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FROM MANIPULATION TO COMMUNICATION PRACTICE  
FOR  
BEGINNERS



English language - conversation

A Thesis  
Presented to the English Department  
Sanata Dharma  
Teachers' Training Institute  
in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for Sarjana Degree

by

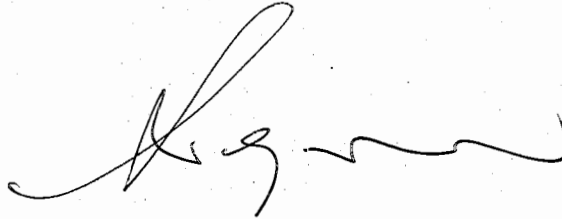
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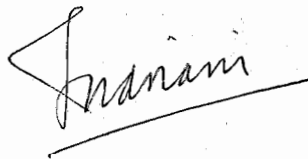
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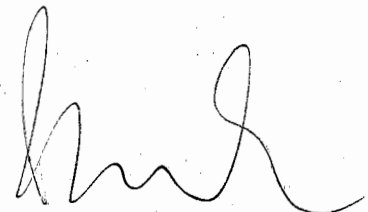
(Dra. M.I. Indriani)

Sponsor

IKIP SANATA DHARMA

(Prof. Dr. A.M. Kadarman, S.J.)

Rector



(Drs. J. Bismoko)

Head of  
the English Department

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

It is not such an easy task for a teacher of English to teach his students to speak the language. Actually, no people can teach students to speak a foreign language. What the teacher can do is just to help the students develop their speaking ability by providing them with enough opportunity for language practice. It is the students who have the inner ideas to be expressed. The teacher cannot supply the students with the ideas. The teacher's task in helping them to express themselves freely is, therefore, to look for ways of eliciting the students' inner ideas.

Certainly, there are various ways of helping students to communicate. This writing, then, is an attempt to provide teachers of English, especially those who teach beginner students, with a view towards a way of developing the students' speaking ability. This is not a new method. It is only a way of leading students to the stage of communication world.

Among the various ways, the structural approach is one which assumes that language learning is habituation practice to establish automatic language habits. Yet, it has been proven that the structural approach is not enough to answer the students' need to communicate. So, besides the habituation practice, the students still need some sort of practice - communication practice.

The communication practice is intended as a means of leading students to the development of their speaking ability. To develop speaking ability means to complement the habituation drills used in the language teaching. The writer agrees that the use of dialogues is an effective complementation.

Since the structural pattern drills and the dialogue should be complementing each other, in this thesis the two will be dealt. Part I, is concerned with the structural pattern drills, their nature, their types as well as some suggestions on how to conduct the drills. From part II on, the discussion is about the use of dialogues. Successively, we will discuss: the reasons for using dialogues, teaching dialogues and their construction, the use of dialogues, and the presentation of dialogues as a stepping-stone to free communication.

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# I. STRUCTURAL DRILLS IN THE AUDIO LINGUAL METHOD.

1 The audio-lingual method relies greatly on the effectiveness of structural pattern drills in the teaching of language. This method uses a lot of manipulative drills as the main tool although they do not develop communication ability - the ability to function in real communication settings. The approach tends not to notice the importance of meaning in language practice, so that within this approach the role of communication is neglected. It is ridiculous to expect pupils who have been able to perform such drills excellently to be able to speak the language creatively, since actually they have hardly been involved in a really meaningful communication practice. The stress on which the audio-lingual method always puts is the formation of automatic habits. It is true that the goal is to establish in the learners automatic control of the patterns of the language, but it fails to apply the principle to the real use of language in real communication.

Thus, it will be quite reasonable to have a combination of manipulative activities and ~~communi-~~cative activities in the classroom, if the final goal is to enable the learners to speak the target language. The first type of activities is intended to make the learners ~~get involved~~ in manipulative drills through which they can get a basic skill in acquiring structural patterns.

The other type is meant to give the students as many chances and practice as possible to speak the language in a real communication setting. Anyhow, we must always keep in mind that there is no such clear-cut division since the classroom activities are actually the mixture of the two types - manipulative and communicative - with different proportion. The proportion varies in accordance with the stages of learning. Thus, it also follows the principle of grading. In the beginning, the manipulative portion is greater and along with the development of the students' acquisition of the target language it should shift gradually until finally the communicative portion dominates the classroom activities. Through the concept of " a four-way scale " C.H. Prator<sup>1)</sup> suggests that it will be useful to develop speaking ability by using the following activities:

- completely manipulative
- Predominantly manipulative
- predominantly communicative and
- completely communicative.

One of the most popular activities that belongs to the first type is a single-slot substitution drill. For example, the teacher gives the students a model sentence such as My brother is a teacher, and then he asks the learners to substitute the

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1) C.H. Prator, Development of Manipulation-Communication Scale, English Teaching Forum, Special issue Vol. XIII, pp122-125, 1975.

last slot with the names of other profession like: doctor, student, farmer, lawyer, lecturer, driver, fisherman, soldier and so on. The teacher can give the cue either orally or with pictures. From this starting point, the teacher can make the drill more communicative, for example by asking the students to respond by using the real names of their father and the actual professions. In this way some element of communication has been inserted. Thus, the teacher should be creative in conducting the drills.

Before one can speak a language fluently and automatically, he must have some intensive practice beforehand. Intensive practice in basic grammar is really essential to develop his understanding of the rules of the language system. Surely, he must learn how to use certain grammatical constructions and vocabulary items. In addition, a lot of opportunity to use the language in real communicative settings is also needed. One of the basic things of the activities in the students' acquaintance with the grammar of the language learned. The students will be able to produce their own sentences if they already have good knowledge of the grammar, although it should not be meant that knowing about grammar alone is enough. It is often found that students with good knowledge of the grammar cannot speak the foreign language well. Thus, in this case practice to reinforce the grammar knowledge is really needed. The practice should be intensive so that it will become an automatic habit formation. After acquiring

habits through a lot of practice as such, the learners are ready to pull out sentences of their own in the target language. It is not in the sense, however, that they are already ready to speak freely in the target language. It is essential, therefore, that in the beginning stages of learning, the teacher should try to develop in the students a conscious understanding of the rules of the language and he should also try to establish in them a formation of habits. Thus, it is obvious that in developing language acquisition for beginners, structural drills are of great and basic importance.

#### A. INTEGRATED DRILLS.

One of the obvious mistakes made by the audio lingualists is that while they are using the approach they tend to emphasize the establishment of automatic habits, whereas the fact and experience have shown that students who have acquired deeply established habits often cannot use the patterns in real communication setting outside the classroom. So, the transfer that the audio-lingualists greatly expect actually never occurs. In addition, the drills used actually do not provide the students freedom. In the drills they are just saying what is required by the teacher. It is impossible, therefore, that the drills being used or practiced can develop into a meaning-

less routine without having any relationship to the use of language in real communication.

Having considered the weaknesses on the approach as mentioned above, it is necessary to develop an integrated drill that will not deprive the students of their urgent need to communicate their inner thoughts and desires so that the habits that they have acquired come to be meaningful and transferable. If the habits are transferable, it means that the students are improving in their ability to speak the target language. So it is really essential that the teacher can design drills which pay careful attention to what the learners want to say. Being provided with integrated drills as such, the students will not only say what is required by the teacher and demanded by the drills. In this way he makes the students not merely parrot without knowing what they are saying, but they produce significant utterances which are really coming from their inner desires and intentions. Learning to produce the inner self as such is a basic step in developing speaking ability.

In conducting such integrated drills we can apply the principle of getting the students involved in communication as early as possible. In structural drills the learners have to say only something based on certain structural patterns. In this case, the drills are said to be purely manipulative.

In real communication, on the other hand, they have to express what they wish to say - after they are stimulated with a certain situation. The integrated drills, then, attempt to integrate the essential elements that are needed in developing the ability to speak; that is, the drills integrate structural or grammatical elements and situation or circumstances that naturally demand utterances. Such circumstances are actually a necessity that forces the students too pull out sentences of their own freely. It is clear in itself, therefore, that all those elements are basic to the development of speaking ability.

In integrated drills as such, the major role is held by the teacher. Here the teacher cannot be substituted by any other means or by any teaching machines since it is only the teacher who can provide the students with proper stimuli that will elicit the learners' own utterances. Excellent guide or instructions on how drills should be conducted and how communication practice should be developed may be easily found in books. Yet, once again, it is the teacher who can select and decide the conditions that are most suitable to the learners' needs, ineterests and moods. In other words, the teacher can provide situation that will get the learners communicate something when they are practicing. So, the students are compelled by the necessity to do something.

## B. STRUCTURAL DRILLS AND THE URGENT NEED TO COMMUNICATE.

It is very essential for learners of any language to know the basic structure of the language before they are able to grasp and understand the language easily. That is why the audio-lingualists use the structural approach since early in the beginning stages of learning. They use structural drills based on some units of grammar or units of structure. Of course, it is easy to conduct such structural drills. It will not be a hard thing to do unless the teacher is required to conduct the drills and to pay attention to the contexts or the situations in which utterances are to be used. The teacher has the freedom to choose the structural items to be practiced by the students. To administer structural pattern drill, then, becomes more difficult since the teacher has to try to make any efforts to provide the students with some stimuli that will encourage the students' need to communicate. The difficulty arises from the fact that the need to communicate does not focus on and arise from structural items. Instead it focuses on the content of what is going to be said and arises from a pressing immediate situation or condition. Of course, structural drills are a bit different from everyday situations in which the need to communicate is really natural. Practices based on certain



units of structures are not natural; it is something artificial as regard with the necessity to communicate.

Nonetheless, it is hardly possible to avoid such artificiality in language teaching. An English teacher should always bear in mind that in the beginning stages of learning artificial selection is just justifiable, since artificiality as such is closely related to grading. Without introducing artificiality language learning is likely to be very difficult and inefficient because beginners are not ready to get involved in real communication in which there is no grading at all yet. The teacher should also remember that the first stages are still manipulative in which manipulative structural drills are the main activities to develop the learners' competence to communicate, their mastery of the rules of the language and the formation of language habits. Anyhow, the drills are not communication practice yet. They are developed with regards to the application of the principle of the students' urgent need to communicate, so that they become meaningful, not just purely mechanical.

### C. VOCABULARY

Vocabulary selection is also an important aspect of language learning that must be considered in preparing drills. To make the drill potential, the teacher must be wise as to choose the proper vocabulary items.



A vocabulary selection is regarded good when the words it encompasses are really reflecting the learners' experience, so that the learners are familiar with the concepts and the things that are represented in the vocabulary items. If the vocabulary items are familiar enough it will also make the drills more meaningful to the learners and they are not merely parroting without knowing the meanings of the utterances at all.

Words and phrases should be really chosen so as to fit the students' life, experience and need. It is suggested that the vocabulary to be taught should be words that are semantically necessary to understand and to express.<sup>2)</sup> The vocabulary in the structural drills, then, can function as a bridge to connect the structural approach used in the first stages and the communicative in the later stages.

In the selection of vocabulary items, the teacher can group together words that have the same function or which derive from the same situation. It is likely that grouping words of the same function as such will help the students to be able to use those words more easily in a real communication. For example, food is a common need for all people; so a list of names of various kinds of food and drinks as well as verbs related to food can be presented together.

<sup>2)</sup> Harry Hawkes, The Notional Syllabus, Discourse Analysis, and ESP Materials, English Teaching Forum, Vol. XVII, No. 2, P. 21, April 1979.

In fact, vocabulary is an important problem of any people who are trying to speak a language. Yet, it does not mean that one who has mastered a great number of vocabulary of the foreign language can speak the language well. That vocabulary is the first thing that comes up when one is trying to speak is partly evident in the fact that students often ask for this thing and that thing in the target language.

In sum, the teacher should be very careful in selecting the vocabulary items that are going to be used in the drills or exercises. He should choose items that are practical, functional and meaningful to the learners. By providing the learners with such a fine selection of vocabulary items the teacher can really provide an opportunity to transfer what has been learned in the classroom to a real use in natural communication outside the class.

#### D. CLASSIFICATION OF STRUCTURAL DRILLS

An English teacher is free to choose the type of structural drills to use in implementing the audio-lingual method. As there are many types of structural pattern drills, he can use some in a single teaching session. The problem is that he has to judge whether the drills are still relevant or not. We know that at times drills focus on the

forms of the language expressions, without taking into consideration the significance of meaning; whereas in a language learning, a level that involves an understanding of how one is learning and essential elements of what is being learned is necessary.<sup>1)</sup> In addition to that, enough exposure must be given to the students so as to let them have the optimum time in the actual production of the target language, where the ultimate goal is natural communication. This essential objective, therefore, should be really reflected in the implementation of the method which the classroom demands.

The above consideration should reveal an implication for the classroom teaching-learning situation. That is, grammatical rules included in the drills should explain the particularities of the patterns to be learned and a series of drills from a manipulative level to communicative one. In light of the above dimension Paulston<sup>2)</sup> classifies drills into three major categories: mechanical, meaningful and communicative. Now let us have a look at those drill types, so that we can judge the value of each type.

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1) Wilga Rivers, The Psychologist and The Foreign Language Learner, p.50, Chicago, 1964

2) Paulston, C.B, Teaching English as a Second Language: Techniques and Procedures, p.4, Winthrop Publisher Inc. Cambridge, 1976.

### 1. Mechanical drills.

A mechanical drill is a drill in which the response is fully controlled. In this class of drills, there is only one way of giving the correct response or answer. On account of the full control, the students need not even understand the content of the utterances in the drill, although they can produce the response correctly. One of the most extreme examples of this class of drills is the repetition drill in which the students only respond by making a repetition exactly what the teacher says as the cue. Actually the various kinds of substitution drills are also similar to this group of drills.

There are two kinds of mechanical drills namely: memorizing mechanical drill and testing mechanical drill. The first kind, memorizing mechanical drill, is a drill the purpose of which is primarily to help the students memorize the patterns of sentence with virtually no possibility of mistakes. The other kind is a drill which can provide the teacher with feedback and it can help the students organize the information that has been learned into wholes or contrasts. It is sometimes necessary, of course, to make the students realize different patterns through a contrast, for it is not uncommon that they cannot realize the presented patterns. For example they may be very confused about 'Present Continuous Tense' and 'The Future Tense' that uses the verb

with BE- going to constructions. Such students conclude that "He's going to Jakarta" and "He's going to go to Jakarta" are of the same structures.

Transformation or conversion drills are also mechanical in nature. This kind of drills can be used to teach the structural changes of an utterance. For example, a conversion from an affirmative into negative and interrogative, from active into passive as follows:

Teacher: Yanti eats the apple.(affirmative)

Student: Yanti does not eat the apple.(negative)

or : Does Yanti eat the apple?(interrogative)

T : Yanti eats the apple.

S : The apple is eaten by Yanti.(passive)

This kind of drills is considered mechanical, since all the students need is memorize the structural change. They can do the drill even though they do not understand exactly what they are uttering.

Response drills can also be the easiest kind of mechanical drills. Here is an example:

- What would you like to drink, tea or coffee?

wine or beer?

nectar or water?

A student may answer "nectar" although he does not have any idea of what nectar is. Anyhow, at times there are students who can respond in an unexpected version. Instead of choosing from the

available cues above, for example they will say: " I would like to drink orange juice", or " I'd like to drink lemonade", and the like. Of course such answers will appear only from those whose vocabulary is already wider.

What we expect about the students behavior is that after the drill they will have the facility of automatic use of the patterns . This is really in line with the notion that language learning is habit formation. In this stage the learning takes place through analogy and transfer of identical patterns.

Looks simple as it does, the mechanical drill is really necessary in language learning, too. It can provide practice in mechanical associations such as: adjective-noun agreement, subject-verb concord, negative and interrogative constructions, and so on. In mechanical drills as such the learners will not notice the mechanical nature of the drills as long as they learn something.

On account of the full control over the response mechanical drills are particularly suitable for choral drill. All the students know how to select the response utterance- the correct one- on the basis of the cues provided by the teacher, no matter whether they are provided orally or in pictorial forms. Thus, it is undeniable that the teacher is the only one responsible for supplying the correct response.

## 2. MEANINGFUL DRILL

We have seen that even mechanical drills are important in the teaching of a foreign language. While not denying the need of mechanical drills in our teaching of English, as English teachers we should always bear in mind that such mechanical drills alone will not enable our students to express their own opinions fluently. And then, we proceed a step further as to help our students. At this point we let our students work through meaningful drills.

In a meaningful drill, the students' response is still being controlled, although the response may be expressed correctly in more than one way. There is a right answer, and the teacher provides the students with the information necessary for giving the response; the information may be called out from the class situation or even from a certain assigned reading. Anyhow, the teacher always knows what the students should or ought to answer. Another thing about the meaningful drills is that they are just language exercises in which any answer will do as well, as long as it is grammatically correct and goes in line with the information provided. The students will not be able to respond correctly unless they understand structurally and semantically what is being said. The following will serve as an example:

@ Teacher : Rosa is outside the classroom.

Student 1 : Where is Rosa?

Student 2 : Rosa is outside the classroom.

@ Teacher : She is reading a newspaper.

Student 1 : What is she doing?

Student 2 : She is reading a newspaper.

It can be noticed in such a drill that the teacher's cue serves as the information controlling the student's response. It should be noted, however, that only student 1's response is meaningful in this drill. The response of student 2, on the other hand, is not; it is merely an exact repetition of the cue. Student 1 above can respond because he has the understanding of the cue made available by the teacher as well as an understanding of the "Wh..." question pattern or construction.

Comprehension question-answer type can also fall under the class of meaningful drill. Thus, after a discussion of a reading passage the teacher asks the students questions based on the reading. For example:<sup>+</sup>)

Teacher : What color is little Red Riding-hood's hood?

Student : Little Red Ridinghood's hood is red.

Like in the example above, the response-answer in this kind of drills is long.



In this phase we still have the same goal as that in the mechanical drills; to let the students have an automatic use of language manipulation and to establish in them firm language habits. Yet, the method used here is a bit different from that used in the previous phase. In the mechanical drills the students are not given explanation of grammatical analysis so that they are left to make analogy of patterns on their own. In meaningful drills, on the other hand, such grammatical explanation and analysis are necessary. Unless the students understand or recognize the characteristic features of the language manipulation, they cannot do the drills correctly. Thus, to stress again, it is necessary for the teacher to present the grammatical analysis first before giving the meaningful drills.

### 3. COMMUNICATIVE DRILLS.

Although the term is "communicative", there is not yet real communication taking place in this stage. What we expect from the students here is normal speech for communication, or rather, a transfer of the language patterns that they have already learned to appropriate situations.

In communicative drills, the students themselves may not feel the fact that they are doing the drills as if they tend to fill their time and attention in exchanging information like in real communication. Anyhow, it is still remaining as a drill

rather than a free communication practice, since here we still use the cue-response format. Thus, there is a control over the structural patterns being used. To retain this control gradually, in order that the students really practice what they have learned before, is one of the teacher's hard tasks, then.

Now, we can see more clearly what the differences between communicative drills and the other two - mechanical and meaningful drills- are. As a matter of fact, the differences lie in the expected behaviour after the practice and the degree of the response control. There is still another main difference between a meaningful drill and a communicative one, namely that in the communicative drill the students are expected to add some new information or reality about the real world. In the mechanical and meaningful drills, the teacher and the class always know what the expected answers are, although the grammatical patterns used in the drills may vary accordingly. In these two groups of drills, there is always a right answer and a wrong one? The following example may serve to give a clearer idea of the difference between meaningful and communicative drills.

@ T: What color is your shirt, Sonny?

S: My shirt is white.

T: Are your trousers yellow?

S: No, they aren't. They're blue.

In the example above, the teacher's questions are likely to be silly questions. Actually, he as well as the class already know the fact of the color of Sonny's shirt and trousers. The situation itself has supplied that information. In this case, Sonny's response is merely meaningful, not yet communicative. Let us look at another example:

@ Teacher: Are your parents still alive, Heru?

Heru : Yes, my parents are still alive.

T : What are their occupations?

H : They're teachers.

Here in this example, Heru's response is quite communicative. He has produced the response to the teacher's cue and in the response there is actual information. The teacher and the class really get a piece of information; they have not known that information before.

Among the three groups of drills mentioned above, of course, the communicative one will be the most time consuming and the most difficult to arrange. Anyhow, they are all a good means of teaching or rather, of leading students to expressing personal ideas. The simplest way of conducting communicative drills is just by asking the students to respond truthfully. Role playing in a series of situation like: telephone conversation, shopping, ordering food in a restaurant is also a good means to conduct communicative drills.

## E. TYPOLOGY OF STRUCTURAL PATTERN DRILLS

In the previous section a general classification of structural pattern drills has been presented. The description of each class is still comparatively so general, and we use two criteria for classifying the drills namely: The terminal goal expected and the degree of the response control in the drill. Thus the description will give teachers of English only general views about drills.

In this section, we will try to have a look more thoroughly at the kinds of structural pattern drills. We talk about typology of drills. A typology of pattern drill is necessary for the teacher of a foreign language because such a thing is actually a useful guide in constructing drills. It is the reason for the writer to attempt to present a more specific description of each drill type here.

Type of drills here refer to the restructuring of a model. Restructuring indicates the type of arrangement and the complexity of that arrangement that the students go through in order to arrive at a certain response.

The following typology of structural drills is suggested by Paulston and Bruder<sup>®</sup>). They use types of restructuring as the basic criterion for putting drills into the various types.

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Paulston and Bruder, *ibid*, p. 11.

- I. Repetition Drills
  - A. Verbatim repetition
  - B. Open-ended repetition
  - C. Dialogue repetition
- II. Discrimination Drills.
  - A. Pattern recognition
  - B. Context recognition
  - C. Function coding.
- III. Alternation Drills.
  - A. Morpho-lexical Drills
    - 1. Single slot substitution
    - 2. Double slot substitution
    - 3. Multiple slot substitution
    - 4. Moving slot substitution
    - 5. Correlative substitution
      - a. simple
      - b. complex
  - B. Syntactic Drills
    - 1. Expansion
    - 2. Completion
    - 3. Reduction
    - 4. Transformation
    - 5. Integration
- IV. Reply
  - A. Two Stage Drills
    - 1. Short answer
    - 2. Comprehension question
    - 3. Rejoinder
    - 4. Comment and 5) Free response
  - B. Three Stage Drills.

We have seen the overview of the structural drills in general. Now, let us go through each of the types in the typology. Here examples will be presented, too. Yet, they are not intended for a certain level of learning. Instead, they may be examples that are suitable for a very beginning level, beginning level, intermediate or even advanced one.

### I. Repetition drills.

Repetition drills are the simplest form of drills that will be done in a very beginning of language learning. They are merely the plain repetition of the cues provided by the teacher. So, they are just what they sound like.

The justification of including repetition drills may be questioned by many since it seems that these drills are mere mindless parroting. The teacher, therefore, must try to make extra attempt to make the students understand the things to be drilled. He should check, for example, that the students really know the meaning of the vocabulary items used in the drill.

In spite of the fact that such is mindless, a repetition drill may be justified for the reason that at the beginning stages of language learning a repetition drill will serve as a useful means in building up the perceptual ability of the students' motor skills.

The incorporation of repetition drills into language learning underlies the notion that actually, the ability of controlling the increasing amount of language in mechanical is an important part of language learning. Beginners can remember and repeat comparatively short sentences; therefore utterances in the drills should be increasing steadily in length. Such utterances, then, are very useful in developing auditory memory for better competence in recognition of long language utterances.

#### A. Verbatim repetition.

In this drill, the students repeat the cues exactly as given. This drill tends to be boring for advanced students; but if we increase the length of the utterances as the students' proficiency is getting better, their memory is likely to be challenged so that the drill is regarded as a kind of game. Anyhow, verbatim repetition drills are useful in teaching subject-verb agreement, adjective-noun order, and other word order in general. Example:

#### NP + BE + adjective

The house is green.

The mouse is small.

The boy is handsome

The students are tired

The flowers are beautiful

The chairs are brown.



There + BE + NP(Noun Phrase)

There's a book on his table.

There's a movie theater in this town.

There are new students in my class.

There are four bedrooms in his house.

In this drill the teacher gives the model as natural as possible. He utters the cue in a conversation speed, and after he reads a model, the students repeat after him immediately.

## B. Open-ended repetition

Open-ended repetition drills are usually also called Chain drills. The drills are done individually. Each student is to repeat all the responses that have been made by the previous ones and he has to add his own piece of information. This kind of drills is good to practice since all the students are required to listen to each other, and their attention is diverted from the drilling itself and towards the actual use of the language. The following is an example of chain drills:

The teacher sets the situation for the students.

He says for example: "You have Rp 10,000. Now imagine you are at the department store.

What are you going to buy?"

S1. I'm going to buy a shirt.

S2. I'm going to buy a pair of shoes.

S3. I'm going to buy a coat and a hat. etc.



The underlined words or phrases in the example above indicate the students' free choices. In the example we can give the students practice on the future construction with BE GOING TO. In order to give more practice on the concord between subject and the form of the verbs, the example can also be extended. For example, S3 can make a response that encompasses the responses of S1 and S2, so that he may have:

" She is going to buy a shirt, he is going to buy a pair of shoes and I am going to buy a coat and a hat."

We can also vary the drill by altering the students' response. For instance, we alter I am going to buy ..... into the Simple Present I want to buy ...... At first, turns should be given in order around the class so that it reduces the number of elements that the students must remember. The elements can be: patterns, vocabulary items and some others. After the around turns, the teacher can call on students at random, and at last he can ask the student himself to choose the next one to answer. It is necessary for the teacher to prevent the students from making any written notes on the items. The challenge of remembering seems to enhance the success of the chain drills.

#### 6. Dialogue repetition

In this kind of drills the students must repeat a sequence of specified patterns with slight

variations. These drills are very good to give students practice on the changing of tenses, the changing of word order, and the formation of questions. They are also a good means of practicing conversational exchanges. In such drills the students concentrate on the exchange rather than on the drilling itself. The following is an illustration of such drills in which we intend to provide practice on the irregular past forms of verbs. This kind of drills is meaningful in nature.

@ T: Mardi comes here every day

S1: Then he came here yesterday.

S2: No, he didn't come here yesterday.

S1: Why not?

S2: He was so busy yesterday.

S1: When did he come here?

S2: He came here the day after yesterday.

@ T: She makes a dress every month.

S1: She made one last month then.

S2: No, she didn't make one last month.

S1: Why not?

S2: She was sick.

S1: When did she make one?

S2: She made one two months ago.

Then, the teacher continues giving cues:

- Sardi catches fish every Sunday.

- They make a voyage every year.

- I buy cakes every day. etc.

It is necessary, if the teacher intends to use the drill as conversational exchanges, for him to take care and to pay attention to make the language as natural as possible. The use of the contracted forms didn't and the pronoun one in the example above, for instance, has made the language a bit more realistic although these elements make the language a bit more complex. We should also bear in mind that although such a type of drills looks impressive, real communication is not actually taking place here. These drills still remain as mere repetition.

## II. Discrimination drills.

Principally, discrimination drills are testing drills. There is one correct answer and this answer depends on the students' conscious choice. These drills are useful to introduce new patterns that are only slightly different from previous patterns such as: singular-plural; Third person singular-plural and other persons; future continuous-present continuous, and so on. In this type of drills, the students should also recognize small differences in order to get correct encoding. The teacher should spend only little time on this type of drills because in such drills the students talk about the language rather than attempting to use it. And yet, the drills do not require a lot of grammatical explanation. In addition, to enhance the students'

grasp of the function of the pattern used in the drill. Discrimination drills also give valuable practice in listening or auditory comprehension because they are functioning to focus the student's attention on the syntactic cues. Now let us go through all the types of discrimination drills.

#### A. Pattern recognition

Like in pronunciation and listening exercises, we can also use the " same-different" response format in discrimination pattern recognition. The format can be very useful. Besides that format we can also ask the students to identify the patterns on the basis of some specified features. For example, the teacher may ask the students to raise one finger when they hear the sentence in singular and to raise two fingers when they hear the sentence in plural:

@ The girls are tall. ( 2 )

The girl is tall. ( 1 )

The boy is short. ( 1 )

#### B. Context recognition

This is the kind of drill that is used to check whether the students have grasped the meaning of certain expressions such as words or even phrases; especially this is useful to test the students' understanding of similar sounding ex-

pressions that have different meanings such as the words whose and who's. It is hard, of course, to recognize the meanings of these two forms if they are pronounced individually. As soon as they are put into contexts, however, it is easier to predict the meanings. When we want to use these items we just put them in sentences as the contexts and then, ask students to identify the meaning by responding possession when we use the first, and person when we use the second item. Example:

T: Whose pen is this?	S: Possession
Who's going to Bandung?	Person
Who's the class leader?	Person
Whose is this wallet?	Possession
Who's the teacher?	Person
Whose is it?	Possession.

#### C. Function coding.

Another type of discriminating drills is the function coding, which is like the reverse of the context recognition type. Here the students have to decode a specific function. This type is useful in selecting the meaning of modal verbs. The following is an illustration:

T: cut the grass.(necessity)	
S: I have to cut the grass.	
T: Cut the grass ( cause)	
S: I have the grass cut.	
T: Do the homework ( Necessity) etc.	

### III. Alternation drills

The alternation drills are very popular, especially found in texts which are designed for audio-lingual teaching. Through substitution, transformation, expansion and the like, the students are provided with practice with the grammatical rules. The purpose of the practice is to internalize the structures by practicing the patterns.

#### A. Morpho-lexical drills.

As the term indicates, this type of the drill should focus on morphological structures or on lexical items. For example it focuses on the position of adverbs of frequency, on prepositions, on negative modal verbs and the like.

##### 1. Single slot substitution

In this drill, the students use another word to replace a word in a sentence slot. The words however, are of the same class. This type of drill tends to be mechanical.

Example: I have a book.

a pencil

an umbrella. etc.

In such a drill a noun of the same function is replaced by a noun, a verb by another verb, an adverb by an adverb and so on. It should be remembered that the slot to be replaced is not necessarily one single word. In order to keep up with the students' progress, it should be

steadily increased in its length so that it becomes a bit more difficult. For example in the later stages of learning we can introduce the if clauses-condition into the drill; here is an example:

T: Tonny would help me if he knew the answer.

if he could

if he had time

if I wanted

## 2. Double slot substitution

In this kind of drills two slots or constituents are replaced. It is the type of drills that is good for practicing comparison or for making clear ideas of structural contrasts in the foreign language.

@ They don't eat many vegetables.

- buy/ apples
- use / eggs
- get / onions
- etc.

@ My shirt is the same size as yours.

- hat/price
- city / size
- bicycle/ price
- bottle/ shape
- coat/ price

## 3. Multiple slot substitution

In this type, three or more constituents are



replaced, and each student gives the response. It should be noted that this drill is too difficult for beginners since in such a drill they have to memorize more things or items. The following is an illustration; The drill is giving practice on comparison using the pattern the same + Noun Phrase- As.

T: hat/ shirt / color.

S: My hat is the same color as his shirt.

T: pencil/ pen /length

S: My pencil is the same length as his pen

T: car/ truck/ price

S: My car is .....

#### 4. Moving slot substitution

In this substitution, a new element is always changed in each sentence. In producing the new response the students have to remember the previous one. This kind of drills is almost purely mechanical, so that, the teacher is expected to conduct it briskly. He needs not maintain the real fact of the sentence, because if he wants to maintain it, he has to think of an appropriate word for each sentence so that the drill goes more slowly. Example:

@ I have a good book. S: I have a good book.

- she

She has a good book.

- thin

She has a thin book.

- want

She wants a thin book.

- wallet

She wants a thin wallet.



### 5. Correlative substitution

In this type of substitution, the cue given by the teacher sets off a morphological or syntactic correlative change in the pattern. The drills are useful in practicing to encode grammatical relationships such as subject-verb agreement, pronoun forms, countable-uncountable nouns, and so on. Shortly, they are good to practice any structures which contrast minimally in some patterns.

#### a. Simple correlative substitution

Basically, simple correlative substitution drills are single slot substitution, in which the students are required to make some adjustment of a certain part of the sentence or pattern. This type of drills is also mostly mechanical. Example:

#### Reflexive pronouns

@ I can do it by myself.

- She

- He

- We

- You

- They

- You and Rina

#### b. Complex correlative substitution

In this type the students are required to replace two or more elements. It is more difficult for the students to do the drill, since

there are correlative changes that add greatly to the complexity of producing the response. In addition, in the drill like this, there is usually a lexical change, too. The following will serve as a paradigm:

@ The girl who is coming is his sister. (girls)

The girls who are coming are his sisters (boys)

The boys who are coming are my brothers.

- boy

- man

- woman

- women

Notice: when we give such drills we should make our students realize the lexical change like in the example above. It is surely possible that they respond mechanically "The woman who is coming is my brother".

#### B. SYNTACTIC DRILLS.

In syntactic drills the students are to reproduce or to manipulate the number or the order of the elements in the cues. The point of the drills is to involve syntactical relationships of features like formation of questions, formation of negative statements, word order, changing from clause to phrase and the reverse (from phrase to clause), and so on.

### 1. Expansion

The expansion type can be used to practice in putting the position of adverbs of frequency. Here the students are asked to put the adverbs in the right position in the sentence. Example:

@ T: The small baby cries. ( often)

S: The small baby often cries.

T: His father is angry ( always)

S: His father is always angry.

T: The boys fight. ( never)

S: The boys never fight.

@ T: The books are on his table. three

S: The three books are on his table.

T: green

S: The three green books are on his table.

T: thick

S: The three thick green books are on his table.

In the second example, the response contains more elements than the cue does. It is interesting because the response gradually gets longer and longer. It will train the students' memory, but the teacher should be careful; when it has become too long for the students to remember, he should change the cue, or the patterns .

It is also a good exercise for the students if the teacher can combine the expansion type with some substitution exercises; For example he can ask the students - in individual turns,

to expand the utterances in the drill by adding adjectives of his own choice to each noun phrase. For example we can expand the pattern "Noun Phrase + BE + Noun Phrase" as in the following:

@ T: man / lawyer

S: The short man is a famous lawyer.

T: boys / students

S:

T: woman / hairdresser.

S:

## 2. Completion.

Completion type is a useful means of moving students away from the very structured types of drills to gradually a stage in which they can begin to express their ideas or thoughts. In this drill type, the response will contain more elements like in the expansion type. Here is a simple illustration :

@ T: Mardi eats some .....

S: Mardi eats some apples

T: Susi buys .....

S: Susi buys some oranges.

T: We want some .....

S: We want some books.

## 3. Reduction

The reduction type drills are the converse of the expansion drills. The order of the elements is still the same as that in the cue, but the

number of the elements in the response is fewer than that in the cue. Example:

@ T: The car is blue	S: It's blue.
She is beautiful	She's beautiful
They are happy	They're happy.
The house is large	It's large.

#### 4. Transformation

In transformation drills the task of the students are to listen to the oral cue and to change the order and form of the cue. The elements of the cue and the elements in the response may vary as well. The drills can be used to give practice on tenses, question, and negative formations. They can also be used to teach noun modifications.

Examples: Make into question forms!

@ T: She's lost.

S: Is she lost ?

T: Tono is sad.

S: Is Tono sad?

T: They are good teachers.

S: Are they good teachers?

@ noun modification

T: a room for the class

S: a classroom

T: a halt for the bus

S: a bus halt

T: windows of the classroom

S: classroom windows.

### 5. Integration

In the drills that we have discussed earlier, we only use single utterances. In an integration drills students are required to integrate or to combine two utterances into one utterance. Sometimes, integration drills also involve certain transformation or correlative change in the pattern. This type of drills is useful especially for practicing conjunctions, subordination and other complex structures. Thus, a teacher should be careful when preparing such drills for beginners. The following example is an illustration of drilling relative clause formation.

@ T: The boy broke his leg.

He's in my class.

S: The boy who broke the leg is in my class.

T: The student is smoking.

He's my brother

S: The student who is smoking is my brother.

Since integration drills may vary most greatly in difficulty, the teacher should always be careful in selecting, adapting or constructing the drills.

### IV. Reply

We can include all types of drills consisting of exchanges similar to those in a conversation under this class. The drills are important in

training the students to interact with each others in the target language. The reply type is clearly more meaningful and communicative in nature rather than mechanical. This reply type is divided into two sub-types:

#### A. Two stage drills

The exchange in a two stage drill is completed with the cue given by the teacher and the response by the student. The cue provided by the teacher can be a question or a statement that requires an appropriate controlled reply or even a free answer by the student. Based on the nature of the expected response and the degree of control, the reply type can be divided into five groups:

##### 1. Short answer

The short answer type is very useful as to train the students in using the target language in an eminently natural way. It is a fact that short answers make language exchanges much more natural. So, if in the pattern drills in the classroom situation the students are required to use complete patterns, later they must be trained to produce the various short answers as well, for the above reason. The pattern drills are meant to internalize the language rules and patterns, and this type of drill- the short answer type, is to make the students' language production sound natural like real conversation. In addition, students often have different concepts of answer-

ing certain formulas. Some students, for example, get confused when they have to respond to a tag-question or a question starting with the negative modal such as : "Don't you", ....., "Can't you" .... and so on.

Example: Tag question responses.

T: Your father is a teacher, isn't he?

S: Yes, he is.

T: The farmers are tired, aren't they?

S: Yes, they are.

T: He wants a pencil, doesn't he?

S: Yes, he does.

T: They went to Semarang yesterday, didn't they?

S: Yes, they did.

## 2. Rejoinder

These drills are not so commonly used in teaching, but actually they are useful in training students in using conversational formulas which serve as introductions, leave takings, change of topics and so on. Paulston and Bruder call such conversational formulas as "phatic language".<sup>@</sup>

Example: the use of "By the way"

T: Rudi came here last week.

S: By the way, I met him two days ago.

T: Mr. Yono is absent today.

S: By the way, I saw him just now.

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Paulston and Bruder, *ibid*, p 29



### 3. Guided Comment or Reply

In this type, the student replies to a comment or a question provided by the teacher. The student answers by using a specified structure. Thus, the teacher's cue should guide or lead the student's response to the use of the structure intended. For example, we can practice on comparison:

@ T: He's 25 years old, but she's only 20.

S: He is older than she is.

T: This green book is important, but that red book is very important.

S: This green book is less important than that red book

Note: It is also possible that the student may answer:-She is younger than he is. and  
-That red book is more important than this green book.

### 4. Comprehension Question

This is a commonly used technique to test the student's understanding of materials read or heard. It is very common in reading exercises, however. When a dialogue or a narrative is used to introduce the grammar patterns, comprehension questions can also be used to check the student's understanding. Example:

@ T: What does he go to the post office for?

S: He goes to the post office for stamps.

T: What do they go to school for?

S: They go to school for education.

### 5. Free Response.

In free response drills, the students are free to respond as they want. The drills are usually communicative drills in which although the students are expected to practice a certain pattern they can often vary the response; that is, they may not use the target pattern in the drill.

Example:

@ T: Describe your father.

S: He's tall. He's thin.

T: Describe your city.

S: It's a very beautiful city.

etc.

### B. Three stage drills.

In this type of drills the cue that is given by the teacher - either a question or a statement, sets a conversational exchange for the students. The directed dialogue and " Ask him..... " type of exercise is particularly used in this drill.

Example:

@ T: Budi, ask Susi if he has an umbrella.

B: ( to Susi ) Do you have an umbrella?

S: ( to Budi ) Tell Budi that you have a pencil.

S: ( to Budi ) Yes, I do.

This type of drill is an excellent means of bridging the gap between mechanical manipulation and freer communication. The question-answer activity is an essential element in communication. In such a drill the teacher forces the students to act or react as if they are in real communication.

## F. STEPS IN CONDUCTING DRILLS.

It is necessary for the teacher to take into consideration on what steps are most effective in conducting structural pattern drills: Unless he can take the reasonable steps for the class activity, the drills will be boring and will make the students uninterested. Thus, it will be difficult for him to achieve the goal, or the objective of the class. Here I would like to present what sequence of activities will be likely effective. Some teachers may follow the steps as presented here, some others may vary according to their own preference. They may begin with mechanical drills done briskly as a review activity. Anyway, the following are the steps we are suggesting:

### 1. Presenting the pattern in context.

The patterns that the students are about to learn are necessary to be introduced in context, in any material of natural language. The context can be in the form of a reading passage, dialogues, short stories, diaries, letters and so on. In selecting the context material, the teacher must be careful. He should not choose materials that embody a lot of cultural material so as not to spend much time on explaining the cultural points.

Although there are various materials, we prefer the use of dialogue as the context. We

choose dialogue for two reasons namely: First, a dialogue demonstrates the way patterns are used in real oral language. Second, it has been proved that it is necessary for some students to be involved in dialogue-memorization; a passage, a letter, a diary, a story or a short novel will not be efficient to be memorized. Anyhow, it is not in the sense that all dialogues used in our drills are to be memorized.

In order to help students understand the content of the introductory context, the new vocabulary should be presented first. It is not necessary however, to introduce all of the new words. Only those words that are crucial to the understanding of the meaning of the context are necessarily explained. The new vocabulary can also be presented as homework. The exploitation of dialogue will be discussed further in the next chapter.

## 2. Asking comprehension questions.

After the teacher has read the introductory material, he asks the students some comprehension questions. The main purpose is to check whether the students have understood the general content of the material. It is appreciable if the teacher can skillfully construct the questions in such a way so as to lead the students to using the target structural pattern like in the introductory passage. This will make the pattern more familiar to the students. In answering the comprehension

questions, the students are allowed to keep their books open, unless the answer will involve the wrong pattern. In addition, here we are checking comprehension, not memory of details; so it is helpful to let students have the written passage.

It will also be useful, if there is enough time, for the teacher to ask inferential questions that ask students to express their own opinions and to let them draw some conclusion from what is read or heard. This technique will provide more opportunity for the students to practice and to relate new information to their own reality. Thus, it makes the language become more real to them.

### 3. Identification of the pattern.

It is also an important step to let the students able to identify the target pattern that they are about to learn. This can be done by writing on the blackboard one example from the introductory passage or dialogue and then asking the students to find other occurrences of the same pattern. The step is important to make the students pay their attention on the teaching point, on the context itself as well as on the form of the pattern.

It is possible that the students identify the wrong pattern. For example they may include the continuous form ( She has been reading), and the simple present perfect form ( She has written).

In such a case, it is necessary for the teacher to pause and write the two patterns on the board, then ask the students to find out how the two patterns differ. This is to avoid later confusion.

#### 4. Formal explanation

Formal explanation here is meant as an analysis of the particular linguistic forms and the characteristic of a structural pattern.<sup>@</sup> This is very important since we expect the students to be able to speak the pattern correctly. Anyhow, it is sometimes controversial that such an explanation should precede the drill. The writer personally thinks that it is better for the students to state the rules of the pattern. So, they should draw a conclusion from examples. In other words, the drill is presented first.

We should make the formal explanation as simple as possible, and if possible we must include a certain contrast to a similar pattern that is previously learned. For example, the contrast between the following patterns:

The girl walks to school and

The girls walk to school.

After contrasting the two patterns, it is good to give testing drills of discriminating-pattern recognition. This is a means to assure the teacher that the students really understand the rule and it prepares students for further practice.

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Paulston and Bruder, *ibid*, p 37.

### 5. Mechanical drills.

As has been discussed, the order of presenting formal explanation and mechanical drill is sometimes as a controversial point. Yet, the teacher himself can adapt the situation and make his own decision on this matter.

The purpose of the drills is to help the students learn the form of the new pattern. The mechanical drills should be done briskly, at a rapid speed. During the drills, the students have to keep their books closed. They should memorize the pattern; so if they only read what is in the book they will never memorize it. When we find the pattern to be hard or difficult for the students to remember, it can be left on the blackboard for the first few drills. Then, later on it is erased again.

### 6. Functional explication.

It is not enough for the students to learn the linguistic form of the pattern. As they learn the form and after they establish it in their memory, they need to learn how to use that pattern. For example, it is not so difficult for the students to learn the form of the Present Progressive but the difficult part is learning when to use it and when not to use it. For the very beginning level, this step may be combined with step 4 in order to lessen the students' burden of learning.

### 7. Meaningful drills.

In a meaningful drill, as we have discussed, the students are concentrating on meaning, not only on the form. When they produce the response, it should be a true response rather than a correct response. It is useful if the meaningful drill that comes after the formal explication focuses on the contrasting structures. This is to assure for the teacher, that the students have learned the rule.

For this step, the teacher can begin with a discrimination-pattern recognition drill. The drill may take the form of questions that the class is likely to be familiar with the answers. They may also be questions based on the introductory material. If not, the teacher can ask questions based on class situation such as:

- Does Rusdi speak Javanese?
- Does Ani understand the question?
- Samsu, do you know the story?
- What's Lisa doing now?
- Is she doing the homework now? etc.



### 8. Communicative drills.

Finally, we give the students communicative drills. In the previous activities, we have put greater emphasis on the teaching of grammatical items. Now in the communicative drill, the main purpose is to include the teaching of the use of language in real communication. Thus, we try to



lead our students to communicating their ideas. One necessity in this activity is that the students add new information to the class. In addition, they should respond conversationally and grammatically in an acceptable manner.

#### G. CORRECTING MISTAKES IN DRILLING.

There must be various kinds of type in correcting mistakes depending on the type of drill and the nature of the mistake itself. We, teachers of English should keep one essential point, that is, don't correct every mistake that a student makes. If we correct all mistakes thoroughly, it is very possible that the student can get frustrated. He will become shy and discouraged.

In mechanical drills, we should correct all mistakes on the new pattern as well as on patterns learned previously. Our reason is that in such drills, the students are to internalize the new forms. Therefore, it is obvious that they have to learn the correct forms, too. It is better that in this type of drills, the teacher himself corrects the mistakes. It will not be productive to ask other students to correct the mistakes.

If we ask students to do correction as such, it may create an atmosphere of competition. In addition the students badly need clear and correct models from the teacher. Asking other students to correct will also slow down the pace of the drill; whereas mechanical drills should be

briskly conducted.

Pronunciation mistakes should be given some attention, too. We may correct pronunciation mistakes - although in grammar drills- especially if these mistakes distort understanding of meaning greatly.

It is likely that mistakes that students make in mechanical drills are usually due to the lack of knowledge of the rule or form of the pattern. In other words they are competence errors. The best way to correct them, therefore, is by supplying with the correct form.

At the stage of meaningful drills, it is often that the students know the rule but they misspeak. Their mistakes tend to be performance mistakes. At this point, the students should not be supplied much more correct forms only. Instead, the emphasis shifts to getting them control their speech, and apply correctly the rules that they already know. Here, the teacher pays attention to the mistakes, but it is the students themselves who do correct the mistakes.

In the communicative drills the stress is on the information or meaning. Only serious errors on the teaching points and those that interfere with communication should be dealt. At this stage, the teacher encourages a kind of peer teaching, in which the students can help each other in correcting mistakes. Mistakes are corrected as quickly as

possible. The teacher has to remember, too, that in doing corrections he should show a pleasing manner so as not to discourage the students. When he corrects the mistakes of the students in this stage, he just gives the correct forms.

It is hoped, that by having a short overview on how corrections should be done, the teacher will get some advantages. In general, then, we hope that teachers of English will find it useful to learn how drills should be conducted. As we have discussed various matters about structural pattern drills, in the next chapter we will see how we can complement our drills with the use of dialogue.

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## II. THE REASONS FOR USING DIALOGUES

It is already discussed that according to the audio-lingual method, oral imitation, memorization and drilling techniques precede the attempts to speak spontaneously. It is supposed that the ability to speak the language derives from the analytic systematic study of grammar, phonology, and lexicon. This is also in line with the concepts of the grammar-translation method that claims that accuracy in speaking a language, or in other words, in expressing one's own ideas, depends on early study of the language forms through reading and writing.

In our approach here we want to try to encourage the students to speak freely in the foreign language through experiences and games-like activities. The students should be encouraged to speak the language they are learning since early in the beginning stages. Here we also agree to the use of the various kinds of drills. Even, our approach is to complement the drill techniques. The variations of dialogue presentation are really game-like activities. So, in this section on, we focus attention on dialogue exploitation. The game-like activities are actually meant to provide the students with the basic ability to speak the language spontaneously. That is, we are presupposing that they will use what they have learned and what they have been learning in an orderly way through a gradual progression of study and practice.

Intensive drills in the manipulative stage are used to provide the students with the opportunity to master language rules. On the other hand, the exploitation in the later stage is meant to help the students get to the stage of communication. Of course, this can be done in gradual steps. We also mean the game-like activities to overcome the students' timidity and the fear of being embarrassed when expressing themselves simplistically or rather awkwardly. Timidity is common in the elementary stage because the students' knowledge of the language is still minimum. Since we are going to use dialogue in our classroom teaching, it is good to know the reasons why we use dialogues. There are several reasons underlying the use of dialogues:

1. A dialogue provides social context.

As a dialogue is a social unit of speech in which two or more speakers are involved, the dialogue itself should certainly contribute a social context. In a dialogue, an interchange of ideas between the speakers takes place in a natural way. The social aspect of a dialogue makes utterances come to alive like in the following illustration: Let us take some isolated sentences:

- What's the matter?
- Let's go back and see.
- You look so sad.
- I'm really sad.
- I remember.

Seemingly meaningful as they are, these loose sentences are actually dull. It is sure that they have carried meanings of their own. But, now let us put them together in a dialogue context:

A: What's the matter? You look so sad.

B: Of course, I'm really sad. I lose my wallet.

A: Really? I saw it on the table in the restaurant.

B: I remember. But what happened after that?

A: O.K. Let's go back and see it!

As they are put in a dialogue form, we feel that these sentences become more realistic, and more alive. The social context of the dialogue has contributed some additional meaning in the exchanges. Julia Dobson also claims that when we incorporate isolated sentences in a dialogue we infuse them with real meaning and life.®

The naturalness and life of the language in a dialogue can even be supported by the possibility of accompanying the dialogue presentation with some kinetic expressions like: facial expressions, posture, gestures and other kinds of body movements.

## 2. A dialogue introduces fixed expressions and phrases.

Fixed expressions such as: pause words, rejoinders, interjection and so on are some of the

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® Dobson, Julia; Dialogues: Why, When, and How to Teach Them, English Teaching Forum, Vol. XIII, Number 1 and 2, 1975, p. 55.

language elements that make the language more natural and sound authentic. It is necessary for a learner of any language to be able to recognize and to use such ready-made expressions correctly according to the right situations. An Indonesian student, for example should know the use of interjections like: " ouch", "Eek ", " Oh ", " Alas" and so on. So, the teacher should teach them for the students will often meet them in texts as well as in oral conversation. The students should know that: "Ouch" is uttered when one is in pain;

"Alas" is used to express the feeling of sorrow and pity;

"Oh" is uttered to show surprise and

"Eek" is uttered only by a female person when she is afraid or startled by something.

The following example illustrates the use of the exclamation " Alas".

A: What happens to that boy on the street?

B: I don't know. An accident? Let's see.

A: O.K. Let's hurry?

B: Alas! He's dead. The driver drove on.

3. A dialogue can provide practice on the pronunciation of the language elements and on grammatical items.

The pronunciation of vowels, consonants and the models of rhythm, juncture, stress and intonation

can best be illustrated through a dialogue. It is quite evident in itself since a dialogue is the representation of the oral conversational language and therefore, it tends to be more complete than the written language. Besides that, grammatical points can also be exemplified in a dialogue. Of course, all dialogue may embody such elements as mentioned here; yet, a certain item can be treated more specifically in a dialogue. For example, this dialogue exemplifies the use of a specific pattern namely the form of the Present Perfect Tense:

A: How long have you lived in Yogyakarta?

B: I've lived here for six years.

A: I've lived in Yogyakarta since 1975. Before that I lived in Medan.

B: I've heard a lot about Medan, but I've never gone there. I'll visit it someday.

A: That's a good idea.

4. A dialogue can give some context that will clarify the meaning of vocabulary items.

The context provided by a dialogue is useful. As we know, the meaning of a vocabulary item, a phrase, or an idiom is also determined by the parts of the sentence that occur before and after it. The following is an illustration of such a dialogue:®

Linda: What does "V.I.P." mean?

Susan: It's an abbreviation of Very Important Person.

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® Dobson, J., *ibid*



Linda: Ah, now I understand. John said he had to meet some "V.I.P.'s at the airport tonight.

Susan: Yes, they're going to attend a conference at the university. They'll be here until Friday.

A dialogue may be used to collect similar vocabulary items like in the following one. This dialogue is used to collect the names of various kinds of food ( dessert).

A: I like all kinds of dessert - ice cream, cake, pie and pudding.

B: You really have a sweet tooth. I like ice-cream, but I don't like pie or cake.

A: Do you like fruit for dessert?

B: Yes, I like fresh fruit after my meals. I don't like canned fruit.

##### 5. Memorization.

As we have said in the previous chapter, a dialogue is useful for memorization. Dialogue is chosen for it is easier to memorize a dialogue rather than any other form of language materials. Because a dialogue is a compact form, it tends to stick easily in the students' minds. A paragraph or a short reading passage, or even a string of loose sentences is more difficult to memorize. The usefulness of dialogue as a material of memorization is that since it is easy, the students will be pleased to be able to memorize the short

dialogue in a comparatively short time. Of course, it is hoped that after they are able to memorize the dialogue with ease, they will be able to use the constructions found in the dialogue when they meet similar situations. They are expected to be able to respond correctly according to the situation. In this case, not only are they able to communicate ideas of their own, but they are also feeling sure that they are using correct grammar since they have memorized entire phrases and sentence patterns from the dialogue. Lado<sup>@</sup> also agrees to the use of dialogue as memorization material, as he states:

"..... Conversational material in the target language exemplifies most naturally the questions, requests, answers, statements and vocabulary that constitute the language. Thus, dialogues are chosen for memorization."

#### 6. A dialogue as reflection of the culture.

The teacher should bit by bit make the learners come to the awareness of cultural points. At times the teacher should present dialogues that reveal cultural values or contrasts. The students finally should realize that some speech formulas imply some unacceptable cultural values, especially unacceptable to westerners. For example,

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<sup>@</sup> Lado, Robert; Language Teaching. A scientific Approach. Mc. Graw Hill Inc., New York, 1964, p.63

the students should be taught that it is considered impolite by the western people to ask personal questions. The western people will be annoyed on hearing questions like:

- How old are you?
- Are you married?
- When do you want to get married?
- How old is your wife?
- How much money do you get per month?
- etc.

So, even if we teach sentence patterns as in the above, it is reasonable to insert some cultural insights. Without being told the students will not know such cultural difference .

#### 7. Applicability.

We have seen that dialogues can fulfil the various needs and functions in a language teaching. Besides that we consider dialogue useful and potential because they are applicable either between young children or adult students. The dialogue may become mere potential in the class of younger students if they are combined with the use of other teaching aids such as colorful pictures and puppets. Such aids draw their attention and interest.

The older students, on the other hand may enjoy more the role playing that the dialogue usually demands. While they are saying and may be altering the dialogue lines, they are fully confident that they are really speaking the language

correctly. This aspect is quite essential for the older students since they want to approximate as closely as possible the expressions that native speakers of the language use.

Up to now we have realized the various benefits of using dialogue. In the next chapter we want to have an overview on the construction of dialogue since it is possible that at times we are required to write our own dialogues when we are teaching.

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### III. TEACHING DIALOGUES AND THE CONSTRUCTION

It is expected that a teacher of English is able to recognize what a good teaching dialogue looks like. In other words, he is required to know the good and bad features of a teaching dialogue. When he is able to do so it will be easy for him to select written materials he wants to use in his teaching. In addition, as a teacher of English one must be ready to alter or rewrite a poorly constructed dialogue so as to conform with his class. Another benefit of being able to recognize the good and bad features of dialogue is that it will enable one to write good dialogues of his or her own more easily.

Of course, teachers are expected to be quite creative. They should not only use materials that are already provided or available. Instead, at times the teacher may be forced by the situation to adapt or even to compose some materials for the students. We can, for example, supplement the available materials by constructing a dialogue based on reading passage which has just been read in the class.

In order to meet the above needs of a teacher we have to investigate further about dialogues. It is likely to be helpful, too, if the teacher before constructing a dialogue has already understood the kind or type of dialogue he wishes to write. In this section, therefore we are going to discuss about the types of dialogues. Besides that it is

also necessary for a teacher who wants to construct dialogues to know the characteristics or the requirements of a good teaching dialogue. It will be discussed in this part, too.

#### A. The Types of Dialogues

There may be many types of dialogues depending on the criteria for the classification. There will be various kinds, for example if we classify them according to the purpose of the dialogues. Here we will only discuss three types of dialogues the classification of which is based on the aims of the dialogues. The three types intended are :

1) Conversation-facilitation dialogues, 2) Grammar-demonstration dialogues and 3) Recreational dialogues.

##### 1. Conversation-facilitation dialogues.

These dialogues are primarily intended to provide the students with useful expressions such as conventional greetings and leave-takings, expletives, rejoinders, exclamations and a set of other frequently used phrases or expressions. The ability to use such set expressions together in a meaningful interchange will encourage the learners for they feel they are progressing when they can use these forms. Conversational dialogues are useful especially for beginning level students. Here is an example of conversation-facilitation dialogues:

Pete: Hello, Jack.

Jack: Hi Pete. Where're you going? To the movies?

Pete: No, I'm not. I'm hungry. I haven't had lunch yet.

Jack: Neither have I. ( I haven't either).

P : Come on then. Let's go and get something to eat.

J : Fine. Where do you want to go?

P : There's a good place near the station.

J : Look out! There's Helen. I don't want to see him.

P : Neither do I. Let's hurry.

With such a dialogue the students are expected to memorize the sentences, so that they can use or produce them later in similar situations. The memorization provides the students with practice in pronunciation of the segments and ample practice in the rhythm, intonation as well as stress patterns. Utterances in a conversation-facilitation dialogue should be short, or if not so, they must be easily divided into short segments. The idea of this is that short utterances are easier to memorize. In order to reinforce memorization we can also use pictures, flashcards or puppets, or other teaching aids.

One thing that the teacher should always remember is that such a dialogue is not exploited grammatically. It is possible, therefore, that the students may be familiarized with constructions which are not systematically graded. So it is not strange if we find grammatical structures which

are not suitable to be taught to beginners. Another thing that we may notice is that a conversation-facilitation dialogue does not necessarily follow the question-answer format.

## 2. Grammar-demonstration dialogues.

As the term indicates, these dialogues are obviously designed to demonstrate grammatical rules (patterns). When a dialogue is cleverly constructed, it can be used to illustrate or demonstrate language rules. They are demonstrated in the exchanges. The aim of a grammar-demonstration dialogue is primarily to lead the students to the recognition of language rules and examples by inductive perception.

The grammar-demonstration dialogues are not meant for memorization. Instead, they can be employed structurally in a systematic way so as to lead the students to grammatical explanations and intensive practice on structural drills and exercises. Through the structural exercises, they will become aware of the operation of the language, able to recognize them and finally to use them naturally in real communication. The following is an example of grammar-demonstration dialogues:

Nardi: Where're you going this evening, Toni?

Toni : I'am going out with my family. We're going to the movies.



(Toni) Are you going to go to the movies, too?

Nardi: No, I'm not. I have to study. Tomorrow

I'm going to have an English test.

Toni : O.K. Nardi. I'll see you later.

### 3. Recreational dialogues.

These dialogues are used to demonstrate in a realistic situation what has been learned and what is being learned . Through this kind of activity, the students are reinforced to create spontaneously new expressions of their own based on their own ideas and imaginings; they express those ideas using language and structures with which they are already familiar.

The recreational dialogue is used as a true bridging activity from manipulative to communicative activity; hence, a stepping stone to free communication. In this case therefore, the dialogue has to have a situation as a starting point. This starting point is intended to let the students have some vocabulary, expressions as well as structures available for use. In such a bridging activity, the teacher needs to provide the students with some means of stimulating the learners' ideas. For example it is done by:

a. Adapting a kind of situation in the dialogue that the students have just learned. We can change, for instance, a situation in which a woman is shopping for fruit and vegetables into another in which a man is shopping for items of clothing.

b. By providing the students with guided dialogue. The students are given a dialogue form in which only the part of the first speaker is written on the blackboard. The students should complete the form. After it is already completed, some students are asked to act out their dialogue versions. The following is an example of a guided dialogue; The situation is taking place at a department store in which a customer is buying a shirt:

Saleslady: Can I help you?

Customer : .....

S : What is the size? medium or small?

C : .....

S : What color do you want?

C : .....

.....?

S : It's fifteen dollars.

C : O.K. I'll take it.

The above is just an example of using a recreational dialogue. Since the recreational dialogue is used as a stepping stone to free communication, it will be treated further in a separate chapter.

## B. Requirements for a good teaching dialogue.

Good and bad features may pertain to a dialogue. So, the teacher must be careful in selecting or in constructing dialogues for his class. For a dialogue to be good, the following criteria must be met: If a dialogue meets these following requirements, then, it will be good to incorporate it into the classroom teaching.

### 1. Length.

A good teaching dialogue should be long enough to develop a believable natural conversation. Yet, it should not be too long; it should be in a considerable length so that it will not be hard for the average students to memorize. George McCready<sup>@</sup> suggests that a good teaching dialogue should contain from three to ten exchanges. In this case the teacher should be wise enough so as to consider the length of the dialogue in line with the level of the students' language mastery.

It will be a hard task for a beginner, for example, to memorize a dialogue consisting ten exchanges. A ten-exchange dialogue may be employed for intermediate or advanced learners. The very beginning learners may deserve a dialogue of two or three exchanges; and gradually it can be expanded to five or six exchanges.

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<sup>@</sup> McCready, George, Developing a Lesson around a Dialogue; English Teaching Forum, Special Issue, Vol. XIII. numbers 1 and 2, 1975, p 51

A strict teacher may force his students to memorize a long dialogue, and the students may, with serious efforts, be able to do so. Yet, this will cause uneasy atmosphere on the part of the students. It is psychologically unsound. If the teacher presses the students too much, they will get discouraged, and it clearly deviates from the purpose of using dialogues.

A fully beginner may feel greatly delighted at being able to recite a short dialogue consisting of two to three exchanges. So it should not be too long. Here is an example:

John: Hello. My name's John.

Juan: How do you do? My name's Juan.

John: Are you Spanish?

Juan: No, I'm not. I'm Mexican.

Besides the length of the dialogue ( the number of exchanges ) we should also consider the length of the utterances of each speaker. If an utterance a speaker says is not long enough it will be easier for that speaker to memorize. The students should be able to reproduce the utterances with ease after they hear twice or three times. It may be reasonable to limit the utterances for beginners to about five syllables like in the example above.

## 2. Naturalness.

A good teaching dialogue should represent a natural interchange that can take place between two or more English native speakers. By using the

social milieu of the language - that is several elements that make language natural- we may turn a dialogue from being stilted. Some of the elements are the use of rejoinders, interjections and some common constructions that even educated native speakers often use. Unless the dialogue uses such constructions as: "I'm", "I'll", "He's", "Can't", "They've", "We're", "She'd" and so on, the language in the dialogue will sound less natural.

### 3. Balance.

A good dialogue should be constructed in such a way so that it gives proportionally equal length of utterances to each speaker. So, the speakers' parts are well balanced. In other words, one speaker does not dominate the conversation over the other. It will not be a good teaching dialogue for example, if one of the speakers only utters short answers "Yes" or "No" and a few number of rejoinders. The following dialogue is an example of dialogues in which the speakers' parts are balanced.

A: Excuse me. Can you help me?

B: Sure. What do you want?

A: I want to have my hair cut, but I can't find a barber shop.

B: I know where one is. Come on, I'll show you.

A: O.K. Thank you very much.

The following example is a dialogue in which the speakers' parts are imbalanced. Compare with the previous example.

A: What did you do in the morning?

B: I backed the car, parked it in the driveway and washed it. Then, I cleaned the garden and cut some flowers.

A: Did you make anything?

B: Yes, I did. I made fence for the garden because the old fence was already broken.

A: What time did you stop?

B: I stopped at eleven o'clock.

#### 4. Final line.

Another feature that characterizes a good teaching dialogue is final line. A good dialogue should end in a strong final line which signals a realistic stopping point in the conversation. By closing a dialogue with such a strong final line the dialogue will become a more compact form. Without a strong final line the dialogue will sound open-ended and rather weak as a conversational unit. Here is an illustration<sup>@</sup>. The first dialogue is lacking a strong final line. The second version, on the other hand, has a good final line.

I. Patty: How old are you?

Susan: Nine, but I'll be ten on May ~~six~~teenth.

Patty: I'm older than you! I'll be ten on May fourteenth.

Susan: Are you going to have a birthday party?

Patty: I don't know.

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<sup>@</sup> Dobson, Julia, *ibid*, p. 57

II. Patty: How old are you?

Susan: Nine, but I'll be ten on May sixteenth.

P : I'm older than you. I'll be ten on  
May fourteenth.

S : Are you going to have a birthday party?

P : Maybe. I'll have to ask my mother.

### 5. Relevance.

It is essential that in constructing or in selecting dialogues for classroom use we consider the content, the age of the students, and the language that the students have acquired. So, in the selection of teaching dialogues the teacher should know whether the dialogues will be used for very beginning levels, intermediate or for advanced ones. In this respect he has to judge the relevance of the subject matter, the grammar items as well as the vocabulary.

As for the topics, the teacher should choose those that will likely arouse the students' interest. Topics that may draw the students' interest are, for example, about the family, friends, schools, works, likes and dislikes and so on. Topics that are closely related to basic needs such as clothing, food and interesting places will also be good for beginners. Even, a dialogue talking about how one introduces his or her friend to another friend will be interesting, too. Such topics may be applicable to students of SMP's in Indonesia.

## 6. Participants.

It is necessary for the teacher to take the participants of a dialogue into consideration. When he is constructing a teaching dialogue he should know whether the dialogue has to involve native speakers of English only, a native speaker and a non-native speaker, or two non-native speakers only.

A dialogue dealing with general topics may involve native speakers for all the participants, but some certain dialogues will not be suitable for native speaker participants. The following dialogue is an illustration of dialogue requiring a native speaker and a non-native one.®

Supervisor: I'm the supervisor. Can I help you?

Customer : Yes. I need just one egg, but the clerk won't sell it to me.

S : That's right. It's necessary to buy at least half a dozen.

C : But why? I don't want six eggs. I just want one.

S : Selling eggs singly isn't profitable. And the idea is for the shop to make profit.

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® Rivers, Wilga M. & Mary S. A Practical Guide to the Teaching of English as a Second or Foreign Language, Oxford University Press Inc, New York, 1978, p. 32



- C : It bothers me that I can't buy the quantity I want.
- S : You don't understand. Running a supermarket is very complicated.
- C : So is grocery shopping, in case you don't realize it.
- S : But look at the variety here. It's possible to buy almost anything.
- C : Anything except one egg, you mean.

Although the names of the participants are not written explicitly, it should be clear that this dialogue must be between a native speaker of English and a foreigner. The customer here must be a foreigner. A native speaker of the language will not likely have such cultural mis-conception .

So far we have discussed some clear ideas of the reasons for using dialogues and the nature of good teaching dialogues. It is hoped that teachers of English who like to use dialogues find the discussion useful as a guide for them in selecting and in constructing dialogues for their classroom language teaching. In the next section we will try to focus the discussion on how to employ the teaching dialogues.



#### IV. The use of dialogues

In class, a dialogue is often used as a means of changing the class atmosphere to avoid the students from getting bored. It is also possible to use dialogue to provide simulated conversation activity within the framework of communication practice. A dialogue can be used in several variations:

##### 1. A dialogue in imitative-repetition drills.

For this purpose, the dialogue should consist of well constructed sentences that will serve as the pattern model of the repetition drills. The sentences should be related in a meaningful context, so that the students will understand the content more easily and they will be interested in the drills. Here is an example in which the students must practice the past tense of the verbs:

Atik: Where did you go yesterday, Rudi?

Rudi: I went to see my uncle.

Atik: How was he?

Rudi: He was very fine.

Here, as the students listen to and then repeat the dialogue, they are not just hearing but they are also using the form in the context of that dialogue. Be sure to check that before the students use the forms they already understand the meaning of the utterances. Because the sentences in a dialogue are related to each other, it is an excellent means of helping students grasp the meaning of the utterances.

## 2. A dialogue used in structure mastery drills.

In order to have a continuation of the previous drill, the same dialogue can be given again with a rather different aim and procedure. Only essential elements and structures are to be increasingly mastered; so, those structures are extracted and each is drilled independently. The grammatical point is demonstrated by extending and clarifying it through sentence variation.

Step 1: I went to see my uncle

my friend

my grandmother.

his sister.

He was fine.

seemed

looked

became

got etc.

Step 2: Here we still use the same technique, but the sentences are drilled within the framework of the dialogue:

@ Where did you go yesterday, Rudi?

meet him

see him

ask her

get it , etc.

## 3. A dialogue used for the basis of substitution drills.

This is intended to strengthen the oral mastery of the items. So, any element of the base

sentence can be used as the slot in the substitution. This drill is done like in the previous one, but here the students are encouraged to supply their own substitution by keeping the vocabulary within their reach. For example we can provide a list of the words on the blackboard and ask the students to choose among those words.

#### 4. A dialogue used as communicative drills.

This is one step nearer to real communication. As we have said in chapter one, though we use the term "communicative", they remain as drills. Here with the kind of activity we intend to train the students' ability to choose and to form appropriate responses under certain real circumstances. For example it can be done as follows :

Step 1: The students are asked to choose their own words freely from a list of words written on the blackboard. ( The words in brackets are the words the students choose)

Mark: Excuse me, Tom. I need some(stamps)

Tom : Sorry, Mark. I don't have any. Maybe Yuni has some.

Mark: Thank you. I'll ask her.

Mark ( to Yuni): Excuse me, Yuni. I need some(stamps)

Yuni: Sorry,..... etc.

After the dialogue is finished like this, then Mark has to give up the role and another student takes his place. The drill continues. It should be remembered that the words listed on the blackboard must be understood.

Step 2: In this step the students have to select a set of sentences that contain familiar grammatical structures in order to provide the development of the dialogue. So, they are not merely expected to produce correct responses. Example:

A: a. Sorry, do you mind if I smoke?  
 b. Well, I don't have enough time now.  
 c. Can I ask you a question?  
 d. Do you think you can help me?

B: a. Yes, of course you can.  
 b. Not at all.  
 c. Sorry, I'm so busy today.  
 d. Why not?

A:a. By the way, do you want some cigars?  
 b. O.K. Next time will be better.  
 c. Because I must study mathematics.  
 d. Which is the direction to the post office?

We notice in the exercise above that the opening sentence of speaker A. limits speaker B's choice. When the students are already familiar enough with the sentences ( option sentences), finally these sentences should be rubbed out in order to lead the students to a more similar natural conversation.

Step 3: In step 3 we conduct cued conversation. The teacher focuses the students' attention on the slot into which substitution drill is to be made. The cues are better to be represented in the form of pictures or flash cards. This

kind of exercise leads the students to repetition of new grammar items or features again and again until they can unconsciously master these items.

In the following drill we suppose that our students have already learned the forms of pronouns that can substitute the noun-phrases like : the book, my book, any ink, some pencils, and so on. Then, the cued dialogue may be as follows:

A: Excuse me B, do you have

1. my watch?
2. the new book?
3. any ink?
4. a dictionary?
5. any sugar?
6. any matches?

B: Sorry, A. I don't have it.

2. it
3. any
4. one
5. any
6. any.

In this case, the students are gradually expected to answer according to their reality. So, the responses may vary, then. A student may answer in a negative form like the example above or in an affirmative form. Such a drill as above can be cued in the following way: he gives each student a cue-card. One card may contain such cues:

- a. You need a dictionary.
- b. You have the object that A needs.

If not done in the above way, the cue may be given orally. At this point the drill also trains listening comprehension.

## V. PRESENTING DIALOGUE AS A STEPPING STONE TO FREE COMMUNICATION

We have said that the recreational dialogue is an essential bridging activity in a foreign language learning. Many dialogues may meet the criteria for a good teaching dialogue, but it does not guarantee that the dialogue will be fruitful in language teaching. The success of the use of the dialogue itself is greatly determined by the way the teacher presents it to his students. Thus, actually the heart of the matter is the technique of presenting the dialogue.

Of course, there are many ways of presenting a dialogue in a body of lesson. There are teachers who like to present the dialogue in the beginning of the lesson as an introductory material. This is the common way that teachers like. In this way the dialogue is given as a model. This way, however, may be justified since in the beginning the learners do need natural authentic models. There are also teachers who like to present the dialogue in the middle of the lesson; the dialogue is intended as a means of varying the classroom situation to keep it away from being monotonous. Still, there are others who tend to give the dialogue as homework. Students are asked to memorize it at home and in the next lesson they recite it in front of the class.

The above ways are manipulative in nature; whereas our concern here is to make the dialogue a stepping stone to free communication.

In this section, therefore, we will discuss this matter. The discussion is partly based on the writer's experience of his six month-teaching of "survival English" to Vietnamese refugees in Galang island. At this point, the writer uses an approach in which the dialogue is used as essential culminating activities.

To be successful in teaching through dialogue, of course, the teacher should make careful preparation. Here are some preparations necessary for the presentation of the dialogue.

1. Selection. The teacher should select the suitable dialogues for his classroom situation. For example, he must take the students' age into consideration. It would not be appropriate for a thirteen year old student to introduce his wife. Besides that, the teacher should also consider the proficiency level of the students, the learning goals as well as the interest of the students. If he wants to use available dialogues, therefore, he should judge whether they are suitable. If not, he has to revise them so that they will be more relevant to his students.

2. Time. The teacher should be able to arrange the division of the lesson time. In considering the time, the teacher may think of three main activities: 1. the students listen to, learn and perform the dialogue, 2. The students do the exercises related to the dialogue, 3. the students use the dialogue as a beachhead for free expression of ideas.



The third activity is the extremely important part of the work. So, it may be that this activity will take most of the time, or at least half of the class time.

3. Exercises. If the dialogue selected is not accompanied by drill exercises, the teacher should prepare the drills carefully. The drills are based on the dialogue lines.

In addition to the three things mentioned above, it is good if the dialogue has been written on the blackboard before the class begins, and then covered with paper or cloth so that the teacher is saving time. If not written on the blackboard, it will be better to write the dialogue on flip-charts, so that every time the teacher just opens the pages. Of course, the flip-charts should be made at home before the class.

Another thing that we need is that we give vocabulary homework to the students one day before the class. This homework contains a list of related vocabulary items and the translation in the learner's native tongue. So in the first day the teacher trains the students to pronounce the words in the list. The meaning of the vocabulary can be illustrated or explained by using translation, pictures or demonstration.

For instance, we want to use a dialogue on a situation "shopping for items of clothing". We list related vocabulary items as follows:

Noun: a shirt

a short dress

a long skirt

a blouse

a new suit

a light jacket

a heavy coat

an old shirt

a pair of pants

a pair of jeans.

a pair of shoes

a pair of gloves

size

color

a saleslady

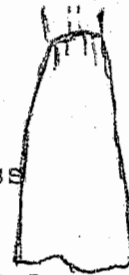
a salesman

a customer

etc.



a short dress



a long skirt



a new suit



an old shirt



a light jacket



a heavy coat

Adjective:

short.

long.

light

heavy.

Verbs: want

have

need

buy etc.

The second day, when the class begins, the teacher checks the homework quickly by saying the equivalents in the native tongue and the students

say the English version. The idea of this step is to check the students' understanding of the items as well as to check the correctness in pronouncing the words so that it will help in conducting the lesson. The lesson is ready to start, then.

For listening and identifying practice, the teacher cues with pictures. The first time, the teacher shows the pictures and says the sentences such as: T: This is a skirt. It's a long skirt.

This is a dress. It's a short dress.

This is a suit. It's a new suit.

At this time, therefore, the students should only listen .

The next, the students have to identify the items. The teacher asks "Yes-No" questions as he is showing a picture, and later he also asks questions starting with Wh.... .

T: Is this a dress? (shows a dress )

S: Yes, it is.

T: Is this a blouse? ( shows a skirt )

S: No, it isn't.

T: What's this?

S: It's a short dress. etc.

The drill can be done very quickly since the meanings of the vocabulary items are already learned and therefore familiar. It is also good to divide the class into two groups then, one of the two should ask the questions while the teacher just gives the cues orally or by showing pictures.

After listening and identifying practice, the dialogue is introduced to the students. The teacher reads it in a natural way and the students just listen. The following is an illustration of the dialogue to be presented:

Saleslady: Can I help you? What do you want?

Customer : Yes, please. I want a new shirt.

May I see that blue one?

S : Sure. What size do you wear?

Small or large?

C : Medium. How much is it?

S : It's fifteen dollars.

C : O.K. I'll take it.

To continue the manipulative practice, the students repeat after the teacher line by line. The teacher can vary the manipulative activity by choral repetition. First, the teacher simulates as the saleslady; then, the next one group of the students simulate as the saleslady while the other as the customer. In this way the teacher can provide a lot of practice in a comparatively short time.

Now it is time for the students to ask questions about the dialogue. If there are difficult words or constructions, the teacher should explain them for the students. The use of one in May I see that blue one, may be a problem for Indonesian students learning English. The teacher can tell them that one here means one shirt; it is used to refer to one thing out of several others.

The next step is structural drill presentation. The base patterns are taken from the dialogue. For example:

T: I want a new shirt. (she)  
 S: She wants a new shirt. (they)  
     They want a new shirt. ( his sister)  
     His sister wants a new shirt. etc.

A multiple-substitution drill may also be based on the dialogue. Here is an example to give more practice on the concord between third person singular and the verb.

@ I want a new shirt.   -she  
 S: She wants a new shirt. has  
     She has a new shirt.   - car  
     She has a new car.     - buy  
     She buys a new car.    - They  
     They buy a new car     - big house  
     They buy a big house . etc.

Note: The teacher leads the students to come to the conclusion of the verb forms as related to the subject. ( The verb takes an 's' when the subject is third person singular.

We can vary the drills accordingly. We can present to our students transformation drill as well. Example:

Teacher: They want a new house.  
 Student: Do they want a new house?  
 T       : He buys a new car.  
 S       : Does he buy a new car ?etc.

After the habituation drills we turn to the dialogue again as the culminating activity. Here we can reinforce memorization in the beginning. In order to help the students memorize the dialogue, presenting the written dialogue on the blackboard will be quite useful. Reading the dialogue will help fix it in the minds of the students, and it is really helpful especially for students who are visual-minded.

The use of blackboard will speed up the process of the students' memorization. As the dialogue is written on the blackboard, we can rub it out gradually through the following ways:

1. Removing one word or phrase at a time.

We go from the first line of the dialogue. The teacher says it, and as he does it, he erases one word or phrase from the line. The students say the entire line; the teacher erases another part of the same sentence; the students repeat again until the whole line is completely rubbed out. This procedure goes on until we finishes all the lines of the dialogue. Of course this way takes a rather long time.

2. Removing words from the right side of the

We can erase a strip of words from top to the bottom on the right side of the dialogue. The class goes through a repetition drill of the dialogue. They have to fill in the missing words. The teacher erases another strip of words and the class goes another repetition drill. This procedure

is repeated until the entire dialogue fully disappears from the blackboard.

### 3. Removing words of the same category.

The teacher erases all the nouns in the dialogue. The students do the repetition practice of the dialogue filling the missing nouns. Next, the teacher erases all the adjectives or all the verbs or all the prepositions or other category of words and the students complete the dialogue again. This procedure is done until the whole dialogue has disappeared.

After such memorization prompting, we can lead the students to further steps towards free communication.

In order to provide the students with more communicative practice, the teacher can start by asking questions about the dialogue. For example from the dialogue between the saleslady and the customer above the teacher may raise such questions as:- Do you think they talk in a restaurant?

- What does the customer want to buy?
- Does he want a blue jacket?
- What is the size ?
- How much is the price? etc.

The teacher can also alter the dialogue so that it is more realistic. This can be achieved by changing the characters or the participants with some students in the class. Or, he may infuse

some sense of reality into the dialogue. By using the sentences in the dialogue as the basis of new questions, the teacher can insist the students on answering questions according to the students' reality, or to general facts in the culture. For example:

- Do you like yellow shirts?
- What color do you like most?
- What about your brother? What is his favourite color?
- What size do you wear now, Budi?

First, the teacher makes several questions and individual students answer. Later, the teacher just encourage the students to make similar questions to the class. It is often found that students tend to dare enough ask the teacher such questions.

It is also good practice towards free communication for the students to make some changes within the framework of the dialogue. Based on the dialogue between the saleslady and the customer above, a pair of students may change the item bought, the color, the amount or the number of items, as well as the price. Creative students may even start bargaining the price. Example:

Susi: Good morning. Can I help you?

Budi: Yes, please. I want to buy a pair of jeans.

S : What color do you need? Blue?

B : Yes. How much are they?



Susi: They're thirty five dollars.

Budi: Too expensive? Thirty dollars.

Susi: O.K. Here you are.

Budi: Thank you.

This exercise has provided the students with considerable opportunity to express themselves freely. The students may make several mistakes in the presentation of their dialogue versions. In this case, the teacher should not correct them directly. He just notes down the mistakes and after the pair has finished presenting the dialogue he can make the correction. In this way the correction is not only intended to the pair but to all of the students in the class.

For a more communicative practice, the teacher may only introduce a situation similar to that of the dialogue that has been learned. The situation of the dialogue above, for example, may be changed into one in which one is shopping for vegetables and fruits in the supermarket, or in which one is buying some stamps and envelopes.

To give greater challenge to the students, this exercise can be recorded. It is quite useful since the dialogue can be played back to show the students' mistakes. If not, the other students in class can participate to detect the mistakes made by the speakers. Then later, they have to tell the class what the mistakes are.

When the students are already able to do the previous exercises acceptably, it is time for the teacher to give the students more freedom in using the language. They are expected to be able to express themselves freely. Yet, in this phase they still certainly need some stimuli from the teacher.

In order to encourage this practice, the class can be formed into smaller groups; each group may discuss the same material. This phase can be said as completely communicative, so it is not necessary that the discussion is based on the dialogue. Instead, the discussion may be based on topics chosen from the students' preference.

C O N C L U S I O N

This writing is not attempting to suggest a new method. It is just an overview on commonly used procedures with some sorts of variation that may be useful and applicable to reach the ultimate goal of language learning, the ability to speak it.

The ability to speak a language is not the same as the ability to imitate or reproduce model utterances or conversational exchanges in the target language. To speak a language means to use utterances in the target language because of the necessity to communicate something to others.

It is undeniable that structural pattern drills are useful in language learning. Yet, they still remain manipulative in nature, so that there is only little element of communication. In order to help students to develop the ability to communicate, there are several ways; dialogue use is one of them. Structural pattern drills and dialogue exploitation are complementary. The combination of the drills and dialogues can lead to successful bridging activity that finally will lead students to free expression of ideas.

A dialogue should be presented as a culminating activity. It is not only presented as an introductory material or as a means of changing classroom situation. The dialogue presentation may occupy the greatest part of the class time.

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