excuse me	pardon me	I'm sorry to bother	I'm sorry to disturb you,	but
		you, but	but	

When combined with any of the expressions in 1 or 2, these openers will change those expressions' formality accordingly.

G. Comments

While the teacher acts as a resource person among the groups of students, she or he should bring to the class's attention vocabulary and any other points that are raised within individual groups which would be useful to all the students.

In addition to the skill, Activity 1 is designed to promote, through speaking, listening, reading and writing, the goals of: 1) healthy interpersonal relations, 2) communicative competence, and 3) an increased understanding of American culture. It tries to do #1 in two ways--by having students work in small groups, getting to know each other better, and by getting students to listen to each other and to the teacher, both during the group discussions, the dialogues and the general discussion. Supposedly, there are only two roles in the situation. It can, however, be an opportunity in sharing because a third part can be created or one student can volunteer to write or write down the dialogue instead of acting. The second goal is aimed for by having students talking with each other; writing a dialogue reflecting real life, to some degree; and then speaking in a class discussion extemporaneously about something, in a different context perhaps, that they have faced.

In other words, both discussions per se and the situation are things they are likely to experience outside the classroom. The grammar lesson preceding this activity will have alerted students, too, to the appropriateness or inappropriateness of different verb forms and phrases in English in various situations involving a request for help.

The third goal is quite subtle, but it is hoped that the teacher can, in some way, make the students realize that most Americans would ask the librarian to slow down and use simpler vocabulary because using the card catalog is something they want to get out of the interaction, i.e., Americans are a practical people. If the teacher can do this by asking students during the discussion what they think an American would do and why, so much the better.

Activity 2

A. Skill

How to ask for help (in using the card catalog, finding a book, obtaining addresses of organizations, etc.).

B. Description of Activity

Students do role plays in groups of three in front of the class. Role plays are based on an exchange with a reference librarian concerning the use of the card catalog.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to ask for help in using the card catalog.
2. Promote harmonious interpersonal relations.
3. Improve students' communicative competence.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher presents necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher divides students or has students divide themselves into groups of three.
3. Teacher reads situation to students twice.
4. Groups discuss situation and prepare a role play. Teacher acts as resource person.
5. Groups present role plays to class.

6. Teacher facilitates discussion based on the situation and/or role plays'.

Situation

"You are using the card catalog in the (name of local public library) for the first time and cannot find the book listed that you are looking for. It's a very popular book, so you are sure that the library must have it. You look for the reference librarian and find her or him at her or his desk writing something. There are piles of books and papers all over the desk and the librarian looks very busy. Instead of disturbing her or him, you ask someone else who works in the library to help you, but that person says to go ask the reference librarian. What can you do? What do you do?"

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

card catalog, reference librarian, role play, excuse me, pardon me, I'm sorry to (disturb/bother) you, but...

F. Grammar

Making polite oral requests (See Activity 1, Section F, pp. 32-33)

G. Comments

While the teacher acts as a resource person among the groups of students, she or he should bring to the class's attention any vocabulary or other points that come out of an individual group which would be useful to all of the students.

This activity aims not only at the skill of asking for help, but through speaking and listening, harmonious interpersonal relations, communicative competence and an increased understanding of American culture. It tries to do the first in two ways--by having students work in small groups, thereby getting to know each other better, hopefully increasing mutual understanding and respect; and by getting students to listen to each other and the teacher, both during the group discussions, the role plays and the general discussion. The students also all get a part to play in the role plays, which may increase their sense of belonging.

The second goal is aimed for by having students speaking extemporaneously with each other about something they may have faced or will have faced in their own lives, but perhaps in a different context; by them putting on a role play that, to some degree, mirrors real life; and by giving them more practice expressing their ideas, but to a larger group, in the class discussion. The grammar lesson preceding the actual activity sensitizes the students to the appropriateness of different verb forms and phrases in various situations when requesting help. (The teacher could have gone into intonation and tone of voice, too, depending on how much she or he felt the students could handle at this time).

The third goal is more subtle, but it is hoped that the teacher can, in some way, get the students to realize that American public libraries and staff, in contrast to many of their European (and probably Latin American, African and Asian) counterparts, consider helping the public their first priority, whereas in the libraries of other countries the first priority is usually preserving the books and other material in the library for the research needs of scholars. Any public library patron in the U.S., the students included, should feel free, therefore, to ask the reference librarian or any other staff member for help, no matter how busy she or he may be.

Activity 3

A. Skill

How to write a business letter, specifically to chambers of commerce.

B. Description of Activity

Students in groups of four unscramble two business letters and write the answers on the board.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate knowledge of business letter format, wording and punctuation.
2. Encourage harmonious interpersonal relations.
3. Improve students' communicative competence.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher presents necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher presents/elicits format of a business letter.
3. Teacher divides students or asks students to divide up into groups of four.
4. Teacher distributes two identical scrambled business letters to every group.
5. Groups unscramble letters. Teacher acts as resource person.
6. Groups write answers on board.
7. Teacher reviews each group's answers with class.
8. Teacher facilitates discussion based on business letters.

The letters, blocked the way they would be cut out:

#1

130 New York Avenue
Little Falls, Minnesota 56345

February 6, 1981

Washington Convention Center
2113 Ohio Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20010

Dear Sir / Madam :

I am planning a vacation to Washington, D.C. in June and would appreciate it if you would send me any information you have on things to do and places to see *there.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours ,

Mary E . Smith

*"Things to do" can be interchanged with "places to see."

#2

1479 Lake Shore Drive
Los Angeles , California 90036

January 28 , 1981

District of Columbia Tourist Bureau
1423 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington , D . C . 20016

Dear Sir / Madam :

I am going to Washington , D . C . , for my June vacation . I
read that you offer some free brochures on things to do and places to
visit in Washington . I would appreciate it if you would send me copies
of them and any other information you have .

Thank you very much .

Yours truly ,

Robert L . Gardiner

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

address, date, addressee, greeting/salutation, sir, madam, slash,
indent, to skip (a line/space), paragraph, punctuation, comma,
period, colon, body (of a letter), closing, signature, return ad-
dress, envelope, stamp, abbreviation, zip code, to appreciate,
sincerely (yours), yours truly

F. Grammar (which can be presented over a period of several days)

1. Polite written request form

I would (appreciate)--used with "if" clause--if you would

2. Count vs. mass nouns

3. "Some" vs. "any (other)"
4. Punctuation in a business letter

G. Comments

As a resource person, the teacher should bring to the class's attention items that come up within the individual groups which would be useful for everyone to know.

While one student from each group is writing the answers on the board, the other students can begin a letter to one of the chambers of commerce, whose address they got from the reference librarian, asking for information on their vacation spot. They can finish the letter for homework. Something else the teacher can do, instead, is supply each group with brown paper and magic markers. Each group can write the unscrambled letters on the paper while still together and then tape the paper to the wall. In this way, students' interest is less liable to wane.

When the teacher goes over each group's answers on the board or on the brown paper, she or he should ask the students whether something is correct or not--always if there is something wrong but also sometimes even if something is correct, in order to make sure students are certain about the rules.

The two major goals of this activity are encouraging, through speaking, writing, reading and listening, harmonious interpersonal relationships and communicative competence, although there also will be something learned about American culture. The activity calls for groups of four students, as opposed to the previous three, which will create a different dimension for the students to deal with. They also have a choice, in doing the activity, of splitting the work in half or all

working on one letter at a time. What they decide may be an indication to the teacher of whether efficiency or having everyone share equally was uppermost in the minds of the students in each group. Whoever volunteers or is asked by the others to write the answers on the board or paper is acknowledging that she or he has or is acknowledged as having a readable handwriting, one more bit of information about that student which makes her or him less strange to the others. The nature of the activity itself encourages cooperation within each group, especially as the results will be made publicly known. During the discussion, students may reveal the degree of security they feel and their respect for others, including the teacher, by their participation and attention.

The second goal is aimed for by having an activity based on life outside the classroom. People, at one point in their lives at least, have to write a business letter and some people write them every day. Such letters have a certain format and style which must be learned. Students also get practice in communicative competence during the class discussion, listening to and using language and tone of voice appropriate in English to a discussion situation of a certain degree of formality.

Concerning the third goal, the teacher may want to make mention of the U.S. system of zip codes, as students are liable to mix these up in their letters, and of their importance in speeding up mail delivery. This can lead, depending on the teacher, the students and time, into a discussion of either mailing codes in the students' country(ies) or of the U.S. Postal Service, pros and cons. The teacher can also generate a discussion on business letters, asking whether people in the students' country(ies) are likely to write them and if so, how often, and what

that might indicate about the role of consumers, for example.

Activity 4

A. Skill

How to write a business letter, specifically to chambers of commerce.

B. Description of Activity

Students in groups of no more than four compose a business letter to a chamber of commerce and write the letter on the board.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to write a business letter.
2. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
3. Improve students' communicative competence.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher presents necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher presents/elicits format of a business letter.
3. Students form groups of no more than four, based on where they plan to go on vacation.
4. Students compose a business letter to one of the chambers of commerce in their vacation area, whose address they got from the reference librarian during the library class visit. Teacher acts as resource person.
5. One student from each group writes group's letter on the board.
6. Teacher reviews each group's letter with class.
7. Students write for homework at least one letter to another chamber of commerce.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

address, date, addressee, greeting/salutation, sir, madam, slash, indent, paragraph, to skip (a line/space), punctuation, comma, period, colon, body (of a letter), closing, signature, return address, envelope, stamp, abbreviation, zip code, to appreciate, sincerely (yours), yours truly

F. Grammar (which can be presented over a period of several days)

1. Polite written request form

I would (appreciate)--used with "if" clause--if you would

2. Punctuation in a business letter

G. Comments

The teacher can distribute brown paper and magic markers to each group and have them write the finished letter on the paper at their seats instead of on the board and then tape the letter on the wall. This variation may keep students' interest better because whoever writes the letter is in their midst.

As a resource person, the teacher should inform the class of important items coming out of the individual groups.

When the teacher goes over each letter with the class, she or he should ask the students whether something is correct or not--always if there is something incorrect but also sometimes even if something is correct, in order to make sure students are certain about the rules.

Students should have the option in the homework assignment of showing the letter to the teacher for possible correction or not before mailing it.

Encouraging healthy interpersonal relations is one of two major goals of this activity. The other is increasing communicative competence. Both are aimed for through speaking, listening, writing and reading.

By working together in common interest groups, students continue to find out more about each other. Common interests are less threatening openers than other topics. The students in each group are also encouraged to cooperate by the nature of the activity because their efforts will be publicly displayed. The student who writes the group letter on

the board or on brown paper is recognized as or acknowledges having a legible handwriting, one more piece of information made known about that student, which makes her or him thereby more familiar. By allowing the students to mail their letters sight unseen, the teacher is showing that she or he not only trusts that they will do the homework exercise, but that they can be the judge of the correctness of their English.

Communicative competence is enhanced because the students get to try out different phrases and verb forms for the way they sound in English, i.e., their appropriateness, in a formal written situation. In writing the letter itself, they are practicing something they, no doubt, will have to do at some other point while living in the U.S. and they also are getting speaking practice in English in problem solving of a sort.

The teacher may want a follow-up session when the responses to the students' letters have come in, just to see how much the letters vary from each other in formality, phrasing and other things. It may be directly attributable to regional influence and therefore, make a good topic for a cultural discussion.

Step 2: Deciding How to Get There

Activity 5

A. Skill

How to comparison shop from newspaper and magazine advertisements.

B. Description of Activity

Three or four groups of students, assigned to different means of transportation, design full-page advertisements for them, all to the same destination. A last group of students, acting as vacationers, considers the ads, decides on one of the means of trans-

portation and tells the class why.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate awareness of factors to take into account when comparison shopping for a means of transportation.
2. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
3. Improve students' communicative competence.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher, during class before, asks students to bring in ads they have been collecting.
2. Teacher, in this class, presents necessary vocabulary and grammar.
3. Teacher divides students or asks students to divide up into groups of about three. (There should be four or five groups all together).
4. Teacher asks for or picks one group (which must have an odd number) to be vacationers.
5. Teacher assigns other groups to bus, train, plane or rented car, all going to the same destination, and gives groups the amount of time each means takes to get there, the price of a round trip by each method, and scissors, paste and large sheets of paper on which to make the ads.
6. Students have about 20 minutes to design full-page newspaper advertisements, using pictures and printing from ads they and the teacher have been collecting, and/or any original artwork they care to draw.
7. The vacationers, who are told they are taking a 3-week vacation together, that money is not a major consideration and that there must be a majority, though not necessarily a unanimous, decision on one method of transportation, discuss among themselves meanwhile the pros and cons of each means of transportation, based on their own experience.
8. Teacher circulates among all groups as resource person during this period.
9. When time is up, vacationers get about 10 minutes to study the ads and decide which way they will go and why. Teacher and rest of class discuss the ads in the meantime.
10. Vacationers report back with their majority decision and minor-

ity view, if there is one, and the reasons for it/them.

11. Teacher facilitates discussion based on the advertisements.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

one-way, round trip, first class, tourist class, excursion, coach, fare, rates, direct, non-stop, standby

F. Grammar (which can be presented over several days)

1. Imperative, including negative and emphatic imperative

2. Comparatives

-er, less (than), more (than), fewer (than), as ___ as, not as ___ as, irregular forms, such as "better"

3. Degree complements

too (much), so (much), enough

4. Superlatives

(the) -est, (the) least, (the) most

5. Literary style of advertisements

use of imperative and contractions; short sentences, sometimes beginning with conjunctions, such as "and" or "or," and sometimes with only subject noun phrases; liberal use of superlatives and, to a lesser extent, of comparatives and degree complements

G. Comments

An example for the advertisements can run along these lines:

the teacher can pick New York City or San Francisco as the destination and assign the highest cost to flying, the lowest to going by bus, with train and car somewhere in between. (It is assumed that the starting point is the same for every means of transportation). The main point is that each method of transportation should be competitive in some way with the others.

While a resource person, the teacher should report to the whole class any important items that come up in the individual groups.

One thing the teacher can discuss with the students while the vacationers are debating is what were the factors they considered, such as the use of attractive-looking people, a certain layout or a particular type of print, in designing their ads. For the class discussion, the teacher can pick up where she or he left off in the first discussion and go on to such topics as advertising and its aims, the American brand of it, how the ads the students designed compare with those they have collected, and American ads compared with similar ads from the students' own country(ies).

Activity 5 attempts to promote, through listening, speaking, reading and writing, the goals of: 1) healthy interpersonal relations, 2) communicative competence, and 3) an increased understanding of American culture. It attempts to do #1 in two ways--by having students work in small groups, getting to know each other better (in a close, tactile way for those designing the ads) and by getting students to listen to each other and the teacher, both in the small groups and during the discussions. Listening, which reveals, in part, the respect students have for each other (and for the teacher) is especially important when the students are designing the ads and when the vacationers are making their decision, because a consensus is necessary in both cases.

The second goal is aimed for by having students talking with each other, some using persuasive tactics in English to have their idea or view adopted, the others hopefully weighing, in English, in their minds or verbally the merits of those ideas or views. Students also get practice speaking extemporaneously about something--advertising--that is an important part of their everyday lives. The grammar lesson(s) will have reinforced their perhaps unconscious awareness of the use of a

particular literary style and its individual elements, while designing an ad, for the majority of students, translates that awareness into tangible form.

The third goal is aimed for in two ways, one obvious, the other more subtle. The obvious way is the discussion dealing with American advertising; the subtle way is practice in group ("committee") work through the small groups and in democracy by doing either a task calling for cooperation or one allowing a minority view.

Activity 6

A. Skill

How to comparison shop from radio commercials

B. Description of Activity

Students answer questions on a handout based on radio commercials they are listening to from a tape. The commercials are for competitive means of transportation, all between the same two points.

C. Goals

1. Improve students' aural comprehension.
2. Have students demonstrate awareness of factors to take into consideration when comparison shopping for a means of transportation.
3. Improve students' communicative competence.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.
5. Encourage healthy interpersonal relations.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher presents necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher distributes handouts containing questions based on radio commercials for different means of transportation that students will be listening to and gives directions.
3. Teacher plays tape of radio commercials. Students write answers to questions after each commercial.

4. Students pair up to compare answers. Teacher acts as resource person.
5. Teacher and class go over handout.
6. Teacher facilitates discussion based on commercials.

Sample Commercials

- 1) "Now fly Air United direct to ____ for only _____. Our wide-bodied planes offer the ultimate in passenger comfort. Flights leave daily from _____. Check the schedule with your travel agent or call us at _____."
- 2) "Don't leave the driving to the other bus! Go with us, Travelways, and save. _____ round trip from _____ to _____, _____ days one-way. Departures every day except Sunday. See your travel agent or stop in for details."
- 3) "Super-saver Amtrain now has _____-day service from _____ to _____ for only _____, _____ round trip. See your travel agent or call _____ today!"

Sample Questions

(The same questions do not have to be asked for each commercial)

What is the name of the company?

What is the price of a round-trip ticket (if the one-way price is given) or vice versa?

What is the means of transportation?

How long does a round trip take (if the figure quoted is for one-way) or vice versa?

Questions at the end can include:

What company offers the least expensive price for a round-trip ticket?

Which means of transportation is the slowest?

Within that means of transportation, which company charges the most?
Which charges the least?

Is X Company's round-trip ticket as expensive as Y Company's?

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

one-way, round trip, first class, tourist class, excursion, coach, fare, rates, direct, non-stop, standby

F. Grammar (which can be presented over several days)

1. Imperative
2. Comparatives
3. Degree complements
4. Superlatives
5. Literary style of advertisements

— See Activity 5, Section F,
p. 45.

G. Comments

The teacher should have clear in her or his mind how much time to give students to read the questions before playing the tape and how much time they should have to answer the questions between commercials and after the tape is over. Ideally, the pauses between commercials should occur on the tape and not by stopping and starting the tape recorder, so that students have as little distraction as possible. The tape should include real commercials as well as made-up ones, totalling perhaps 6-8 in all.

As resource person, the teacher should inform the entire class of any important points which come up within pairs of students.

When the teacher is going over the questions with the class, she or he should pick on different students to answer and, unless the answer is obvious, ask for confirmation from the rest of the class. If there are other answers, the teacher should try to stay in the background as the class resolves the problem.

For the general discussion, the teacher can ask students whether any predisposition they had to airplanes, trains, buses and/or cars as means of travel affected the appeal or lack of appeal to them of the appropriate commercial(s). The teacher and class can get into a broader discussion of advertising, its aims, design, use of psychology, and of American advertising compared with that of the students' own country(ies).

Through aural comprehension, speaking, reading and writing, this exercise aims primarily at communicative competence and an increased awareness of American culture, but it also tries to promote healthy interpersonal relations as well. Concerning the first goal, listening skills are crucial for a radio commercial. The listener has to, at times, make certain decisions, such as buying a product, based on what she or he hears. Speech rhythms are sometimes different, especially if there is a jingle with the commercial, and commercials may have other unusual features, such as puns, nonsense words and short, seemingly incomplete sentences. These are all a part of American advertising style, which can be applied to reading or listening. Therefore, it is important to develop an ear for listening to commercials and to be able to weed out the important from the unimportant. As commercials and, more generally, advertising are a major part of American life, understanding them in order to be able to discriminate among similar products is a necessary skill. Students also get practice in communicative competence in the class discussion, where they use language and tone of voice appropriate in English to a discussion situation of a certain degree of formality.

As for the second goal, through the discussion on advertising, especially when applied to the American scene, and in hearing real-life commercials, the students will hopefully gain insight into advertising's important role in and effect on American life.

By having students pair up with someone of their choice to compare answers before the whole class goes over them, it is hoped that the less secure students will get reassurance either by seeing that their answers agree with their partners' or that if they discover they are wrong, the

partners can point out in a more personal way, perhaps clearer than in the class review, how it happened. When the class reviews the answers and the students find that they may still get something incorrect, they will know that at least one other person did so, too, instead of wondering if they are the only ones to get it wrong. During the discussion, their participation and attention may indicate the degree to which they feel secure and the respect they have for the teacher and their fellow students.

Activity 7

A. Skill

How to pay by check

B. Description of Activity

Students in groups of four generate vocabulary and procedures necessary to open a checking account and write a check.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate understanding of procedures to follow in opening a checking account and writing a check.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher, sometime before this class, asks students if any of them have checking accounts in a local bank or have had a checking account in a U.S. bank.
2. Teacher, in this class, presents grammar.
3. Teacher divides students into groups of four, making sure at least one student with some firsthand experience with U.S. checking accounts is in each group.
4. Groups generate vocabulary and step-by-step procedure necessary to open a checking account. Teacher acts as resource person.

5. Teacher elicits vocabulary and procedure from all groups together and writes them on the board.
6. Students, in groups again, generate vocabulary and step-by-step procedure necessary to write a check. Teacher acts as resource person.
7. Teacher elicits vocabulary and procedure from all groups together and writes them on the board.
8. Teacher facilitates class discussion based on activity.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

checking account: to open/to close an account, checking account, check, checkbook, bank teller, (to) deposit, to withdraw, withdrawal, monthly bank statement, (to) balance, minimum balance, transaction, identification, charge

check: blank check, payee, signature, pay to the order of, pay to the bearer, to write a check, to make out a check, to cash a check, to endorse
gimmick, customer

F. Grammar

Use of imperative in giving directions

G. Comments

This activity is based on the assumption that some, if not all, of the students have had some experience with U.S. checking accounts. Many, if not all, of them have probably had an account in their own country(ies), so the procedures should be somewhat familiar to them.

The teacher, as resource person, should alert the whole class to any important points which come out of individual groups.

An alternative to eliciting one composite list of vocabulary and a procedure for opening a checking account/writing a check is to have the groups write their vocabulary and procedures on brown paper, as they are discussing them. The teacher can then go over each group's results with the entire class. This has the benefit of repetition (without being too repetitive, since there should be no more than four groups and ideally three) and gives students a chance to see different

approaches and perhaps some different vocabulary. The teacher can go over grammatical mistakes at the same time. If the teacher does decide on a composite vocabulary and procedure, one thing she or he can do is draw a picture of a blank check on the board, so the class has a visual representation, and elicit vocabulary from the class, labeling the drawing.

The teacher can facilitate a discussion on how "glamorous" checks and checkbooks have become in the past few years and how they are only two of a wide array of gimmicks U.S. banks use to attract customers. It is helpful to have samples of different styles of checks and checkbooks. Students can discuss what banks are doing in their own country(ies) to attract new accounts.

Through speaking, listening, reading and writing, this activity aims at several major goals. Students have an opportunity to improve their communicative competence both in the small groups and in the discussion at large. In the group, they are using language and tone of voice appropriate in English to a cooperative effort--softened commands, polite requests, perhaps some colloquial phrases, such as "OK, what next?" In the discussion, students get practice using or listening to language and tone of voice appropriate in English to a discussion situation of a certain degree of formality.

Concerning interpersonal relations, students are getting to know each other better in the small groups, especially since the teacher chose their makeup, and they are also, hopefully, strengthening their feeling of security, as evidenced in their participation in both group and class activities. The attention they give to other students and to the teacher is a sign of the respect they have for them. If stu-

dents do use brown paper, the one chosen or who volunteers to write everything is acknowledged or acknowledging that she or he has a legible handwriting, one more thing about that person which becomes familiar. Students who know something about U.S. checking accounts get a chance to "shine" as well as see a little of what it is like to be the one to impart knowledge in the classroom. (This technique is more fully utilized in Activity 13, pp. 73-77). Even students who may feel they know nothing may be surprised at what they can come up with, at least in regard to vocabulary.

As for gaining a greater understanding of American culture, students are examining one element of it--bank advertising gimmicks--in the discussion and may begin to touch on the gimmicks' wider ramifications--advertising and consumerism--though these two subjects will be discussed much more fully in later activities. Students are also learning two very necessary procedures in American culture--how to open a checking account and how to write a check. Though these procedures are probably very similar to those in other countries, no doubt they will have some cultural quirks.

Activity 8

A. Skill

How to pay by credit card

B. Description of Activity

Students in groups of four do three consecutive exercises with class reviews in between. Exercises involve answering written questions based on students' prior knowledge of credit cards, generating polite oral questions and labeling parts of a credit card sales slip.

C. Goals

1. Give students an overview of credit cards, including their

purposes and what is involved in getting one.

2. Have students demonstrate the ability to ask polite questions.
3. Improve students' communicative competence.
4. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
5. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher, prior to this class, asks students if any of them have credit cards, especially ones they have gotten since living in the U.S., or have applied for any since coming to the U.S.
2. Teacher, in this class, presents/reviews necessary vocabulary and grammar.
3. Teacher presents/elicits basic parts of a credit card.
4. Teacher divides class into groups of four, insuring that at least one student who is somewhat familiar with credit cards is in each group.
5. Teacher distributes series of questions to groups for them to answer (see below). Teacher acts as resource person.
6. Class goes over answers.
7. Groups next write down as many ways as they can think of to ask a sales clerk whether a credit card is an acceptable form of payment. Teacher acts as resource person.
8. Teacher lists groups' variations of polite questions on the board.
9. Teacher constructs on board informal-formal continuum of the questions, eliciting answers from students.
10. Teacher distributes to groups dittos of typical credit card sales slip with parts to be labelled.
11. Groups label parts. Teacher acts as resource person.
12. Class reviews parts of sales slip.

Questions

- 1) How many multipurpose credit cards can you name that are used in countries all over the world? (Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Diners Club, Carte Blanche. There may be others.)
What are some of their differences? (The last three charge an annual

fee and the last two are used mainly for dining and hotels, while the first three are more versatile.)

- 2) Where can you get applications for these credit cards? (Banks, hotels, restaurants, stores, their offices)
- 3) Name as many of their purposes as you can think of.
- 4) What other kinds of credit cards are there? (Department store charge cards, gasoline credit cards, to name two)
- 5) If you want to get a credit card, what financial information do you have to include on the application? (Salary, if employed, credit references, bank accounts) Why?

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

credit, credit card, charge card, plastic money, credit risk, account number, valid, to expire, expiration date, line of credit, sales slip/receipt, bill, to retain (a copy of), subtotal
major credit cards: Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Diners Club
 Carte Blanche
abbreviation: Qty. (quantity)

F. Grammar

Asking polite questions (variable)

G. Comments

There may be some students who know something about credit cards, if not in English, in their own language. This activity tries to draw upon that prior knowledge in order to maintain student interest without being threatening.

As a resource person, the teacher should be sure to inform the entire class of important points, especially vocabulary, that come up within the individual groups of students.

It would be very helpful for the teacher to have visual aids, such as brochures and credit card applications, for students to look at. These could be handed out just before Step 6 but after the groups have answered the series of questions. When the teacher goes over the parts of a credit card in Step 3, she or he, to make it clear, can draw a card on

the board or even better, have a large-sized reproduction of a representative one to tape onto the board.

This activity, through reading, writing, speaking and listening, aims at three ultimate goals. Students improve their communicative competence not only doing a conscious exercise (Steps 7-9) in the use of language and tone of voice in English appropriate to a certain situation, but also, perhaps unconsciously, while working in small groups in a cooperative manner, using softened commands, polite questions, etc.

Students continue to get to know each other by working in small groups and in this activity, where they have three tasks to do, they may develop a greater "esprit de corps" by the end than in other activities. Students who know more about credit cards (in English) than the others will get a chance to show that knowledge and if not done in an overbearing way, can enhance their self-esteem. They also get an idea, perhaps, of what it is like to impart knowledge in the classroom. (This aspect is more fully utilized in Activity 13, pp. 73-77). The other students may surprise themselves at what they know, especially vocabulary, and so enhance their self-esteem, too. By the attention the students pay to each other and to the teacher, students show the respect they have for other students and for the teacher.

Students, if they are exposed at all to the media and do any kind of shopping other than in food stores, have, doubtless, seen signs on store doors or ads for various credit cards. Without having an explicit discussion, the teacher can be quite certain that students are aware of the importance of "plastic money" in American life. Having the phrase as a vocabulary item reinforces that awareness. Depending on time, however, or if the teacher wants to extend this class, she or he can facili-

tate a discussion on the use of credit cards in the students' own country(ies). A discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of credit cards can be held later during the feedback session of Step 5, which is basically concerned with using money wisely (see p. 28).

Step 3. Deciding on Accomodations

Activity 9

A. Skill

How to ask for recommendations, specifically from a travel agent, over the phone.

B. Description of Activity

Students work in pairs on a fill-in-the-blanks exercise which they then act out in front of the class. The exercise is a telephone conversation between a person wanting a hotel recommendation and a travel agent.⁵

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to ask for hotel recommendations over the phone.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Promote harmonious interpersonal relations.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher presents/reviews necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher pairs up students or asks them to pair up.
3. Teacher distributes fill-in-the-blanks exercise to each pair.
4. Students discuss and work on the exercise. Teacher acts as resource person.

⁵The idea for this activity is based on an exercise in Tina Kasloff Carver and Sandra Douglas Fotinos, A Conversation Book: English in Everyday Life, Book Two (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977), p. 65.

5. Pairs of students act out telephone conversation in front of the class.
6. Teacher goes over any grammatical, pronunciation and/or intonation problems.
7. Class generates and practices saying variations of questions in telephone conversation.

Telephone Conversation

Travel Agent: Hello. _____ Travel Agency. May I help you?

Person: _____.

Travel Agent: Well, are you interested in a _____ hotel, a _____ hotel, or a _____ hotel?

Person: _____.

Travel Agent: OK. In that case, I would recommend the _____ Hotel, the Hotel _____ and the _____ Inn. The _____ Hotel has a _____ and _____, but no _____. Double rooms are _____ per night. The Hotel _____ doesn't have a _____ either, but it has _____, a _____ and is _____. Doubles range from _____ to _____ a night. The _____ Inn, in my opinion, is the _____ of the three. It has _____, a _____, a _____ and _____, and it also has a _____. Double rooms range from _____ to _____ per night.

Person: _____ the price of a double room at the _____?

Travel Agent: _____ a night. _____ book a reservation for you now?

Person: _____.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

lodging, accommodations, to recommend, recommendation, luxury, deluxe, superior, first class, moderately priced, medium priced, to book a reservation, single (room), twin bed, double (room), suite, double bed, full-size bed, queen-size bed, king-size bed, sauna, (modified) American meal plan, European meal plan, continental breakfast, air conditioning, air conditioned, private bath/shower

F. Grammar

1. Making polite oral requests over the phone by:

- a. question

will you/would you/can you/could you/would you be able to/
is it possible for you

(See Activity 1, Section F, #1, p. 32, for suggested informal-formal scale)

- b. affirmative statement followed by the question

I need.../I want.../I'm going to _____ on vacation and I.../I'd like/I would like

(See Activity 1, Section F, #2, p. 32, for suggested informal-formal scale, substituting "I'm going" for "I'm doing")

2. Mass vs. count nouns, especially with respect to the indefinite article.

"Television," for instance, by itself signifies the service, whereas "a television" refers to the actual appliance. "Continental breakfast" means the same meal every day over a period of time, as in "the price includes continental breakfast," whereas "a continental breakfast" usually refers to that meal on one particular day.

G. Comments

The teacher, while a resource person, should inform the entire class of any essential points that are brought up by individual pairs of students.

To make the telephone conversation more realistic when the students actually present it, the teacher can bring in two toy phones, allowing the vacationer to dial a number and the travel agent to "receive" the call. Carver and Fotinos in the above-mentioned book note that the Bell Telephone Company has a telephone unit, consisting of two telephones and a master control unit, available for classroom use in many areas of the country (p. 188). The teacher may want to check with the local telephone company about it.

The main goal of this activity, which involves reading, writing, speaking and listening, is communicative competence, but promoting harmonious interpersonal relations and increasing students' understanding of American culture are also aimed at.

This activity represents a very common experience in an American's

life, using the telephone. Here, it allows students to visually see some of the words spoken and gives them time to come up with words, expressions and/or sentences that grammatically fit without being stilted. While it reinforces their earlier experience of using the phone in Step 2, Skill 2, students should be improving their ear for appropriate conversation in this type of situation and feel more at ease in using the telephone. They also are made aware that questions (hopefully polite!) can and should be asked if something is not heard or understood (e.g., the person's question about the price of a double room). This is especially crucial in a phone conversation. By generating alternatives to questions in the conversation, students get additional practice in using language and tone of voice appropriate in English to this particular situation.

By working in pairs, especially if the teacher groups students together who do not normally associate with each other, students can continue to get to know each other better. This is a cooperative effort and an acceptable performance before the class is dependent on both of the students. There is not quite the amount of insecurity there would be if the students had to write out the entire dialogue, so hopefully their self-confidence will be boosted. Students also have some degree of creativity in choosing fanciful or more ordinary names for the travel agency and hotels, in choosing prices and the hotels' special features. How carried away they do or do not get could indicate the amount of respect they have for the teacher and for the importance of the activity at hand. Students' attention while listening to two fellow students present their dialogue is another indication of the quality of interpersonal relations.

As for the third goal, the activity, at least in the vocabulary

generated, exposes students to typical features of American hotels/motels and gives them some idea of American standards. No doubt they will mentally compare these standards against those of the hotels/motels in their own country(ies). The teacher, depending on time, may want to discuss this with students.

Activity 10

A. Skill

How to ask for recommendations, specifically from a travel agent, in person

B. Description of Activity

Students in groups of three do role plays among themselves, knowing only their own role as either travel agent or as a pair seeking advice. Role plays are based on an exchange between two people wanting a hotel recommendation and a travel agent.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to ask for hotel recommendations in person.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Promote harmonious interpersonal relations.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher presents/reviews necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher divides class into groups of three and tells students they will be doing a role play.
3. Teacher asks students to decide among themselves who will be the travel agent and who will be the two people going on vacation together.
4. Teacher distributes travel agent's role to travel agents and couple's role to couples. Role descriptions are not to be shown to the other member(s) of the group.
5. Students study parts. Teacher acts as resource person, particularly to travel agents.

6. Students act out role play among themselves. Teacher goes from group to group as observer.
7. Students discuss in their groups what happened. Teacher acts as resource person.
8. Class discusses role play.

Role Play

Couple: You are going to take a vacation in _____ and would like to stay in a first-class hotel. However, when you go to the _____ Travel Agency (which was suggested to you by a friend), you only want some recommendations of hotels. You are not ready to book a reservation yet. The travel agent who waits on you is very pleasant but you feel she or he is trying to "sell" you on the _____ Hotel.

Travel Agent: Every time you have gone to _____ on vacation, you have stayed at the _____ Hotel, a first-class hotel. You are always impressed with the service, the atmosphere, the cleanliness, the food and the price. The hotel's location is great, too. Even though you think two other first-class hotels, the _____ and the _____, are good, you personally feel that the _____ Hotel is the best and that everyone who goes there will feel the same way.

Two people enter the travel agency and you ask if you can help them.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

lodging, accommodations, to recommend, recommendation, luxury, deluxe, superior, first class, moderately priced, medium priced, to book a reservation, single (room), double (room), suite, twin bed, double bed, full-size bed, queen-size bed, king-size bed, sauna, (modified) American meal plan, European meal plan, continental breakfast, air conditioning, air conditioned, private bath/shower

F. Grammar

1. Making polite oral requests by:

a. question

will you/would you/can you/could you/would you be able to/
is it possible for you to/do you think you could

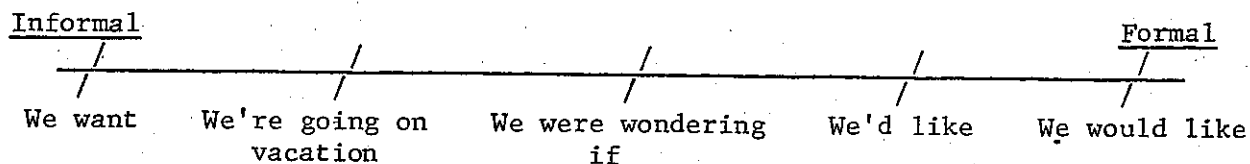
(See Activity 1, Section F, #1, p. 32, for suggested informal-formal scale)

b. affirmative statement followed by the question

We're going on vacation to _____ and.../We would like/

We'd like/we were wondering if/we want

On an informal-formal continuum, these expressions (not meant to be exhaustive) might look like this:



2. Mass vs. count nouns, especially with respect to the indefinite article.

(See Activity 9, Section F, #2, p. 60)

3. Comparatives

-er, less (than), fewer (than), more (than), as ___ as, not as ___ as, irregular forms, such as "better"

4. Degree complements

too (much), so (much), enough

5. Superlatives

(the) -est, (the) least, (the) most

G. Comments

The teacher, in being the one to decide the grouping of students, should try to place one especially self-confident and/or good student in each group. Hopefully, that student will be the travel agent.

When the students are reading their roles and plotting their strategy, the teacher, as resource person, should mention any important points that come up to all the students.

When the students are doing their role plays, the teacher should be listening not only for grammatical, pronunciation and intonation problems, but appropriate tone of voice. The teacher can preface the class discussion with the first three things and then launch the discussion proper with a comment on tones of voice used in the role plays.

During the small group discussions, the teacher can provide some

questions to give the discussions structure, such as, "How important do you think it is for a travel agent to be impartial?"

Through reading, speaking and listening, this activity aims primarily at communicative competence and healthy interpersonal relations, but an increased understanding of American culture is also a goal.

Students are going to be placed in analogous situations, if not the same one as vacationers, where they want to get an idea of the choices available without committing themselves at the time, but may, nevertheless, run up against someone who tries to persuade them to make a choice or choose the thing she or he personally recommends. Aside from what a person actually says, being able to recognize a persuasive tone of voice in English and language appropriate to that tone as opposed to an impartial tone of voice and its language is an important skill. The hope is that students will make whatever decision they make knowing the salesperson or whoever it is was persuasive or impartial, that they were not "duped," something that is all too liable to happen to non-native speakers. During the class and group discussions, students also gain in communicative competence, using and listening to language and tone of voice appropriate in English to a discussion situation of a certain degree of formality.

If the teacher takes care in the way the groups are divided (and also has some luck), she or he may be very successful in getting students to work together who ordinarily may not mix. This role play could become intense, depending on how it is interpreted, but if the students have been developing mutual trust in each other all along, any negative feelings felt during the role play should not carry over. During the small group discussion, the students have a chance to disassociate

themselves from roles they may not have enjoyed playing and look at the experience more objectively. The discussion and the class discussion after it allow students to express themselves and listen as well to what others have to say. They can be a time for students to reveal the degree of security they feel and the respect they have for their fellow students and for the teacher.

In a subtle way, students are learning about American culture. America, throughout its history, has been famous for its "salesmen" (both genders meant here!), whether they be promoting a religion, a political party, a brand of toothpaste or a used car. Being aware of this (and the teacher can choose to explicitly touch on this in the class discussion), students may feel they have some justification for any skepticism they have towards a product or service, whatever it may be. When their skepticism is also based on solid evidence, so much the better. This awareness is related to the discussion of advertising and the American brand of it in Activities 5 and 6. Students also get an idea of a service provided by travel agencies in the U.S. which might not be provided in their own country(ies). They also learn about American hotel standards, primarily from the vocabulary.

Activity 11

A. Skill

How to make reservations by writing a letter to the hotel/motel.

B. Description of Activity

Students write a business letter dictated by the teacher.

C. Goals

1. Have students improve their auditory discrimination and aural grammar skills.

2. Have students demonstrate the ability to write a business letter concerning hotel reservations.
3. Improve students' communicative competence.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher presents new vocabulary and reviews, if necessary, old vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher reviews business letter format.
3. Teacher reads letter through once at a normal pace. Students listen.
4. Teacher reads letter a second time, more slowly. Students write down what they hear.
5. Teacher reads letter a third time at a normal pace. Students check their work.
6. Teacher either collects papers to correct and class goes over letter the next day; or she or he writes letter up on the board, eliciting answers from the students.

The Letter

17 Lake Shore Drive
(Name of town), (State) \ (Zip code)

April 4, 1981

Hotel Astor
Reservations Desk
680 California Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75221

Dear Sir/Madam:

I would like to reserve a double room at \$33.00 a night for June 9-22, 14 days in all, for a total of \$462.00. I am enclosing a check for my room deposit of \$66.00, as requested in your brochure. Please inform me if there is any problem.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

Old: See Activity 3, Section E, p. 38.
New: to enclose

F. Grammar

1. Polite written request form
 - a. I would (like)
 - b. "please" used to soften the imperative
2. Punctuation in a business letter

G. Comments

The teacher can decide not to review the format of a business letter before giving the dictation as a way to see what students have retained from Step 1, Skill 7. However, if this seems too threatening, a quick review is in order.

The teacher should decide before giving the dictation whether or not she or he will repeat a word or expression and make the decision clear in the directions. The teacher should also decide whether all punctuation will be mentioned, only in those instances (mainly with commas) where students might become confused, or not at all.

The advantage of the teacher collecting the papers after the third reading is that she or he can see what the students have done without benefit of correction. The alternative allows students to make corrections and ask questions while the dictation is still fresh in their minds.

In this activity, students test their auditory discrimination, especially with numbers, as well as their aural grammar skills. Students also get the chance to see whether or not they have mastered the format of and grammar appropriate to a business letter, an indication of communicative competence.

An additional exercise the teacher can do is to make either a homework assignment in which students rewrite the letter, using other appro-

priate expressions and/or verb forms, or do it in class.

Activity 12

A. Skill

How to make reservations in person through a travel agent.

B. Description of Activity

Students do role plays in groups of three. Role plays are based on a situation in which two vacationers are at the travel agent's to book a hotel room.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to make hotel reservations in person.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher presents/reviews necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher divides class or asks students to divide up into groups of about three. (There should be no more than five groups and four is preferable).
3. Teacher distributes a copy of the situation to each group.
4. Groups discuss the situation and prepare a role play. Teacher acts as resource person.
5. Groups present role plays to class, which can be taped if they wish.
6. Teacher facilitates a discussion based on the role plays.

Role Play

"You and your husband/wife/friend/ relative/ are at the travel agent's. You wanted to book a double at the Savoy Hotel, a first-class hotel, at \$38.00 a night for seven nights, but the travel agent tells you that there is only a suite left for \$50.00/night. You know that the Savoy is recommended in the Mobil Travel Guide, is in a central location, has a swimming pool and is air-conditioned. It has no restaurant, however, and you always like to have breakfast at your hotel. The only other first-class hotel with double rooms available is the Parkway Motor

Inn, which charges \$43.00/night, but is 20 minutes out of town. It is also recommended in the Mobil Travel Guide, has a swimming pool, air-conditioning and its own restaurant and it offers free bus service to town.

What do you and your husband/wife/friend/relative tell the travel agent?"

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

suite, to recommend, recommendation, first-class, to book a reservation, double (room), air-conditioned, air conditioning

F. Grammar

1. Making polite oral requests by:

a. question

would you be able to/can you/could you/is it possible for you to

(See Activity 1, Section F, #1, p. 32, for suggested informal-formal continuum)

b. affirmative statement followed by the question

We would like to/we'd like to/we want to/we're going on vacation to _____ and

(See Activity 10, Section F, #1b, pp. 63-64, for suggested informal-formal continuum)

2. Mass vs. count nouns, especially with respect to the indefinite article.

(See Activity 9, Section F, #2, p. 60)

3. Logical Connectors⁶

a. concession

although/even though/though

b. addition

also/besides/as well

⁶ Taken from Marianne Celce-Murcia and Diane Larsen-Freeman, An English Grammar for Teachers of English as a Second or Foreign Language (pre-publication version) ([United States]: n.p., 1977), pp. 147-148.

c. contrast

but/however/while/on the other hand/whereas

d. cause and effect/reason and result

so/therefore/because/since

G. Comments

This is perhaps the first time that logical connectors are being explicitly brought to students' attention, even though students have gotten practice in using at least some of them when the class did "comparison shopping" activities in Steps 2 and 3 and other comparison activities, such as in the feedback sessions. Because of their importance, the teacher should plan to spend more than one lesson on them.

The teacher may also decide that it is more effective to discuss logical connectors after the activity. One advantage of taping the role plays is that the teacher can make a transcript of the students' own conversation containing logical connectors, which can serve as the basis for one or more grammar lessons to be given now or spread out over time, as the teacher chooses. The teacher can postpone the feedback session, which is supposed to follow, and extend this session to whatever length necessary. Any tapes made can be played back and work can be done on pronunciation and intonation.

The teacher, while a resource person, should bring to the class's attention any important points which are brought up in individual groups.

Through reading, speaking and listening, communicative competence, harmonious interpersonal relations and an increased understanding of American culture are all goals of this activity.

Not only are students gaining communicative competence through the grammar lesson, but the role play itself represents a not uncommon situation--having to make unexpected choices--to which students will have

to respond in a socially acceptable way. In both small group and class discussions, they are also getting practice speaking extemporaneously in a way suitable for a discussion situation of a certain degree of formality.

Small group work can do a lot to promote harmonious interpersonal relations. In addition, by having the choice of whether or not to have its role play taped, each group is, to some extent, answering the question of how comfortable each member feels with the others and with the rest of the class. While peer pressure may be a factor in how many groups decide to have their role plays taped, the teacher should not overlook the security aspect. In both the group and class discussions, students may show the degree of security they feel as individuals and the respect they have for others, including the teacher, by their participation and attention.

Whether or not students have faced or know of a situation in their own country(ies) similar to the one presented in the role play, they will almost certainly face something on this order while they are living in the U.S. Americans have to be flexible in many instances when first choices are not available because demand is greater than supply and so many things operate on a "first come, first served" basis. In the case of hotel reservations, it demonstrates the need to book a reservation early. Leisure is a major business in the U.S and people take their vacations seriously. The teacher in the general discussion might want to talk with the students about their attitudes towards taking a vacation and how important a role it plays in their countrymen's and countrywomen's lives.

Step 4. Buying a Camera

Activity 13

A. Skill

How to request information in person, specifically about cameras from a sales clerk.

B. Description of Activity

Students simulate situation in a camera store: several students knowledgeable in cameras "set up shop" in different parts of the room and the other students act as their customers.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to request information in person from a camera store salesperson.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.

D. Procedure

Class before:

1. Teacher polls students to see how many are interested in buying which of three types of cameras--instamatic, 35mm, or single lens reflex.
2. Teacher asks for one or two students (depending on size of groups) knowledgeable in one of the three camera types to volunteer to be "sales clerks" for the next class for that camera type, answering questions from a group of "customers."
3. Teacher gives each volunteer several ads with illustrations for different makes of their camera type and asks them to look over the ads before the next class. Students may also bring in a camera that they would like to talk about, as long as it is the same type.
4. Teacher tells "customers" to think about questions they would like to ask the "sales clerk" for their camera type.

This Class:

5. Teacher presents/reviews necessary vocabulary and grammar.
6. Sales clerks set up shop in various parts of the room. Customers group themselves according to what type of camera they are interested in.

7. Teacher assigns each group of customers to a sales clerk.
8. One member of each group is chosen by the others to begin the conversation with the sales clerk by asking for help. After that, everyone is free to ask the salesperson questions. Teacher acts as resource person for all groups.
9. Teacher brings class back together briefly for reviewing grammatical errors and/or eliciting feedback.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

35mm, instamatic, single lens reflex, focus, light meter, flash (cubes/bulbs), shutter (speed), f-stop, carrying case, batteries, automatic, manual, setting (rewind) knob, (cocking/focusing/film speed) lever, lens (cap), depth of field, rangefinder, self-timer, aperture, film counter, (rewind) crank, film speed scale, back lid, take-up spool, sprocket, to load a camera, film cartridge

F. Grammar

1. Making polite oral requests by:

a. question

will you/would you/can you/could you/would you be able to/
is it possible for you to/do you think you could

(See Activity 1, Section F, #1, p. 32, for suggested informal-formal continuum)

b. affirmative statement followed by the question

I want/I'd like/I would like ("We" can be substituted for "I")

(See Activity 1, Section F, #2, p. 32, for suggested informal-formal continuum)

c. use of openers with either of the first two

excuse me/pardon me

"Pardon me" is probably the more formal of the two. When combined with any of the expressions in "a" or "b," these openers change those expressions' formality accordingly.

2. Comparatives

3. Degree Complements

4. Superlatives

5. Questions

See Activity 5, Section F, #2-4, p. 45.

a. affirmative yes/no question

- 1) when auxiliary verb is present, it is fronted and marks the tense

Sally has gone-→Has Sally gone?

- 2) if none is present, but the verb "be" is, "be" gets fronted and carries the tense

Robert is home-→ Is Robert home?

- 3) if neither is present, then "do" is introduced in the initial position and marks the tense

They studied hard-→ Did they study hard?

b. negative yes/no question

- 1) uncontracted "not" appears within the sentence and precedes the remainder of the auxiliary or the verb phrase

He can go--→ Can he not go? She is here--→ Is she not here?
He works every day--→ Does he not work every day?

- 2) contracted "not" appears with the auxiliary verb in sentence initial position

He can go--→ Can't he go? She is here--→ Isn't she here?
He works every day--→ Doesn't he work every day?

See Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman for more detail on "a" and "b," pp. 58-63.

c. wh-question

- 1) focus is on the subject noun phrase or the determiner of the subject noun phrase

She went to the store-→ Who went to the store?
His umbrella is over there-→ Whose umbrella is over there?

- 2) focus is on some element of the verb phrase

She went to the store-→ Where did she go?
His umbrella is over there-→ Where is his umbrella?

See Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman for more detail on "c," pp. 65-70.

G. Comments

Since students by now should have the grammar for polite requests

down fairly well, the grammar lesson should probably emphasize question formation--both yes/no questions and wh-questions. Although students at a high-intermediate level should not have too much trouble with question formation, this lesson (and others, if the teacher thinks necessary) may clear up problems they were never quite sure of the answers to.

If there are not enough volunteers for salespeople, the teacher should have decided beforehand whether to be one or whether to increase the size of the groups of customers, which should ideally not exceed four students.

As the teacher acts as a resource person going from "store" to "store," she or he will have to decide whether to have errors corrected right then by the group or wait until the class gets back together. Another question the teacher may have to resolve is whether or not to interject a comment or question, perhaps posing as a customer, if conversation in any group lags.

As a prelude to a visit to the camera store, this exercise, through speaking and listening, gives students practice in making polite requests and in asking questions in a formal setting--communicative competence. Both skills are important in a society in which there can be a staggering array of choices and the only way to make an informed choice is to ask questions of someone knowledgeable in the pertinent area.

As for interpersonal relations, this activity may not only bring together students who have not worked much with each other before, therefore giving them an opportunity to get to know each other better, but it also gives the sales clerks a chance to "shine" and show a side of themselves perhaps previously hidden. Students will probably feel

very comfortable with each other because the "teacher" is one of them. The sales clerks may also appreciate, to some degree, what it is like to be a teacher-knower in Curran's sense of the term, "sick to teach," anxious to be understood,⁷ just as the teacher is.

In an indirect way, perhaps, students may be increasing their awareness of American culture in that underlying a visit to a camera store in the U.S. is the expectation that the store will have a wide variety of cameras from which to choose and if it does not, there will most likely be another store that will. Americans themselves often lose sight of the fact that there is a choice available in so many areas. This point would certainly be appropriate for the teacher to bring up during the discussion on consumerism in Step 4's feedback session (see p. 27), if she or he does not want to bring it up now.

Activity 14

A. Skill

How to request information in person, specifically about cameras from a sales clerk.

B. Description of Activity

Students spend a 2-hour class in a camera store, asking questions of and being shown cameras by sales clerks.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to request information in person from a camera store salesperson.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Encourage healthy interpersonal relations.

⁷Curran, p. 12.

4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher arranges with camera store owner or manager to bring students in and have two salespeople (more if possible) show students cameras and answer questions.
2. Teacher, the day before, divides class into as many groups as there are salespeople available and by camera type. Teacher informs salespeople which group they will take.
3. Teacher reviews/presents vocabulary and grammar, if necessary, prior to going to store.
4. Students, in store, ask questions of sales clerks. Teacher acts as resource person.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

(See Activity 13, Section E, p. 74)

F. Grammar

(See Activity 13, Section F, pp. 74-75)

G. Comments

Although communicative competence, through speaking and listening, is the major goal in this activity, promoting healthy interpersonal relations and an increased knowledge of American culture are also goals.

The first goal is obvious. Although the situation is somewhat contrived, students are talking to a native speaker, not the teacher, in a natural setting about a real-life concern. Because it is not a one-to-one relationship, they are not getting the amount of practice speaking that they would in such a relationship, but they can learn from other students' questions. They also get some idea of what it is to "share" a sales clerk with another "customer" in the event that they should be waited on in the future by a salesperson who is waiting on several people at once.

This activity can be a measure of both how far students have come

in respecting and listening to each other and to the teacher, and of their self-esteem in that it is hoped everyone will get a chance to ask a question and take the opportunity to do so. It would be a bit of a blow to the teacher and upsetting to some students if several students "hogged" the sales clerks' attention. While the teacher might recognize this as either insecurity or enthusiasm on their part, the less vocal students might not be so understanding. The teacher may be able to reverse such a trend in a diplomatic way and, by all means, should do what she or he can.

As for the third goal, students see the inside of an American camera store, perhaps for the first time. The camera buffs, at least, who were interested in cameras before they came to the U.S., will, doubtless, compare the store with what they knew in their own country(ies). Students have tangible evidence of the wide range of choices available to Americans in at least one area. They may also feel free to ask the sales clerks to repeat or explain something, showing that they absorbed the "moral" in Step 1, Skill 1, that people in public service positions in the U.S. are there to help customers.

Activity 15

A. Skill

How to comparison shop for a camera

B. Description of Activity

Students write essay in class on how and why they decided to "buy" the camera they will bring on their vacation.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate awareness of factors to take into account when comparison shopping for a camera.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.

3. Encourage healthy interpersonal relations.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher, in previous class, tells students to decide for this class what camera they will "buy" for their vacation.
2. Teacher reviews vocabulary and grammar, if necessary, in this class.
3. Teacher distributes directions to students, but also reads them and asks students if they have any questions.
4. Students have about one hour to write a composition (teacher decides length). Topic is how and why students decided to "buy" the camera they are going to bring on their vacation. Directions include some questions they should consider in their essay.
5. Teacher collects essays and reads them in time for next class.

Questions to Consider

- 1) Have you ever had a camera before?
- 2) Why did you choose an (instamatic/35mm/single lens reflex) camera?
- 3) How did you find out about the camera you chose?
- 4) What are the features of your camera that you think distinguish it from and make it better than other cameras of the same type but different brands?

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

Old: See Activity 13, Section E, p. 74.

New: feature, to distinguish, brand

F. Grammar

1. Comparatives

-er, less (than), fewer (than), more (than), as _____ as, not as _____ as, irregular forms, such as "better"

2. Degree Complements

too (much), so (much), enough

3. Superlatives

(the) -est, (the) least, (the) most

G. Comments

In writing the directions, the teacher may want to focus on one particular grammatical point, such as a verb tense, and can word the directions so as to elicit that point in the students' compositions.

The teacher, in the follow-up class, can hand out a ditto of anonymous mistakes of various kinds, but mainly grammatical at this time, and elicit corrections from students.

Although the teacher should be most interested in the essays to trace the students' development of consumer skills--the content of the essay--she or he should also be interested in the students' communicative competence, as it pertains to a particular type of writing, here expository writing--the form of the essay.

Students are expected in this exercise to write in a clear, straightforward and organized way about something they have given some prior thought to. They are also expected to use more formal language than they would if they were speaking. Again, while the emphasis in this activity should be on the content of the essay, students are getting necessary practice in a form of writing they see every day in newspapers and magazines and which they, very likely, may have to do more of outside the class, in the case of such things as research or company reports. In fact, the teacher can use the compositions at a later time when writing is the focus of the lesson.

Healthy interpersonal relations between teacher and students are a concern of this activity. The teacher has a major responsibility towards her or his students in that any comments she or he writes on their papers should not be so numerous or critical that only the students' affective sides are involved, especially if this is their first

important writing exercise in the class. Grievous grammatical errors and awkward wording should not go unnoticed, but this activity makes it possible for the teacher, on a one-to-one basis with all of the students, to keep their self-esteem intact or even enhance it.

This activity also aims at having students increase their understanding of American culture, although it may seem roundabout, because it is an exercise in developing consumer skills. By developing consumer skills, hopefully outside as well as inside the classroom, students will be better able to cope in a society which offers choices for so many goods and services.

Activity 16

A. Skill

How to comparison shop for a camera

B. Description of Activity

Students individually design full-page advertisement for the camera they are going to "buy" for their vacation, comparing it with a competitor, real or imaginary.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate awareness of factors to consider when comparison shopping for a camera.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher tells students the class before to decide for this class what camera they will "buy" for their vacation and to bring in any camera ads they have been collecting.
2. Teacher reviews vocabulary and grammar, if necessary, in this class.
3. Teacher distributes directions to students but also reads them

and asks students if they have any questions. Teacher also distributes scissors, paper and paste.

4. Students have about one hour to design an ad for the camera they will "buy," comparing it with a leading competitor, real or imaginary. Teacher acts as resource person during this time.
5. Students display their ads and have 10-15 minutes to look at the others.
6. Teacher facilitates a discussion based on the ads.

Directions

"You work in the advertising department of the camera company whose camera you are going to buy. Design an ad for that camera in which you compare it with a leading competitor, real or imaginary, and tell in words and/or pictures why your camera is better. Keep in mind the type of Americans who are likely to buy your camera or the competitor's."

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

Old: See Activity 13, Section E, p. 74.

New: competitor, feature, to distinguish

F. Grammar

1. Imperative
2. Comparatives
3. Degree complements
4. Superlatives
5. Literary style of advertisements

— See Activity 5, Section F,
p. 45.

G. Comments

It is a good idea for the teacher to be equipped with camera ads as well for this exercise.

As a resource person, the teacher should bring to the class's attention any important points that are brought up by individual students.

For the general discussion, the teacher and students can discuss what elements, if any, the ads have in common, how they differ, what thinking went in to designing the ads, and compare them to actual camera

ads that the students have cut out. Depending on time, the teacher and students can discuss whether the ads would have been very different, in wording, layout, audience aimed at or mentioning a competitor, for example, if the students had designed it for consumers in their own country(ies). This may, however, be something the teacher can leave for the feedback session at the end of Step 4.

Through reading, writing, speaking and listening, the goals of communicative competence, healthy interpersonal relations and an increased understanding of American culture are all aimed at in this activity.

By "being on the other side of the fence" in designing, rather than being the audience for, an advertisement, students are more fully aware of the importance of literary style (as well as layout) in an ad and how the words and phrases chosen are intimately related to the psychology behind the ad. Students should be becoming more attuned to the tone of an ad from its written style, being able to tell whether that tone is compatible with the product and the target audience.

By displaying their ads, students get to show their creative efforts, which hopefully will increase their self-esteem. At the same time, they see the products of their fellow students' imagination and hopefully will increase their esteem for the other students as well. By this time, the teacher should have been able to create with the students an atmosphere in which the display of original work is not viewed as threatening by any of the students. In the class discussion, students again reveal the respect they have for both other students and the teacher in their attention and by their participation, show the degree of their feeling of security. By participating and/or listening they also increase their communicative competence because the discussion requires language

and tone of voice appropriate in English to that type of situation.

As for the third goal, students continue to learn more about Americans and American advertising by designing an ad. An interesting feature of U.S. advertising is the use of the competing brand's name in an ad, which may not be the case in ads in other countries. .

Step 5. Planning the Budget

Activity 17

A. Skill

How to estimate expenses

B. Description of Activity

Students read a passage about a couple's estimated vacation expenses, answer written questions based on the reading and then discuss the answers in groups of four.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to assess vacation expenses realistically.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Encourage healthy interpersonal relations.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher presents/reviews necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher distributes reading passage which contains questions at the end.
3. Students read passage, write the answers to questions.
4. Teacher divides class or has students divide themselves into groups of four.
5. Students in groups go over answers and discuss their reactions to the passage. Teacher acts as resource person.
6. Teacher facilitates discussion based on the passage and students' reactions to it.

7. Students for homework estimate their vacation expenses, using the categories generated in the Introduction (see p. 27).

Reading Passage

"John and Nancy Williams are going to St. Thomas next winter for one week. They will arrive on Tuesday, January 6, and leave Monday, January 12. They have budgeted \$1,100 to spend on this vacation. They were able to take advantage of a special round-trip fare on Eastern Airlines for \$99.00 per person. Their hotel will cost \$45.00/night, breakfast included.

The major item they want to buy while there is liquor because they are allowed five quarts of liquor each duty free. They plan to get five quarts of Seagram's V.O. at \$6.00/bottle, three quarts of Gordon's Gin at \$4.50/bottle and two bottles of Johnnie Walker Black Label at \$7.25 a quart.

They have made their necessary purchases of camera film, drugs and cosmetics, a new piece of luggage and other items, all of which total \$150.00 (this amount comes out of the \$1,100). As far as meals go, Nancy and John plan to skip lunch but spend about \$17.00 per person at dinner. For entertainment and unexpected purchases, they plan to allot \$200.00."

Questions

- 1) What is the total amount John and Nancy plan to spend on their vacation? (\$1,080)
- 2) Is there any money left? If so, how much? (\$20.00)
- 3) How much will the Seagram's V.O. cost? (\$30.00) The Gordon's Gin? (\$13.50) The Johnnie Walker Black Label? (\$14.50)
- 4) What does John and Nancy's hotel bill come to? (\$270.00)
- 5) What do you think about their budget? What would you change, if anything, if it were you who was going to St. Thomas?

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

(to) budget, (to) estimate, to come to, bargain, to allot, duty free, liquor types and brand names--Seagram's V.O., etc./gin, etc.

F. Grammar

1. Use of conditional in the unreal present

If I were going to St. Thomas, I would...

2. Questions

See Activity 13, Section F, #5, pp. 74-75.

G. Comments

While a resource person, the teacher should bring out for the whole class any important points, grammatical or otherwise, that come up in the individual groups.

The teacher will want to ask students during the discussion why they feel the couple's budget is realistic or unrealistic, the major point being that for a budget to be accurate, it must reflect the cost of living, a knowledge of which is gained through shopping experience and reading newspapers and magazines for prices; and the propensities of the person for whom the budget is intended, i.e., include the items that that person is likely to spend money on, such as antiques.

In discussing in small groups and then in the class as a whole the question of whether the vacationing couple has realistically budgeted enough money, students gain in communicative competence. They are getting practice in expounding and possibly having to defend their viewpoint--i.e., arguing in a formal situation and using the tone of voice and phrases appropriate in English to such a situation.

Working in small groups allows students to continue to get to know each other better, and if the teacher selects the groups, she or he can bring together students who are less familiar with each other. The degree to which students listen to the teacher and to other students, especially concerning Question 5, is a measure of the respect they have been developing for others. Their participation is a measure of the security they feel.

The teacher, in the class discussion, can ask students what duty free items they would take back with them and direct the discussion into a cultural vein. Students from wine drinking countries, for instance,

might prefer wines (if available) or liqueurs, while students from the Middle East might prefer designer clothes perhaps unavailable in their own country(ies) and/or frowned upon for religious reasons. As for Americans, liquor, the teacher can explain, continues to be a major choice because of its popularity (although wine is making inroads) and its expense in the States.

Activity 18

A. Skill

How to estimate expenses

B. Description of Activity

Students estimate expenses for their vacations and in groups of four compare figures for different items.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to estimate expenses.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Promote harmonious interpersonal relations.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher, the day before, tells students to have figures ready for transportation to and accommodations at their vacation spot.
2. Teacher, during this class, presents/reviews necessary vocabulary and grammar.
3. Students estimate expenses for their vacation, using the categories generated in the Introduction (see p. 27). Teacher acts as resource person.
4. Teacher divides class or has students divide up into groups of four.
5. Students in groups compare figures for each category. Teacher acts as resource person.
6. Teacher facilitates discussion based on students' budget esti-

mates and group discussions.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

(to) estimate, (to) budget, souvenirs, purchases, to allot

F. Grammar

Verbs taking the infinitive, as explained by the Bolinger principle, that is, "the infinitive very often expresses something 'hypothetical, future, unfulfilled'"⁸

to want	to plan	to expect
to intend	to hope	to decide

G. Comments

As a resource person, the teacher should inform the class of any important points that come up within individual groups or from individual students.

While the students are in small groups, the teacher can ask them whether they can draw any conclusions from comparing figures in any category. For example, students may have the same expectations about spending in regard to entertainment but vary widely on souvenirs or they may have very different ideas about the cost of things. In the class discussion, the teacher should bring up two factors necessary for an accurate budget--that it reflect the cost of living, knowledge of which is based on shopping and reading the newspapers and magazines for prices; and that it be a very personalized budget, including those items that the person for whom the budget is intended is likely (or liable!) to spend money on, such as hobbies.

The teacher, drawing upon research based on the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Social Sciences Index, American Statistics Index

⁸Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, p. 209.

and/or other sources, can also facilitate a discussion on how the "typical" American spends her or his vacation dollar compared with how the "typical" person in the students' country(ies) would draw up her or his vacation budget.

Through speaking, listening, and to a lesser extent, writing and reading, students gain in communicative competence, harmonious interpersonal relations and an increased understanding of American culture. For the first goal, students are getting practice, both in the small group and class discussions, in using language and tone of voice appropriate in English for a discussion situation of a certain degree of formality. Harmonious interpersonal relations are aimed for by having students work in small groups, continuing to get to know each other better, especially if the teacher has selected the groups. Four students were chosen instead of three because it was felt that one additional person would make the small group discussions more interesting and the possibility greater for variations on budgeting to occur. Students, by their participation and attention during the class discussion, reveal, to some degree, the security they feel and the respect they have for other students and the teacher. As for increased understanding of American culture, the general discussion is a cultural one and in doing the very exercise of estimating their expenses, students are doing a typically American activity.

Activity 19

A. Skill

How to make an inventory of things to be brought and things to be purchased, based on what extra money is available.

B. Description of Activity

Students individually make a list of things they will bring on vacation and in groups of four categorize them into mass and count nouns.⁹

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to make an inventory.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher reviews/presents necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Students make list of things they will bring on vacation. Teacher acts as resource person.
3. Teacher divides class into groups of four, based on where they are going on vacation, and distributes brown paper and magic markers to each group.
4. Groups categorize items into mass and count (including singular and plural) nouns and try to shift the nouns into the other category. They write results on brown paper and tape it to the wall. Teacher acts as resource person.
5. Teacher goes over each list, eliciting corrections from students, and stars items in common.
6. Teacher facilitates discussion on appropriate vacation attire and dress codes in general in the U.S. and in the students' own country(ies).
7. Students for homework: 1) make a list of the things they will need to buy, 2) price them and total them, 3) compare the total with what they have allotted for necessary purchases in their budget, and 4) categorize the items into mass and count nouns wherever possible.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

(to) inventory

F. Grammar

⁹The idea for this activity is based on one described in Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, p. 91.

Mass vs. count nouns

G. Comments

The vocabulary may get very specialized at times, so the teacher's role as resource person in Steps 2 and 4 is very important. If a word or point comes up that will benefit the whole class, the teacher should inform all of the students.

The teacher, as she or he sees fit, may want to review the homework assignment in class, in much the same way as this activity was structured, or keep it on an individual basis, handing back corrected papers to each student.

Through speaking, listening, and to a lesser extent, reading and writing, this activity aims at communicative competence, harmonious interpersonal relations and an increased understanding of American culture. Students gain in communicative competence by their participation in the small groups and in the class discussion, using and listening to language and tone of voice appropriate in English to those situations. By working in small groups, students continue to get to know each other, especially as they have a common interest--going to the same vacation spot or at least, the same general location, and because the teacher has had some say in the groups' makeup. Four students were chosen for this activity rather than three (five is probably too cumbersome) so that there are fewer groups, hence, less repetition of material in the lists. It is hoped that this will help maintain student interest. Students who write their groups' lists on the brown paper are acknowledged by the others as having or acknowledge that they have a readable handwriting, one more fact about them that will make them more familiar to the other group members. The class discussion on vacation attire and

dress codes in the U.S. vs. those in the students' own country(ies) will certainly give students insight into American culture and their own, perhaps, as well.

Activity 20

A. Skill

How to make an inventory of things to be brought and things to be purchased, based on what extra money is available.

B. Description of Activity

Students make an inventory of things they will be bringing with them and another of things they need to buy. Pricing the latter against their estimated budget, they see whether they can afford a large purchase, such as luggage.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to make an inventory.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher reviews/presents necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Students individually make an inventory of things they will be bringing with them on vacation and another of things they will need to buy. Teacher acts as resource person.
3. Students price and total the items they need to buy, figure it into their estimated expenses and see whether there is any money left over for a major expense, such as luggage.
4. Teacher takes a quick survey to see who has money to buy what.
5. Teacher divides class or has students divide up into groups of four.
6. Groups draw up lists of businesses, organizations, etc., which do inventories and discuss what the purposes of an inventory are. Teacher acts as resource person.
7. Teacher elicits lists from students, trying to categorize the

items (e.g., profit/nonprofit organizations or by area--government, health, business, education, etc.) as she or he writes them on the board.

8. Teacher facilitates discussion on the use of inventories.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

(to) inventory

F. Grammar

Mass vs. count nouns

G. Comments

Most of the vocabulary will be generated in Steps 2 and 6. As resource person, the teacher should inform all the students of any word or point that comes up individually if she or he feels the whole class can benefit.

The class discussion can cover the basic process of inventorying--counting stock to see whether to produce/buy more or have a sale/not buy more until stock is used up--and apply the process to something in the U.S., such as the crisis in Detroit because of large "big car" inventories.

Through speaking, listening, reading and writing, this activity aims at three major goals. Students improve their communicative competence by participating in both the group and class discussions because they are getting practice using and listening to language and tone of voice appropriate in English to those particular situations. Healthy interpersonal relations are promoted by working in small groups, where students continue to get to know each other, especially if the teacher divides up the class. Step 4 of the procedure can probably be omitted, but students may be curious to see who has money to buy a major item (which the teacher should define) and what seems to be the most popular

major item. By working in groups of four (five is probably too big) rather than three, there are fewer groups, hence fewer lists of inventories the teacher has to go over, hopefully insuring greater student interest in Step 7.

Inventories are at the heart of a lot of decisions made by American businesses, government and all kinds of organizations, such as art museums, libraries and hospitals. Students, by making personal inventories and then seeing the importance of inventories not only on a personal level (it enables them to know whether they can afford a major purchase) but also on a much grander scale (when applied to the U.S. auto industry, for example), can better understand American culture, which is very business-oriented; that is, it applies business principles, such as taking inventories, to non-business sectors as well. That is not to say, of course, that no other cultures use inventories or are business-oriented. Rather, the difference is one of degree and emphasis.

Step 6. Planning the Itinerary

Activity 21

A. Skill

How to read a road map.

B. Description of Activity

Students read a passage in which they have to trace a route on a road map and answer questions.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to read a road map.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Promote harmonious interpersonal relations.

4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher distributes map, or portion thereof, of a U.S. state (this exercise uses one of Vermont) to each student.
2. Teacher presents/reviews necessary vocabulary and grammar.
3. Teacher presents procedure and things to look for in reading a map.
4. Teacher gives students some oral "warm up" questions to which they write the answers after looking at the map.
5. Teacher elicits answers from students.
6. Teacher distributes reading passage based on map.
7. Students read passage and write the answers to questions at the end of the reading. Teacher acts as resource person.
8. Teacher divides class or has students divide up into pairs to compare answers. Teacher acts as resource person.
9. Class goes over answers.

Reading Passage

"Betty wants to take an all-day trip through central Vermont, so one morning she leaves very early from Brattleboro (marked on the map) and heads west on Route 9 until she hits Wilmington. She then takes Rt. 100N, passing through West Dover, West Wardsboro, Wardsboro and East Jamaica. At East Jamaica, she takes Rt. 30W to Manchester Depot, then switches to Rt. 7N, which she takes up to Rutland. From there, Betty drives on Rt. 4E to White River Junction, where she takes 91S back to Brattleboro."

Questions

- 1) How many towns did Betty pass through on her way from E. Jamaica to Manchester Depot? (3) What were they? (Jamaica, Bondville, Barnumville)
- 2) What is another name for Rt. 7? (Ethan Allen Highway)
- 3) From Rutland, how else could Betty have gotten to Brattleboro? (Variable)
- 4) How many ski areas did Betty pass by between Wilmington and Rutland? (6) Name two. (Haystack, Carinthia, Mt. Snow, Stratton Mountain, Snow Valley, Big Bromley)

- 5) What airports did Betty pass by between White River Jct. and Windsor on 91? (None)

etc.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

to intersect, intersection, junction, to head, to hit, grid

Directions: north(ern), south(ern), east(ern), west(ern) and combinations of any adjacent two, beginning with north or south

Abbreviations: Mtn., Mt., Rec., L., Br., R., Pd., Jct., St. (Saint), E., W., N., S., Pk., Rt.

Geographical/topographical terms: county, city, town, village, state, river, lake, mountain, brook, highway, bridge, parkway, expressway, route, recreation area, interstate, multilane (un)divided, two lane, under construction, controlled access

Symbols for: ski area, airport, hunting area, public rest area, snowmobiling, etc.

F. Grammar

1. Questions

See Activity 13, Section F, #5, pp. 74-75.

2. Use of historical present tense in narratives

G. Comments

The teacher can include in the grammar a brief look at how particles change a verb's meaning--"to pass by" vs. "to pass through," for example--but this should be covered in greater depth at another time and over a period of time.

As a resource person, the teacher should inform the class of any important items coming up from the individual pairs of students.

The teacher, if she or he wants to, can have students write up their own circuitous routes, either in class or for homework, and pair students up, each taking the other's "test." Students can, thus, get more practice in map reading and in the grammar points covered. The teacher can, in addition or instead, facilitate a discussion on ethnic origins of place names (see Activity 23, Section F, #2, pp. 102-104, and Section G, pp. 104-106, for details).

Through reading, writing, speaking and listening, this activity aims at three major goals. The first, communicative competence, is aimed at by the practice students get when comparing answers and in the class discussion, if there is one, using and listening to language and tone of voice appropriate in English in such situations.

As for the second goal, promoting harmonious interpersonal relations, by working in pairs before the class goes over the exercise, less secure students can either get confirmation of their answers from their partner or hopefully, an unhurried, personalized response to what may be an incorrect answer. When the class goes over the answers, the students, if their answers are incorrect, will either have been prepared and know why or feel relieved that at least one other person got the answer wrong, too. If the teacher chooses the pairs, there is probably a greater chance for a meaningful exchange to take place. Students also show their respect for other students and the teacher and the degree to which they feel secure by their attention and participation in the class discussion, if there is one.

In an indirect way, students are learning about American culture not only by dealing with an actual map of one of the states, hence getting an idea of geography and topography, but also of the high stage of development which the U.S. is at--it has ski, snowmobile, hunting and picnic areas, airports, national parks, etc. If there is a discussion, students learn about U.S. ethnic history.

Activity 22

A. Skill

How to read a street map

B. Description of Activity

Students work individually and in pairs doing exercises involving a street map and giving directions.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to read a street map.
2. Have students demonstrate the ability to give directions.
3. Improve students' communicative competence.
4. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
5. Increase students' understanding of U.S culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher distributes to each student a map, or portion thereof, of a U.S city with places of interest noted.
2. Teacher reviews/presents necessary vocabulary and grammar.
3. Teacher explains/elicits from students how to read a street map.
4. Teacher gives students a few oral "warm up" questions and elicits answers.
5. Teacher divides class or asks students to divide up into pairs.
6. Teacher gives directions and shows by example what is to be done.
7. One student of each pair provides her or his partner with a starting point on the map and asks how to get to such and such a place from that point. The other gives directions while the first traces the route. Students take turns. Teacher acts as resource person.
8. Teacher facilitates discussion based on map.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

grid, block, corner, diagonally across from, uptown, midtown, downtown, intersection

Directions: north, south, east, west and combinations of any adjacent two, beginning with north or south

Abbreviations: N., S., E., W., Ave., St., Rd., Bway, Blvd., Cir., Sq., Pk., Mus., Ctr., Lib., etc.

F. Grammar

1. Use of the imperative in giving directions
2. Questions

See Activity 13, Section F, #5, pp. 74-75.

G. Comments

For what can be a challenging variation, the teacher can tell the pairs of students that they are having a telephone conversation. One of them is supposed to be meeting the other somewhere (students decide where) but is lost and needs directions on how to get there. Both have maps and the second student dictates the route over the phone. Students then exchange roles.

As the resource person, the teacher should inform the class of any important points raised by individual pairs of students.

For the discussion, the teacher can ask students if they have been to that particular city, whether they asked for directions and whether it was difficult to find one's way. That can lead into a broader discussion of the layouts of cities, the reasons for them, and what are similarities and differences between the layouts of American cities and those of the cities in the students' country(ies).

This activity aims at three ultimate goals through speaking, listening and reading. Students, in giving directions, are improving their communicative competence because directions use a certain verb tense (the imperative) and a certain tone of voice (hopefully authoritative). In the class discussion, students also get practice in using and listening to the language and tone of voice appropriate in English to a discussion situation of a certain degree of formality.

By working in pairs and at what should be a fun exercise, students continue to get to know each other better, especially if the teacher has paired them. During the discussion, students show by their attention the respect they have for one another and the teacher. Participa-

tion is a measure of the students' feeling of security.

In doing the map exercise, students increase their understanding of American culture because they get a "feel" for a particular American city. Depending on whether they have been in other American cities or not, they may begin to see patterns, such as streets seem to run straight or that each city is perhaps very individual in the U.S. They may learn, if it comes out in the discussion, that, unlike people in some other cultures, Americans generally admit it if they do not know how to get somewhere when asked for directions or admit that they are not sure, if such is the case.

Activity 23

A. Skill

How to calculate distance in U.S. and metric measurements.

B. Description of Activity

Students answer written questions based on a state map involving distance.

C. Goals

1. Have students demonstrate the ability to convert metric into U.S. measurements and vice versa.
2. Improve students' communicative competence.
3. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
4. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher reviews/presents necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher presents/elicits arithmetical comparison of U.S. measurements and their metric equivalents.
3. Teacher distributes same state map, ruler, if necessary, and series of questions based on map to each student.
4. Students write answers to questions. Teacher acts as resource

person.

5. Teacher divides class or has students divide up into pairs to compare answers. Teacher acts as resource person.
6. Teacher elicits answers to each question from pairs of students.
7. Teacher facilitates discussion based on map and/or measurements.

Sample Questions

- 1) How far is Town X from Town Y in kilometers? In miles?
- 2) What town is X kms to the southeast of City Y?
- 3) How long is it between Town X and Town Y in kilometers taking Rt. A and then Interstate B?
- 4) How many towns of X population are within a Y-km radius of City A?
- 5) Approximately how long is the A River in kilometers between Town X and Town Y?
- 6) Is Town A X kms to the north of Town B? If not, how far is it?

etc.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

"as the crow flies," inch, foot, yard, mile, scale of miles, millimeter, centimeter, meter, kilometer, to calculate, calculation, to convert, conversion, equivalent, metric, radius, to round off

Abbreviations: in("), ft ('), yd, mm, cm, m, km, mi

F. Grammar

1. Questions

See Activity 13, Section F, #5, pp. 74-75.

2. Nationalities

a. adjectives

- 1) "n" -- simply added to name of country
Austrian, Russian, Bolivian, American, Libyan
- 2) "an" -- last letter of country name is dropped, "an" added
German, Mexican, Moroccan
- 3) "an" -- simply added to name of country
Chilean, Uruguayan, Paraguayan
- 4) "ian" -- last letter of country name is dropped, "ian"

added, spelling of stem may change
 Italian, Hungarian, Canadian, Argentinian,
 Grecian (which has a more poetic connotation
 than "Greek" and is usually applied
 to things associated with ancient Greece)

- 5) "ian" -- simply added to name of country, spelling may change
 Egyptian, Peruvian
- 6) "i" -- simply added to name of country
 Kuwaiti, Pakistani, Israeli, Iraqi
- 7) "ish" -- last syllable of two-syllable country name
 dropped, "ish" added, spelling may change
 English, Scottish, Turkish, Finnish, Polish
- 8) "ish" -- simply added to name of country, spelling may
 change
 Spanish
- 9) "ese" -- last syllable dropped, "ese" added, spelling
 may change
 Lebanese, Chinese, Portuguese, Burmese
- 10) "ese" -- simply added to country name
 Japanese, Vietnamese, Sudanese
- 11) first syllable only retained, spelling may change
 Thai, Swiss, Czech
- 12) "ic" -- simply added to country name
 Icelandic
- 13) "ch" -- simply added to first syllable of country name,
 spelling may change
 French, Scotch
- 14) other (can be further investigated)
 Dutch, Greek, Welsh

b. nouns

1) singular

- a) adjectives which remain unchanged
 Italian, Greek, Chinese, Egyptian, Swiss, Thai
- b) adjectives which are changed

"man" added, spelling may change
 Scotsman, Frenchman, Englishman, Irishman

last syllable of adjective dropped, spelling may change

Turk, Pole, Finn, Scot

last syllable of adjective dropped, "iard" added
Spaniard

last syllable of adjective dropped, "er" added
Icelander

2) plural

- a) unchanged adjectives
English, French, Irish, Polish, Spanish, Japanese
- b) "s" added to unchanged adjectives
Greeks, Americans, Czechoslovakians, Germans
- c) "s" added to adjectives which are changed by dropping last syllable
Turks, Poles, Finns, Argentines, Scots
- d) "s" added to adjectives which are changed by dropping last syllable and adding "iard"
Spaniards
- e) "s" added to adjectives which are changed by dropping last syllable and adding "er"
Icelanders

Of course, some countries or areas have several adjectival and noun forms, which adds to the confusion. Take Scotland, for example: adjectives--Scotch, Scottish; nouns--Scot, Scotsman/Scottish, Scots, Scotch, Scotsmen.

G. Comments

Students will, no doubt, be aware of at least some English forms of nationalities, whether nouns, adjectives or both. The teacher may not really want to go into any detail here, since there are numerous categories of endings which may overburden and overwhelm students. Perhaps memorizing the forms as they come up would seem the most appropriate way to handle this topic. Nonetheless, Section F, #2, is an attempt to categorize the major forms. It is, by no means, meant to be defini-

tive; rather it is a preliminary overview of categories.

While acting as resource person, the teacher should inform all students of important points that are brought up by individuals or when students are in pairs.

A state that has had a large influx of ethnic groups, such as New York, Illinois or California, is a good state to have a map of because the discussion can deal with place names. (This discussion is also appropriate for Activity 21, pp. 95-98). The teacher can conduct it in different ways, but one approach is to elicit from students the names of ethnic groups they think have had a role in the history of the U.S., which the teacher can write on the board. The teacher then can throw out names of places in the state (giving grid numbers or other means of locating them for map reading practice) and ask students to categorize the names by nationality. The reverse can be done, the teacher asking students to come up with a Greek, French, German, English, etc., place name from the map. The teacher can facilitate a discussion on immigrants to the U.S. and their contributions and/or immigration in the students' own country(ies). The teacher can facilitate an alternative discussion on the pros and cons and history of the metric and U.S. systems of measurement.

This activity, through reading, writing, speaking and listening, tries to promote three major goals. Students' communicative competence is promoted because students get practice speaking English appropriate to the pairwork they do and to a discussion situation of a certain degree of formality. Harmonious interpersonal relations are hopefully promoted because of the work in pairs, each student continuing to get to know another student better, especially if the teacher does the pairing.

Less secure students may also feel more confident either because their answers have been corroborated by their partners; their partners give them a personal explanation of why they (the partners) think the students' answer is incorrect; or the less secure students know that at least one other student got an answer wrong when the class as a whole reviews the questions. During the general discussion, students show their confidence, to some degree, by their participation and show their respect for other students and the teacher by their attention.

Students increase their understanding of American culture by becoming familiar with the system of measurement currently in use; dealing with an actual map of a U.S. state, learning about its geographical and topographical layout; and having a discussion on one facet of U.S. history, whether it be the U.S.'s ethnic minorities or its measurement system, now being phased out.

Activity 24

A. Skill

How to calculate distance in U.S. and metric measurements.

B. Description of Activity

Students trace route on state road map from passage read by teacher and answer oral questions concerning distance based on route.

C. Goals

1. Improve students' aural comprehension.
2. Have students demonstrate the ability to calculate distance in U.S. and metric measurements.
3. Improve students' communicative competence.
4. Promote healthy interpersonal relations.
5. Increase students' understanding of American culture.

D. Procedure

1. Teacher reviews/presents necessary vocabulary and grammar.
2. Teacher presents/elicits arithmetical comparison of U.S. measurements and their metric equivalents.
3. Teacher distributes same state map, or portion thereof, (New York State is used here) and rulers, if necessary, to each student.
4. Teacher reads a passage during which students trace route described in passage on map.
5. Teacher reads series of questions to which students write answers.
6. Teacher pairs students or has students pair up to compare answers. Teacher acts as resource person.
7. Teacher elicits answers from class while still in pairs.
8. Teacher facilitates discussion based on map or measurements.

Passage

"Brian and Jean are going to take a 3-day trip in upstate New York. On the first day, they start from Ithaca (city is marked on the map), take Rt. 13S to Horseheads, where they get Rt. 17W and take it to Corning. The town of Corning is where Corningware dishes and Steuben glass are made. After a visit to the Corning Glass Works, they continue on Rt. 17 to Bath, where they then get Rt. 54N. They take this road to the town of Hammondsport, at the southern tip of Lake Keuka. That is where many of New York State's wineries are located. Brian and Jean spend the afternoon touring the wineries and stay overnight. The second day, they continue north on Rt. 54 until it intersects with Rt. 14 at Dresden. They take Rt. 14N to Geneva, then get on Rts 5 & 20W to Canandaigua, where the Sonnenberg Gardens and Roseland, an amusement park, are. Brian and Jean spend the day in Canandaigua and stay overnight. On their third and last day, they travel east on Rts. 5 & 20 to Rt. 89S, which is past the town of Seneca Falls, where American women met in 1865 to write the "Women's Bill of Rights." They take Rt. 89S to Taughannock Falls, the second largest waterfalls east of the Mississippi River. After a stop there, they drive to Ithaca, where their trip began and now ends."

Questions

- 1) What is the scale of miles on your map?
- 2) Are there 10km between Ithaca and Taughannock Falls? (No, there are 16.1)
- 3) If Brian and Jean go 50kmph, how long will it take them to get from Geneva to Canandaigua? (About 36 minutes)

- 4) How many miles are there between Bath and Corning? (20) How many kilometers? (32.2)
- 5) How far in kilometers is the town of Penn Yan, on Rt. 54, from Hammondsport? (37.03km) Round the figure off to the nearest km.

etc.

E. Vocabulary/Expressions

See Activity 23, Section E, p. 102.

F. Grammar

1. Questions

See Activity 13, Section F, #5, pp. 74-75.

2. Use of historical present tense in narratives.

G. Comments

The teacher, when presenting the grammar, can briefly touch on the importance of a particle to the meaning of a verb ("to get" vs. "to get on," for example) but this should be covered in greater depth at another time and over a period of time.

As resource person, the teacher should bring to the class's attention any important items that come up from the pairs of students.

The teacher should choose a state map which she or he thinks will be of interest to the students. It can be the state they are in, the one where most of the students are going "on vacation" to, if such is the case, or one of the better known states, such as California. For the class discussion, the teacher can tell and/or try to elicit from the students some of the state's history, particularly as it pertains to the map, or expand on what is mentioned in the reading passage.

For instance, the role of geography, topography and of immigrants, as perhaps evidenced in the place names, can be discussed. Students can compare any or all of the above three factors (or some other(s)) with

those same factors as they apply to the history of their own country(ies).

This activity aims at three ultimate goals primarily through speaking and listening, but to a lesser extent, also through reading. Students gain in communicative competence during the class discussion. Whether or not they actively participate, they are being exposed to the language and tone of voice appropriate in English to a discussion situation of this degree of formality.

This activity also attempts to promote healthy interpersonal relations by having students work in pairs, continuing to get to know each other better, especially if the teacher paired them up. Less confident students will hopefully be more confident, whether their answers agree with their partners; or do not agree but the partners explain the mistake in a non-threatening way; or the less secure students do so to their partners. Even if the pair agrees on an answer and in the class review, it turns out to be incorrect, each knows at least one other person is wrong. In the class discussion, respect for others, including the teacher, is shown in students' attention and confidence by their participation.

As for an increased understanding of American culture, the class discussion speaks for itself.

V. Conclusion

In effect, this thesis is an illustration of Edward M. Anthony's hierarchy of approach, method and technique.¹⁰ The thesis began with the assumptions I have made thus far concerning language learning and teaching (approach). It went on to discuss the use of themes in general and the theme of planning a vacation in the U.S., in particular, as a means to teach English consistent with those assumptions (method). Finally, the activities, besides hopefully being useful in and of themselves, were to demonstrate how the theme of planning a vacation in the U.S. could be carried out (technique). If an ESL teacher reading this thesis gets nothing more than some useful suggestions for activities, the writing will have been worth the effort. However, I would also hope that I have been at least partly successful in showing how activities are more effective if they are set within a framework, such as a theme, to give them coherence and are ultimately based on assumptions made by the ESL teacher concerning language itself and language teaching and learning.

¹⁰Edward M. Anthony, "Approach, Method, and Technique," English Language Teaching, 17, (1963), pp. 63-67.

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