

S.E.A.L.

SECONDARY ENGLISH FOR ADULT LEARNERS

GENERAL PEDAGOGICAL GUIDE

MAY 1997

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This pedagogical guide has been prepared as an accompaniment
to the **Secondary English for Adult Learners** program
of the ministère de l'Éducation du Québec
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In completing one discovery we never fail to get an imperfect knowledge of others of which we could have no idea before, so that we cannot solve one doubt without creating several new ones.

Joseph Priestley, *Experiments and Observations on Different Kinds of Air*, 1775-86

Contents

Introduction to the Guide	1
The Program: Secondary English for Adult Learners	3
A note on the weighting of language functions in SEAL objectives	14
Principles of the Pedagogical Approach	15
Varieties of whole discourse	16
Macro-functions of language	16
The varieties of discourse determined by the program	16
Roles of the learner as receiver/sender of communication	18
Natural contexts	18
Language skills and their integration	18
Understanding the components of communication	19
The needs and experience of the learner	21
Role of the adult as a learner	21
Organizational strategies for learning	22
Organizational Strategies for Comprehension	23
Organizational Strategies for Composition	23
Other processes	26
Cognitive processes	26
Beyond cognition: objectification	28
Interaction: a fundamental process	32
Group-work processes	33
HELPFUL BEHAVIOURS IN TASK GROUPS	33
UNHELPFUL BEHAVIOURS IN TASK GROUPS	36
The processes of peer review and feedback	37
The processes of reading and writing	39
RESPONSE TO READING	40
WRITING PROCESS	44
JOURNALS AND THE INNER VOICE	48
Speaking and listening	50
Learners attitudes	52
The role of the teacher	53
Learning in Multi-level Classrooms	54
The Place of Grammar	56
Elements of English Usage	58

Applications of the pedagogical approach	61
The proposed learning material	61
Planning lessons: general principles	61
Other resources	64
Using the electronic media	64
Appendix A: Film and video resources	65
Other sources	66
Appendix B: Notes on copyright protection	67
Notes on the reproduction of copyrighted written material.	67
BIBLIOGRAPHY	68

Introduction to the Guide

This is a guide to using the Secondary English for Adult Learners program and its accompanying material. As such, it is to be taken neither as a definitive analysis of the program, nor as a final authority on how to teach the program. We hope that teachers will find it a useful complement to their own experience and knowledge of how to help adults learn English.

Think of this as a traveller's guidebook. A good guide gives necessary information clearly, and points out possibilities available to the voyager, without insisting on a single itinerary, without saying that there is a single path to the destination. We would appreciate feedback on how well this guide fulfills its purpose.

The Program: Secondary English for Adult Learners

Secondary English for Adult Learners (SEAL) is the required secondary-level English as a first language program for adults in the English-language general education sector in Québec, and replaces the *Programme par objectifs*. The SEAL program is organized into ten levels of learning: two for each year of secondary school.

The following table shows the course numbers, their secondary degree, and general descriptive titles. Each course is of 60 hours and 4 credits.

COURSE #	SECONDARY	COURSE TITLE
ENG 1061-3 ENG 1062-3	I	Language in Everyday Life Language and Self-expression
ENG 2062-3 ENG 2061-3	II	Language, Media and Communication Language for Creativity
ENG 3062-3 ENG 3061-3	III	Language to Persuade Language to Inform
ENG 4061-3 ENG 4062-3	IV	Language for Enjoyment Language in Work and Society
ENG 5061-3 ENG 5062-3	V	Language in Drama and Literature Language and Learning

Teachers will necessarily read the program, which includes an introductory essay on the theoretical foundations on which it was conceived, clearly delineates the terminal and intermediate learning objectives to be attained by learners, and sets out indicators for the attainment of the objectives. All remarks in this pedagogical guide as to the foundations of the program and its content must be taken simply as a gloss of the primary source, which is the SEAL program itself.

Along similar lines, it is the program and not the proposed accompanying teaching material that must govern the pedagogy used in the classroom. The program is the obligatory map; the learning material that has been provided as a possible accompaniment is entirely optional, although effort has not been spared to make the learning material a worthy companion to the program.

The tables on the following pages give the general and specific objectives at each level.

**Secondary I
ENG 1061-3**

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The student will demonstrate an ability to understand and compose oral and written discourse intended to influence action.

FOCUS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RELATED CONTENT
Listening	by listening to and understanding oral messages and instructions	listening experiences: messages instructions
Reading	by reading and understanding instruction manuals	reading experiences: instruction manuals
Speaking	by explaining a process orally and by formulating and giving messages orally	oral language experiences: explaining processes giving messages
Writing	by writing instructions and directions	writing experiences: instructions directions

**Secondary I
ENG 1062-3**

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The student will demonstrate an ability to understand oral and written discourse intended to reveal the self and to evoke aesthetic appreciation, and to compose oral and written discourse intended to reveal the self.

FOCUS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RELATED CONTENT
Listening	by listening to and understanding songs, poems and expressive conversations	listening experiences: songs and poems expressive conversations
Reading	by reading and understanding poems, diaries, journals, informal expressive essays	reading experiences: poems diaries and journals expressive essays
Speaking	by participating in conversations to reinforce personal relationships	oral language experiences: personal conversations
Writing	by writing occasional letters and personal letters	writing experiences: occasional letters personal letters

**Secondary II
ENG 2062-3**

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The student will demonstrate an ability to understand and compose oral and written discourse intended to obtain or impart information.

FOCUS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RELATED CONTENT
Listening	by listening to and understanding radio and television news reports	listening experiences: radio and television news reports
Reading	by reading and understanding newspaper reports	reading experiences: newspaper reports
Speaking	by participating in conversations in order to report events	oral language experiences: conversations to report events
Writing	by writing factual summaries and letters requesting information	writing experiences: factual summaries letters requesting information

**Secondary II
ENG 2061-3**

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The student will demonstrate an ability to understand and compose oral and written discourse intended to evoke aesthetic appreciation.

FOCUS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RELATED CONTENT
Listening	by listening to/viewing and understanding radio or television programs	listening/viewing experiences: television and radio programs
Reading	by reading and understanding short stories and one-act plays	reading experiences: short stories
Speaking	by recounting stories	oral language experiences: storytelling
Writing	by engaging in creative writing	writing experiences: narratives descriptions character sketches poems

**Secondary III
ENG 3062-3**

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The student will demonstrate an ability to understand and compose oral and written discourse intended to influence action, behavior or opinion.

FOCUS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RELATED CONTENT
Listening	by listening to and understanding oral commentaries	listening/viewing experiences: oral commentaries
Reading	by reading and understanding persuasive texts	reading experiences: editorials letters of opinion persuasive articles
Speaking	by participating in discussions to reach a consensus	oral language experiences: discussions
Writing	by writing letters of opinion and complaint	writing experiences: letters of opinion letters of complaint

**Secondary III
ENG 3061-3**

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

**The student will demonstrate an ability to understand
and compose oral and written discourse intended to inform.**

FOCUS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RELATED CONTENT
Listening	by listening to and understanding documentaries	listening/viewing experiences: documentaries
Reading	by reading and understanding	reading experiences: articles
Speaking	by participating in discussions to exchange information	oral language experiences: discussions
Writing	by writing informative texts	writing experiences: informative texts

**Secondary IV
ENG 4061-3**

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The student will demonstrate an ability to understand oral and written discourse intended to evoke aesthetic appreciation and to inform, and to compose oral and written discourse intended to inform.

FOCUS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RELATED CONTENT
Listening	by viewing and understanding movies	listening/viewing experiences: movies
Reading	by reading and understanding novellas and entertainment reviews	reading experiences: novellas entertainment reviews
Speaking	by participating in discussions to exchange ideas	oral language experiences: discussions
Writing	by writing book and movie reviews	writing experiences: book and movie reviews

**Secondary IV
ENG 4062-3**

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The student will demonstrate an ability to understand and compose oral and written discourse intended to inform and to influence action, and to understand written discourse intended to evoke aesthetic appreciation.

FOCUS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RELATED CONTENT
Listening	by listening to and understanding interviews	listening/viewing experiences: interviews
Reading	by reading and understanding employment ads, job-related literature and biographies	reading experiences: employment ads contracts job-related literature biographies
Speaking	by participating in interviews and a variety of social speaking situations	oral language experiences: interviews social speaking situations
Writing	by writing résumés and letters of application	writing experiences: résumés letters of application

**Secondary V
ENG 5061-3**

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The student will demonstrate an ability to understand oral and written discourse intended to evoke aesthetic appreciation, to compose oral discourse intended to evoke aesthetic appreciation or to inform, and to compose written discourse intended to inform.

FOCUS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RELATED CONTENT
Listening	by viewing and understanding plays	listening/viewing experiences: plays
Reading	by reading and understanding novels	reading experiences: novels
Speaking	by participating in a dramatization or discussions related to a play or novel	oral language experiences: dramatizations discussions
Writing	by writing a critical analysis of a play or novel	writing experiences: critical analyses

**Secondary V
ENG 5062-3**

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The student will demonstrate an ability to understand and compose oral and written discourse intended to inform.

FOCUS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RELATED CONTENT
Listening	by listening to and understanding lectures	listening experiences: lectures
Reading	by reading and understanding academic material	reading experiences: reference material articles research documents
Speaking	by giving an oral presentation	oral language experiences: oral presentations
Writing	by writing a research paper	writing experiences: research papers

A note on the weighting of language functions in SEAL objectives

It can easily be seen that the functions of language are not given equal weight in relation to the four language skills. For example, the poetic function of language (language intended for aesthetic appreciation) is given more prominence in comprehension (reading, listening) than in composition (speaking, writing), since though the SEAL program aims to foster an appreciation of poetic language and literature in all learners, it does not have as a primary goal to turn learners into poets, novelists and the like.

Likewise, the transactional-informative function (language intended to inform), a very broad category of language use including reports, narratives, descriptions, generalizations, theories, and so on, is given considerable weight in the learning objectives.

These function weightings are supported by the needs analysis survey that was conducted prior to development of the SEAL objectives.

Principles of the Pedagogical Approach

The SEAL program conceives of language as a tool for the formulation of thought and as a means for communication. Its central principles, explained more fully in the following pages, are briefly stated below:

1. Language learners should treat varieties of whole discourse
2. with respect to all the macro-functions of language (transactional, expressive and poetic),
3. while taking on a variety of sender and receiver roles
4. in natural contexts.

5. None of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) is inherently more important than the others. These language skills develop best in integration, reflecting real language use, mutually reinforcing each other.

6. Language learners must understand the components of communication, which in any specific context of use are: the type and medium of the discourse, the functions of the language, the message carried by the discourse, the characteristics of the relationship between the sender and receiver of the language, sociolinguistic conventions governing the use of the language, the formal (i.e., grammatical and rhetorical) aspects of the language.

7. Adults will learn best when dealing with discourse which has some bearing on their lives and of which they can understand the practical significance for their own needs in relation to their own experience.

8. Adults students should learn about learning. To this end:
9. adult learners should develop appropriate organizational strategies for learning,
10. and develop competence in thought and communication by engaging in appropriate processes.

11. Learners should come to value the ability both to participate effectively in the communication process and to use language effectively in the formulation of thought.

12. The role of the teacher is to facilitate learning and not simply to dispense information.

Varieties of whole discourse

Discourse may be defined as the communication of meaning by language.

According to this definition, language is discourse if used within a meaningful situation, for a purpose, by a sender for a receiver.

The SEAL program agrees with Moffett (1968) in proposing “that curriculum units and sequence be founded on different kinds of discourse” which will allow learners to communicate in “a variety of sender and receiver roles in a variety of relations” (SEAL program).

The reason for including different sorts of discourse in the syllabus is not for the simple sake of variety; it is so that learners of the language may develop their competence in a number of roles in language use. This can only be done by exercising the language-user roles with different kinds of discourse.

Macro-functions of language

This variety of discourse types must include discourse in all the principal language functions: expressive (language close to the self, intended to reveal the sender to a receiver sharing an understanding of context), poetic (language as an artistic medium the purpose of which is to please or satisfy; language for its own sake), and transactional. The transactional function is further divided into conative (language intended to influence behaviour, attitude or opinions by ordering, instructing, advising or persuading) and informative (language which records, reports, classifies, compares, asks and answers questions, speculates, hypothesizes). Any discourse usually has more than one function; SEAL assigns discourses to function categories on the basis of their predominant functional focus.

The varieties of discourse determined by the program

For each general objective in the SEAL program, related content in the form of specific discourse types has been determined (see the table of prescribed discourse types, Figure 2 on the following page). This is not to say that the SEAL program prescribes which specific examples of each discourse type are to be covered in class. Teachers, in conjunction with their schools and with their learners, will arrive at choices which suit the contexts in which they teach and are aligned with the needs and interests of their learners. Often, the learners themselves will find and choose the example of the discourse type prescribed. For example, ENG 2062-3: Language, Media and Communication deals principally with the news. Clearly this course must make use of news discourse which is topical and of interest to the learners, and not just recycled news from twenty years ago; it is not primarily a history course. Nor would invented news be suitable, except as an exercise in creativity; the point is to expose learners to real discourse in natural contexts.

The table on the following page gives the discourse types at each level prescribed by the SEAL program.

RELATED CONTENT

	ENG	LISTENING EXPERIENCES	READING EXPERIENCES	SPEAKING EXPERIENCES	WRITING EXPERIENCES
Sec. I	1061-3	Oral messages and instructions	Instruction manuals	Explaining a process, and giving messages	Instructions and directions
	1062-3	Songs, poems, expressive conversations	Poems, diaries, journals or informal expressive essays	Expressive conversations to reinforce personal relationships	Occasional letters, personal letters
Sec. II	2062-3	News reports	Short newspaper reports	Conversations to report events	Factual summaries
	2061-3	TV/Radio episodes	Short stories, one-act plays	Storytelling	Creative writing
Sec. III	3062-3	Commentaries	Persuasive texts: editorials, letters of opinion, persuasive articles	Discussions to reach a consensus	Letters of opinion, letters of complaint
	3061-3	Documentaries	Newspaper or magazine articles	Discussions to exchange information	Informative text
Sec. IV	4061-3	Movies	Novellas; entertainment reviews	Discussions to exchange ideas	Book, movie reviews
	4062-3	Interviews	Employment ads, contracts, job-related literature, biographies	Interviews, "social speaking"	Résumés, letters of application for employment
Sec. V	5061-3	Plays	Novels	Discussions or dramatization	Critical analyses
	5062-3	Lectures	Academic material	Oral presentations	Research papers

Roles of the learner as receiver/sender of communication

Composing (sending) and responding (receiving) are together the two principal and general intellectual operations of the language-learning process.

Learners in the SEAL program must be given tasks which allow them to exercise roles both as sender/composer (speaker and writer) of language and receiver/responder (listener and reader) of language.

For this to occur, learners need to be put into situations where they can communicate with others as receivers and senders of language, and thus where social relations are a condition for the accomplishment of given tasks.

Natural contexts

Contexts for learning ought to be significant for the learners and appropriate to their needs; they must be varied enough to reflect and simulate the myriad communication contexts that learners encounter as users of language in real life.

As well, learning contexts must challenge students sufficiently to stimulate them to discover tools of language sophisticated enough to permit them to accomplish their purposes in communication. The SEAL program offers such varied contexts. Learners watch, discuss and reflect on the news; write letters; engage in discussions and conversations; watch films and television; read novels and poetry; write critical papers...

Language skills and their integration

The four language skills are not separate in language development; they reinforce each other in use and are combined in the communication process. Reading implies that writing has occurred, while listening generally means listening to what someone says.

The SEAL program insists that the best development of language skills comes about through their integration in the processes of learning by doing and reflecting on doing. Thus all the skills are important, and all need to be practised by learners. In order that the use and practice of the skills lead to development, it is proposed that they be integrated in the classroom. What does this mean?

A teacher may ask a learner to read, and go no further than to ask for proof that the reading has been done. And then the teacher may ask the learner to write, and leave it there. However, this is not how reading and writing happen in natural language use. We read, reflect in the inner voice on what we read, and then talk about what we have read in order to elaborate and clarify our response to our reading. We write a story, re-read what we have written, ask others to comment on it, and then we revise. We speak, and then listen as others react to what we have said. Furthermore, development of any one area of language ability has been found to reinforce and promote growth in the other areas.

These are but a few examples of what the integration of language skills means in communication. Language competence is not only the mechanical ability to manipulate a limited and definable set of formal patterns correctly; it is a more general ability to use language appropriately for particular purposes in particular situations for specific audiences, to organize and direct and interpret experience by means of symbolic representation, and thus to create meaning. Language develops naturally and continuously through the human need to understand and communicate meaning.

Understanding the components of communication

Learners should develop an understanding of the various components of communication so that they may use language thoughtfully and appropriately in situations with others. These components, as explained below, are to be seen in relation to the discourse contexts determined by the learning objectives of the SEAL program.

- **Type and medium of discourse**

Any instance of discourse can be partially characterized by the type which gives it form (e.g., personal letters, instruction manuals, short stories, interviews, reports, etc.), and by the medium which conveys it (aural, visual, print...). The learner must develop the ability to respond to and employ the significant attributes of the various types and media of discourse as specified in the related content for each objective.

- **Functions of language**

The four specific macro-functions of language (expressive, informative, conative and poetic), are indicated by the general objectives of the program. These functions are intimately related to specific contexts and discourse types. The learner needs to develop the ability to respond to and employ function(s) of language appropriate to the contexts and discourse types indicated in the specific objectives and related content of the program.

- **Message**

All instances of communication involve a set of relations among a sender, a receiver and a message. In linguistic communication, the message is formulated in a symbolic system (language), given form in a specific type of discourse, and transmitted through a particular medium. An understanding of these elements is crucial for both the sender who composes the message and the receiver who comprehends it. The learner needs the ability to comprehend and compose messages within the context of the discourses specified by the related content for each objective.

- **Receiver/sender: characteristics, relationship**

The relationship between the sender and receiver within the communication process varies along a continuum with respect to degree of familiarity, where at one end the sender and receiver are the same (as in diaries and journals) and at the other end the audience is a large anonymous group (as in publication). Furthermore, both sender and receiver have certain characteristics, such as the degree of their knowledge, their needs and purposes, which must be taken into account if communication is to be effective. Finally, effective communication involves, for the receiver, responding in an individual way, and, for the sender, assuming an individual voice. It is through accommodating the responses of others that this individual viewpoint is confirmed or reshaped. The

learner needs to develop the ability to comprehend and compose discourse with an awareness of both the sender's and receiver's characteristics and purposes and the relationship that exists between them. The learner also needs the ability to respond and compose from an individual viewpoint and to accommodate the responses of others in confirming or reshaping this viewpoint.

- **Sociolinguistic conventions**

Understanding sociolinguistic conventions involves being able to respond to and employ a dialect, a register, and the usage conventions appropriate to a specific context. The audience and purpose identified within each context determine the appropriate dialect (i.e., language variety common to a particular speech community), register (i.e., degree of formality) and conventions of usage (i.e., the changing fashions of "correctness" within a specific dialect). Sociolinguistic conventions also include those non-verbal aspects of communication such as gesture, eye-contact, facial expression, etc. The learner must develop the ability to understand and compose language which is appropriate to the particular situation in which it is used.

- **Formal aspects of discourse: grammatical and textual**

The formal aspects of discourse comprise both grammatical rules of usage and textual conventions. The former include rules of lexis, morphology and syntax. The latter include cohesion devices, by which utterances/sentences are joined together to form a unified piece of discourse, and forms of rhetorical organization specific to each discourse type. The learner must develop the ability to understand and employ these aspects of discourse, bearing in mind that appropriateness to the context determines the degree to which formal accuracy is required.

That learners must develop understanding of the components of communication means more than that they be able simply to identify these components.

To see more explicitly how the matter of understanding the components of a communicative situation might be worked out in practice, let us take the speaking objective of ENG 1061-3 of the SEAL program as an example:

The student will demonstrate an ability...to compose oral discourse...intended to reveal the self by participating in conversations to reinforce personal relationships.

In order to attain this objective, learners have to understand their purpose in speaking, their relationship with their interlocutors, the meaning(s) they wish to convey, characteristics of the type and medium of the discourse required, the appropriate level of language to use, the formal and textual characteristics of the discourse involved in conveying their message(s). This is not to say that learners need to be able to name these components of the communicative situation, but rather to say that their speaking must display an understanding of these aspects.

Thus, learners must develop the ability to put their understanding of aspects of communication to use. When writing to apply for a job interview, for instance, they will compose a

letter (understanding the appropriate type and medium of discourse for the communication goal), use a particular, formal level of language (understanding the relationship between sender and receiver and the necessary formal characteristics of English to accomplish the required level of language) and a specific format (understanding the sociolinguistic component), include necessary and leave out irrelevant information (understanding the message they want to convey and their purpose in conveying it), cast the letter within the conative function of language (understanding that the purpose of the letter is to make its reader act in a desired way). But they will write the letter, and not simply be able to name aspects of the hypothetical communicative situation.

How do learners develop an understanding of the components of communication? By undertaking, in cooperation with others, tasks that they can only perform by developing such understanding. By working with others and sharing both what they know and the questions they have. By referring to authorities, including learning material, reference books and their teacher. By reflecting on, thinking about and discussing what they are doing with language in order to accomplish their learning tasks.

The needs and experience of the learner

The needs and experience of the adult learner must be brought into the language learning process. In a fundamental way, this has influenced the development of the SEAL program in its choice of general and intermediate objectives as well as in the statement of indicators through which the objectives are to be attained.

However, teachers are not to suppose that because both the needs and experience of learners have been considered in the creation of the program that they can forget about them and teach as though they were already taken care of. In fact, the needs and experience of the learners will be part and parcel of what happens in the classroom; they will be evident in the way learners respond to tasks and to text, in the language they use, in the questions they ask, the answers they give and the way they work alone and in task groups.

This is all to the good. The more clearly the needs of learners are expressed and clarified, the greater the chances that we can help them learn to meet their learning needs. The more learners' experience becomes part of learning, the more learners will respond to what they learn and the more they will be motivated to learn further.

Perceptive teachers will know how to respond to these manifestations of the learner's personality, and how to adapt their teaching to their learners' needs and experience.

Role of the adult as a learner

Ideally, adult learners in this program will have clear ideas as to their own language needs, be prepared to work cooperatively with their peers, be resourceful enough to do a fair part of their learning without the constant presence of a teacher telling them what to do, be able to organize their own learning time and be ready to assess their own progress. In short, the adult learner will demonstrate considerable autonomy in the learning process.

We know from experience that ideal is not real. Thus it becomes in significant part the teacher's responsibility to work closely with learners to guide them towards the learning autonomy suggested by the ideal.

Organizational strategies for learning

This section of the guide will consider strategies for organizing learning.

A non-exhaustive list of these strategies, seen as processes of overt behaviour for organizing individual learning or task work in large or small groups, is found on the next page. It is followed by examples illustrating the application of some of the organizational strategies.

Before turning to the list and the examples, we think it a good idea to clarify what is meant by organizational strategies as overt behaviour. Organizational strategies are ways of arranging one's efforts in relation to a particular task or problem. They are overt processes a learner, problem-solver, or task performer follows in order to achieve a satisfactory outcome. Each organizational strategy successfully undertaken potentially enables the learner to achieve success in subsequent strategies and in task outcomes. Beyond this, though, is the fundamental idea that to undertake any organizational strategy, learners need to use language and to think, and thus such strategies are in fact an inherent part of the practice through which both language and thought develop.

The organizational strategies which concern us here are those involved in the comprehension and composition of language in task-based learning. The listing that follows consists only of those strategies we believe to be the principal and necessary ones for most language-learning tasks.

Using organizational strategies does not come naturally to many adult learners. One of the teacher's major duties is to show learners what organizational strategies are and how they can provide the framework for successful task accomplishment. Adept teachers will show learners how to appropriate these strategies for themselves, not as automatisms but as conscious processes of reflective and ongoing practice toward developing the autonomy of learning which is the goal of education.

Organizational Strategies for Comprehension

- **Preparing**
active predicting, anticipating content
formulating questions*
- **Engaging**
responding to the text*
recording responses
taking notes
asking questions about the text
- **Refining**
sharing responses with others
returning to the text (reading/listening again)
developing meaning more fully
confirming/modifying initial response

Organizational Strategies for Composition

- **Collecting**
brainstorming
concept mapping
freewriting
researching
note-taking
- **Planning**
developing probe questions
selecting
focusing*
organizing, grouping, sequencing
outlining
- **Developing**
rehearsing
drafting
- **Refining**
obtaining feedback
analyzing, evaluating*
revising content
editing for form, style, clarity

In the above list, the strategies marked with an asterisk could be considered either as unobservable or as overt. It is their observable manifestation that are the focus here. This means, for instance in the case of responding to text, explicitly expressed response rather than interiorized response carried out in the inner voice.

It is to be understood that though organizational strategies are both necessary and natural in

comprehending and composing communication and in the formulation of thought, and must be provided for in the conditions and tasks set for learning, they cannot themselves be considered the aims of learning, but are rather among the means by which development will occur.

It is to be kept in mind that involvement in and consciousness-raising work on these organizational strategies are more necessary for some learners than for others. As regards revision, for example, some learners may be able to achieve satisfactory outcomes for certain writing tasks without revising initial drafts; others may need to engage in sustained revision before completing the same tasks.

Example A: Use of organizational strategies in comprehension

Task: Read and understand a magazine article

Application of organizational strategies:

1. Learners predict content of text from consideration of title, or of first paragraph, etc. (preparing).
2. Learners share predictions with each other (refining).
3. Learners record predictions (engaging).
4. Based on what they know already about the subject, what they don't know, and what they want to know, learners formulate questions as to content of article (preparing).
5. Learners share questions with each other, and choose those questions they most want answers to (refining).
6. Learners record selected questions (engaging).
7. Learners read and respond to text (engaging).
8. Learners take notes on text while reading (engaging).
9. Learners ask questions about text as read (engaging).
10. Learners share understanding of text (refining).
11. Learners verify whether predictions were correct (refining).
12. Learners verify whether they have found in the text answers to selected questions (refining);
13. Learners return to text and read again to enrich and develop meaning more fully (refining).
14. Learners confirm or modify all initial responses (predictions, questions, etc.) (refining).

Example B: Use of organizational strategies in composition

Task: Write a letter of complaint

Application of organizational strategies:

1. Learners together brainstorm for possible subjects for letters of complaint (collecting).
2. Learners individually select a subject for a letter of complaint (planning).
3. Learners research existing samples and forms of letters of complaint (collecting).
4. Learners together focus on formal and rhetorical characteristics of letters of complaint (planning).
5. Learners individually note ideas for letter of complaint (collecting).
6. Learners individually organize and sequence ideas for their letter of complaint (planning).
7. Learners individually draft letter of complaint (developing).
8. Learners obtain feedback on draft of letter (refining).
9. Learners offer feedback on letters of peers (refining).
10. Learners evaluate feedback received (refining).
11. Learners individually revise letter of complaint (refining);
12. Learners accomplish final editing of letter for form, style, clarity, subsequent to final feedback if necessary (refining).

Notice that in both the examples of application of organizational strategies offered above, there are in fact elements of composition in the example given as comprehension (e.g., when learners orally share their questions about the text, and later their understanding of it), and elements of comprehension in the example given as composition (e.g., when learners research examples of letters of complaint and their forms).

This is a further example of how language skills are to be integrated in classroom practice. Comprehension often requires composition of either speech or writing for clarification and refinement. Likewise, composition requires comprehension of speech or text for clarification and refinement.

The theme of interactive learner groups which runs through the two applications laid out above is the focus of a section in this guide entitled Group work processes. Interaction is also treated briefly in the section entitled Interaction: a fundamental process.

Now we shall turn our attention to some of the other processes necessary for the development of competence in language: the cognitive processes central to efficient and effective formulation and expression of thought, and the interactive process in language learning. The guide will also deal with skill-focused processes of particular importance in whole-

language pedagogy such as the response to reading and the writing process. Also, we shall consider the matter of learner reflection on learning, under the heading Beyond cognition: objectification.

Other processes

Of the processes to be discussed here some, such as the cognitive processes, are not directly observable behaviour. Others, such as the fundamental process of interaction in learning, are most definitely observable. Still others, such as the process of response to reading and the process of writing combine both observable and non-observable aspects. The guide will treat these processes in the order in which they appear in the list below:

- **cognitive processes**
- **beyond cognition: objectification**
- **interaction as a fundamental process**
- **group work:**
 - Helpful behaviours in task groups
 - Unhelpful behaviours in task groups
- **peer review and feedback**
- **reading and writing:**
 - Response to reading
 - Writing process
 - Journals and the inner voice
- **speaking and listening**

Cognitive processes

The term 'cognition' refers to all the processes by which...sensory input is transformed, reduced, elaborated, stored, recovered, and used. It is concerned with these processes even when they operate in the absence of relevant stimulation, as in images and hallucinations. Such terms as sensation, perception, imagery, retention, recall, problem-solving, and thinking, among many others, refer to hypothetical stages or aspects of cognition. (Neiser, 1967)

Following is a brief analysis of the major categories within the cognitive domain. For each cognitive category, we have given a definition, followed by common verbs which can be used to illustrate learning within the category. These verbs should be apprehended in the light of tasks for the use of language in appropriate learning situations.

Knowing

The bringing of information to conscious mind; the remembering of what has been learnt previously. Typical verbs for stating learning: identify, list, name, outline, reproduce, repeat, recall, state, define, describe.

Comprehending

Understanding meaning; interpreting. Typical verbs for stating learning: distinguish, generalize, estimate, convert, give examples, infer, paraphrase, predict, rewrite, summarize, explain.

Applying

Using what has been learnt in concrete situations. Typical verbs for stating learning: transfer, transform, compute, demonstrate, manipulate, modify, operate, predict, prepare, produce, relate, show, solve, use, employ.

Analysing

Deconstructing the whole into its parts in order to understand its organization. Typical verbs for stating learning: break down, differentiate, discriminate, identify, illustrate, infer, outline, point out, relate, separate, subdivide, diagram.

Synthesizing

Reconstructing parts to form a whole. Typical verbs for stating learning: combine, build up, categorize, compose, create, design, explain, generate, organize, rearrange, reconstruct, revise, rewrite, tell, write, compile.

Evaluating

Using criteria to arrive at a value judgement. Typical verbs for stating learning: compare, contrast, explain, justify, appraise, criticize, interpret, support, value, judge.

The importance of the cognitive processes in the development of language competence is that language and cognition seem to develop through reciprocal practice as the language user reaches for meaning in experience. As the SEAL program remarks:

In their search to make sense of their experience, people constantly strive for higher-order structures and hence organize their concepts in increasingly complex language. Language is thus seen to be a tool for thought rather than simply an expression of it.

[Language is] part of a natural human competence to organize experience by means of symbolic representation. This competence...is a power that all learners possess and bring to the classroom where they can learn to use it more effectively for their own purposes. It develops naturally and continuously through the individual's personal search for meaning and coherence in experience.

By designing tasks which explicitly involve learners in cognitive processes and the formulation of thought in language, teachers can favour this reciprocal process.

Thus the teacher may design a task which calls on learners to compare one argument with another, to contrast a short story in text with its treatment in film, to evaluate the use of character development within a novel, to generate ideas for solving a specific problem read about in the news and to categorize these ideas, to justify the use of certain descriptive expressions in their writing, to discriminate between a personal letter and a business letter, to identify the principal and supporting ideas in a persuasive article.

It is, of course, of the utmost importance that learners be given the tools to perform these tasks. We cannot ask a student to evaluate characters in a novel if the student does not know what it means to evaluate, what criteria for evaluation are, and if she did not read the novel...

SEAL conceives of language as a tool for the formulation of thought and as a means of communication among people. In everyday terms, the cognitive processes described above are the basic matter of thinking and the process of making sense of experience, and are thus irreducibly tied to language and the formulation of thought in language.

In this regard, the prime question for the teacher is: How can tasks and activities be set up to provide a context in which the whole variety of cognitive processes can be engaged in by the learner?

The sections of this guide entitled Learning material and Planning lessons offer some concrete guidelines.

Beyond cognition: objectification

The term objectification here means thinking about and reflecting on what one has done, is doing or will do. To objectify one's thinking is to make consciously into an object of thought cognitive processes which are internalized when they happen. To objectify one's actions, similarly, is to reflect on them consciously and at will.

The examples below will consider the same classroom task worked on by learners in two ways: first excluding, and then including, the process of objectification. Subsequently, we shall discuss briefly to what extent objectification can be useful for aspects of the learning process other than thinking.

Example 1: A classroom task without objectification

Task: understand and evaluate a newspaper review of a film

Situation: sixteen students, one teacher; no one has seen the movie

Directives given by the teacher:

“Here is a review of a new film. In groups of four, read and evaluate it. Is it a good review or a bad review? Be prepared to support your conclusion.”

Task process:

1. Students get into groups of four, read the review, and give their opinions of it.
2. Students in each group name a reporter to present the conclusions of the group to the whole class.
3. Groups report to the whole class, supporting their conclusions by restating the opinions expressed in the group.
4. The class may try to arrive at a consensus evaluation of the review, based on opinions of each group.
5. Teacher presents next task.

Example 2: A classroom task with objectification

Task: understand and evaluate a newspaper review of a film

Situation: sixteen students, one teacher, no one has seen the movie.

Directives given by the teacher:

“Here is a review of a new film. In groups of four, read and evaluate the review. Is it a good review or a bad review? Be prepared to support your conclusion. Be prepared also to report on the procedure your group undertook to accomplish the task.”

Task process:

1. Students get into groups of four. In each group, students briefly discuss the task to clarify it and to make sure everyone has the same understanding of the objective of the task. [The objectification: clarification of the task, making the meaning of the task conscious for all in the group.]
2. The group consciously adopts a particular procedure for undertaking the task. The members of the group might decide first, for example, to adopt a specific way of reading in order to maximize return on effort and minimize the time required. (E.g., divide the reading into four sections, each group member reading one section and then reporting on it to the others: this maximizes the return on time spent reading. Since it is a group task, perhaps the time spent reading should be group time and not indi-

vidual time.) In a similar manner, the group may decide 1) to make notes while reading and then share the notes, 2) to discuss in order to clarify after the initial reading and then go back to the text to clarify its meaning further, 3) not to consider evaluating the review before reading has been done at least twice, 4) to consider evaluation as something other than simple personal opinion, etc. [The objectification: learners plan their group task procedure and make the planning conscious and agreed to by the group.]

3. Students follow the procedure they have planned. They read, discuss, re-read, etc., or whatever their plan proposes for accomplishing the task. The group is tolerant of digressions and misunderstandings, but does not get too distracted by them. Digressions and misunderstandings can be handled within the group by further objectification, by someone's saying, for instance, "We're getting off the track; according to our plan we should be..." and "Let's see if we can find the source of the misunderstanding; is it in the paragraph which starts...?" [The objectification: conscious effort to keep the group on track in the task by bringing what does not fit into the plan to the attention of the group, and by making an effort to use the understanding in the group for the good of all in the group.]
4. Students finish reading for understanding, and proceed to identify the path that led to understanding: How did we figure out what X meant? How did we come to realize that the reviewer has a bias? What was it in the text which most added to our understanding, what most distracted us? And so on. [The objectification: asking questions which lead the group back over ground that was covered in major part by internalized cognitive processes.]
5. Students in the group consider the evaluation of the review. They ask themselves: What is evaluation? Is it just the same as giving an opinion? What does it mean to say that this is a good review or a bad review; good or bad in what way? The group verbalizes the need for criteria to evaluate the review, brainstorms for evaluative criteria to use, selects certain criteria, applies them to text. [The objectification: reflecting together about the meaning of evaluation; verbalizing thinking about how to proceed with the group task.]
6. Group verifies agreement of its members with tentative group conclusion. If all agree, can all express the conclusion and support it, and explain to the whole class the process used to reach understanding and evaluation of the text? In other words, could each member of the group now be the one to make a report to the whole class? Group works to make sure that any one of its members could now give the necessary report. Group chooses one of its members to be the principal group spokesman for the group's report. [The objectification: conscious, shared reflection on the bases of the group's decision and on the process used to accomplish the task.]
7. Group reports are made to whole class. Discussion ensues: of the evaluations provided by each small group, and of the processes used by each group to reach the task

goal, what was particularly difficult, what was easier, etc. [The objectification: consciousness-raising on group-task procedures, the meaning of evaluation, etc.]

8. With the guidance of the teacher, the whole group discusses the task in relation to real-life language use (e.g., other applications of evaluative criteria, influence of reviews on movie-goers, etc.) and relates the specific task just completed to other work done in class by looking back to previous tasks or forward to upcoming ones. [The objectification: reflecting on what was done and its pertinence to the needs of the learners.]

If we now briefly analyze the different instances of objectification apparent in the second example above, we find that the objectification essentially pertains to three things: task content, thinking and group process (i.e., actions undertaken). There is objectification of task content at steps 1, 6 and 8, of thinking at steps 3, 4, 5 and 7, and of group (or individual) process at steps 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Needless to say, the objectification of thinking, although brought to consciousness for the group, is in essence individual (because the thinking is individual), then shared with the group. The objectification of group process, though focused on how the group completed the task, will have elements of objectification of individual behaviour, since the members of the group all act as individuals even though they do so within the group and towards a group goal.

And so we have identified three of the areas of classroom language development which lend themselves to objectification. The objectification process itself is not automatic, and teachers will need to design tasks that guide learners in objectifying their learning and show learners how objectifying task content, thinking and process can give them greater control over their learning experience.

Moreover, of course, objectification is of use outside the formal learning situation of the classroom. It is the process which helps us answer such questions as: "What am I (are we) doing, and why?," "How did I (we) arrive at this correct answer, and can I (we) use the same procedure to answer other questions or perform other tasks?," "Where did I (we) go wrong in trying to solve this problem?"

Finally, objectification can focus on attitudes and values. The astute learner will not shy away from wondering "Why is it that I feel this way about the task?," "I believe such and such, but on what am I basing my belief?," "So and so rubs me the wrong way; how can we smooth over the rough patches, or confront them, so that we can cooperate better?"

Is it not in this reflection on experience that meaning and understanding are made?

Interaction: a fundamental process

Myth: Adult language learning can be individualized to the extent that the student is able to do all necessary learning alone with programmed material.

Such individualization might (and only might) work in entirely objective subjects such as arithmetic; it will never work in language learning.

This does not mean that learners within a group must always be given the same tasks at the same time. On the contrary, there is much to be said for the idea that we can learn only when we are ready to learn. Not all learners within a group whose members are roughly at the same level of competence will be able to undertake the same tasks at the same time or at the same speed. This can be due to differences in background knowledge, reading speed, mastery of formal characteristics of the language, or other causes. It is one of the teacher's principal duties to help learners develop competence by assigning tasks which suit their readiness to learn. (Jane cannot read Joyce if she is a relative beginner as a reader.) As well, the teacher must often decide whether such and such a task is one that can best be done by learners working alone, or ought to be undertaken by a cooperative working group.

Clearly, if we are to be concerned with learning communication, we must be concerned with interaction among learners. Even in the case where the receiver and sender of communication are one and the same, as in the writing of personal diaries, there is in some sense interplay between the composing and the comprehending mind. If I want to write myself a note in order to remember something, I need to do it in symbols which I can later understand.

In other forms of communication, the sender and the receiver of messages in words must interact for communication to occur, even if this interaction is often through language only and not in any more material or physical way.

How better, then, to set the stage for the development of skills in communication than to create situations and tasks where learners need to interact, where the tasks which are given can only be accomplished through the use of communication.

...most learning in most settings is a communal activity, a sharing of the culture. It is not just that (the learner) must make his knowledge his own, but that he must make it his own in a community of those who share his sense of belonging to a culture. It is this sense that leads me to emphasize not only discovery and invention but the importance of negotiating and sharing. (Bruner, 1986, cited in Britton, 1987)

It is for this reason that the SEAL program conceives of a pedagogy which involves learners with each other in task-based situations.

And so we shall turn our attention now to a consideration of some of the behaviours that help and hinder group learning and accomplishment of tasks.

Group-work processes

Myth: Adult learners know how to work in groups

Some do; some don't. And so it is not certain that planned group work will be efficient. Teachers who want to make the most of the interactive possibilities of learning will do some preliminary (and continuing) work on building fundamental cooperative learning strategies. We discuss several below.

HELPFUL BEHAVIOURS IN TASK GROUPS

We indicate below some of the specific behaviours which further task accomplishment in working groups, behaviours which focus on task content, on the accomplishment of group objectives, or on the processes the group will use to arrive at successful task outcomes. These behaviours can, with some effort and planning by teachers of particular exercises and activities, be shown to and practised by learners. The timing for using these behaviours, the decisions as to when they are most appropriate within a lesson or specific task, will depend on the requirements of the situation.

Clarifying

Open questions (with who, what, which, when, where, why, and how), used by teacher and learners alike, are a fundamental tool for helping to clarify the task at hand, discussions, etc. Paraphrasing what others in the group have contributed is also very helpful in confirming directives pertaining to tasks and in making sure that what has been said in the group is understood by all its members.

Initiating

Group members who initiate new points of view on the task or discussion at hand are a precious resource for the work of the group. Without these new ideas, solutions are hard to attain, discussions become circular, and tasks do not get done. Learners can be encouraged to take new perspectives on tasks and problems at hand by consciously adopting different points of view, by making specific efforts to propose ideas which have not surfaced before within the group, etc.

Asking

Whether or not questions always lead to answers, the questions must be asked because they a) lead to new points of view, b) show how well members of the task group understand the task and the evolution which may already have occurred towards answering the problem at hand, and c) show to what extent the person who asks the question (and those who can or cannot answer it) has retained information already known. One should remember that one of the most important and laudable kinds of asking in a working group is asking for help, and that there is no shame to be attached to needing help and asking for it.

Standing up for one's rights

Learners need to know how to defend themselves and how to claim their rights in communicative situations. In task groups, this may mean being able to insist on one's

right to speak, for instance, but it may also mean being able to insist on one's right not to do something. If Sarah has taken notes during group discussions for the last five meetings, perhaps she has the right to call on the group to name another to this role in the sixth!

Informing

Within a task group, those who have useful and pertinent information aid the accomplishment of the task by willingly sharing the information with the others in the group. Tasks, by their very nature, imply insufficient or unshared information. For necessary information to be processed towards task resolution, what is known needs to be put on the table.

Brainstorming

As a means of generating ideas and sharing what is already known within the group, brainstorming is invaluable. Brainstorming, though an especially generative activity, is quite highly controlled. It consists in having each member of the group provide as many ideas as possible on the subject at hand, without censure, explanation, or exegesis in the initial stage. The generated ideas are noted as they are expressed, and only after the first stage is finished is there any explanation of the ideas produced, the originator of the idea which needs to be explained being responsible for explaining it. Then by regrouping the ideas under categories, or by assigning priorities to the ideas, the group may further its task objectives. Brainstorming is a means of generating as well as processing information relative to a theme or a task. Assigning priorities to ideas generated during the brainstorming can help the group choose among possible solutions, while maintaining the standard that everyone in the group have a voice in the solution.

Taking turns

Taking turns means not just knowing when it is time to talk, but when it is time to listen. Groups should develop the ability to define their own procedures for turn-taking; in brainstorming, for example, taking turns whenever members have ideas to express; in discussions, taking turns systematically around the table; etc.

Synthesizing

At certain moments, it is necessary to put together what is known within the group in relation to a specific objective and restate it. This act of summarizing serves to regroup the attention of the members of the group, but also is a means of clarifying thought. Summarizing and synthesizing can show the connections among ideas. As activities in recalling, they also favour listening and concentration, two indispensable skills in communication.

Reinforcing (encouraging, discouraging)

It is encouraging to be told that one has understood, that one has helped the group along towards solving a problem or resolving a task. Encouragement often means that a member of the group who is not participating actively in the group's work will take

an active stance. Encouraged by constructive reinforcement, the learner is more likely to display useful task behaviour on the next appropriate occasion.

Likewise, it is necessary to tell group members when their behaviour in the group is impeding the resolution of the task, or when they are not participating enough, etc. Someone who is monopolizing a discussion must be reminded that everyone has to be given the chance to contribute. It is up to the group itself to offer these reinforcements to its members; they help keep the task group on track, as well as building a group behavioural ethic. Reinforcement requires friendliness, acceptance of others and their views and most of all, responsiveness.

Partners helping partners

The essence of cooperation is that those who are able help those who are less able, and that those who need help be willing not just to ask for it but to accept it when it is offered. As we have seen in earlier sections of this guide (notably in the discussion of the myth on page 26), there is every reason to encourage peer teaching/learning, since such real interactive problem-solving is one of the essential bases of language development.

Making use of the knowledge and competence of the group

Within every task group there are differences of competence and knowledge. By making use of these differences, the group can profit from a richer field of information and skill to work towards meeting its task. On occasion this will mean letting those who are strong in writing skills, for example, do the writing or note-taking. At other times, it may mean encouraging those who are weak in a particular ability, such as writing, to practise that skill within the group. The choice will depend partly on the complexity of the task, partly on the make-up of the group, partly on the time available to complete the task.

Reviewing

Especially in complicated and lengthy tasks, it is important from time to time to stop and review what has been accomplished so far, to look back at the task itself to see whether the way the group has advanced is in keeping with its objectives, to refocus attention on the progress which has been made, to make sure everyone in the group is at the same point of advancement, etc. Group members should be able to encourage such active review at appropriate moments by undertaking it individually or by suggesting that the group as a whole undertake the review process.

Planning

Instructions for a group task may not include all the procedures, regulations and content which will be necessary for the successful accomplishment of the task. In such a case, the group itself will have to arrive at a consensus as to how to proceed. Planning the group work and agreeing on the processes to follow towards resolution are fundamental requirements for efficient use of limited time and for the appropriate involvement of all members of the group. Learners should be guided to consider this an inherent part of task work in

groups, and should be shown how they themselves will often have to make decisions regarding the design they use to arrive at their goal.

Compromising

Here we include those who are willing to compromise as well as those who propose and try their utmost to arrange compromises within the task group. The group participant who can smooth ruffled feathers, can point out similarities in divergent positions, and can help move the group to common ground, is a precious resource. Practical exercises can be devised for training in this group-work skill.

UNHELPFUL BEHAVIOURS IN TASK GROUPS

Teacher and learner alike will be well advised, also, to keep an eye out for the sorts of individual behaviour which disrupt collective effort in task groups. Here are some typical examples of such behaviour:

Impeding

There are sometimes members of task groups who by their behaviour inhibit the progress of the group towards the resolution of its task. Such behaviour can take the form of talking out of turn, constant interruption, trying to direct the group toward digressions having little to do with its task, going back over ground which has already been successfully covered, dawdling, introducing irrelevant subjects, turning down useful ideas or suggestions, etc.

Withdrawing

On occasion some members of task groups play the hermit within the group. By withdrawing their voice from the group's deliberations, these members often make it necessary for the rest of the group to waste time trying to get the wayward back on track. This withdrawal can take different forms, from complete passivity to lack of interest, to whispering to others in order to wean them, as well, from the group's purpose.

Dominating

Often there will be group members who wish to preside and monopolize, and who act as if the rest of the group were constituted to be their personal audience. They will interrupt, command, sulk, or ridicule. This is a way to get attention, of course, and it is the group's job then to make it clear that the group belongs to all its members and has a particular task in which every member of the group must participate equally and actively.

Aggression

Hostility and negation are sometimes the tools preferred by task group members in order to get their way, or steer the group in the direction they prefer. Destructive criticism, pointless pointing of the finger, attacking for no reason: these are some of the forms such unhelpful behaviour may take. The group must find ways to remind the culprit of the meaning of cooperation.

Showing off

The symptoms here run from bragging, to willful eccentricity, to extremism. Such group members need to be shown that the recognition they get from the group will be more satisfying if they direct all this energy to helping the group accomplish its mission.

The processes of peer review and feedback

We shall go into more detail on this subject when we look at the processes involved in reading and writing. It should be clear to the reader by now that SEAL aims to have learners share their learning, as well as their reflections on the learning process. The practices of peer review and feedback reflect the program's interactive thrust. They are presented here by means of examples of classroom procedures. In the cases cited below, the first example presents classroom procedure that neglects these processes, and the second example presents the same activity with peer review and feedback.

Example 1a: an activity without peer review and feedback

Task: to give an oral presentation on a chosen subject

Procedure:

1. Individual preparation of the presentation up to the point of having a draft of it ready.
2. Rehearsal of the presentation at home in front of the mirror.
3. Presentation in front of the whole class.
4. Evaluation of the presentation by the audience of peers, or at worst by the teacher alone.

Example 1b: the same activity with peer review and feedback

Task: to give an oral presentation on a chosen subject

Procedure:

1. Individual preparation of the presentation up to the point of having a draft of it ready. (There could be intermediate stages of peer review and feedback during the outlining and drafting process, but these have not been included in this example...)
2. Rehearsal of the presentation to two or three classmates in a small group. (Presenter in turn serves as rehearsal audience for the presentations of others in the small group.)
3. In small peer group, members review and give feedback on the rehearsed presentations. Such review and feedback are done according to criteria suggested by the members of the small group, or by the individual presenter.

4. Presentations revised by individual presenters according to feedback received after rehearsal. The presenter may continue to use peers from the rehearsal group for support; for example: “You suggested that I make the introduction catchier. How do you think I could do that, exactly?”
5. Presentation in front of the whole class.
6. Evaluation of the presentation by peers and presenter together; the teacher may participate in this group evaluation and feedback. If the presentation is to be evaluated for summative purposes, the teacher’s evaluation must include constructive feedback.

Example 2a: a composition activity without review and feedback

Task: to write an expressive text

Procedure:

The learner, having chosen a subject and examined samples of expressive writing, gathers ideas, outlines text, drafts text, revises text, edits text for form and hands text in to the teacher.

Example 2b: the same activity with peer review and feedback

Task: to write an expressive text

Procedure:

1. Learner, with small group of peers, examines samples of expressive writing.
2. Learner establishes subject for expressive text (possibly after having brainstormed potential subjects of expressive texts with peers).
3. Learner gathers ideas and outlines text.
4. Learner asks one classmate for feedback on outline (as ideas). Learner serves as reviewer of classmate’s outline and offers feedback.
5. Learner drafts expressive text and attaches a blank page to it. Learner forms group of four with peers.
6. In the small group, learners circulate drafts; each offers feedback in the form of notes written on the blank page of each draft (and signs the notes).
7. Learner receives draft with several sets of feedback; considers feedback with a view to revision of text; if explanation is needed, refers to the peer who offered the feedback.
8. Learner revises text, making use of appropriate feedback.

9. Learner asks at least one peer to help with editing of text for final refinements of form and style; acts in same capacity for peer who helps with such editing.
10. Learner edits text to produce final version.
11. Learner shares final expressive text with peers who have not yet read earlier versions of it.
12. Evaluation may take different forms, if evaluation is required. There may be evaluation by the writer, by the writer's peers, by the teacher. The writer should have some say in setting criteria for evaluation, or should at least know what the evaluative criteria will be, before the final version of the text is written (at the latest).

Justification of peer review and feedback

From a consideration of the foregoing examples, the reader will understand that the importance of peer review and feedback lies in the creation of a real context of communication for problem-solving. But there is more to it.

If learners know that what they write will be read by their peers, they are more likely to keep their peers in mind as an eventual audience while they are composing, and to bear in mind that what they write will be read by someone who does not have their own point of view. This alone will probably improve the composition efforts of the learners. In addition, of course, these same peers participate in the learner's composition process as an active audience which can influence the writer to compose better.

Offering feedback and receiving feedback are kinds of objectification. When someone points out that one of my sentences is unclear, at least to that reader, I am forced to take a new point of view on my own writing. Objectification is just this taking on of new points of view and making them explicit. The reader who has considered my text and made the comment which leads to my new perspective on my writing is also objectifying: that reader has had to make his reaction to his reading conscious, and to express it so that I can understand what he means. This will probably help that reader when in turn he takes on the task of composing a text for an audience whose point of view will be different again.

Finally, students who engage in this sort of give and take during learning, trying to help each other to solve learning problems and cooperating in the carrying out of learning tasks, are involved most directly in the principal function of language, to make sense out of experience. In sum, the process of peer review and feedback fosters a most useful sort of communication for the language classroom.

The processes of reading and writing

Myth: Reading and writing are not as necessary as they used to be for language learners: since nowadays people get their information from television and other electronic media, English courses should concentrate on multimedia discourse.

Yes, learners should deal with the discourse of film and video. No, reading and writing are no less important than they used to be. There are both profound and simple, practical reasons for this.

In practical terms, people need to be able to read and write to fulfill the demands put on them by living in a society awash in information. Even those who are not aiming at higher formal education than secondary school cannot fulfill the requirements of the secondary diploma program without these basic skills. And outside the context of school learning, who can hope to be prepared for further learning of an informal nature without the access to text which reading skills supply? Writing too is a sine qua non for full functionality in modern life: filling out forms, writing letters of application, leaving notes for friends, marking down reminders, these are basic writing tasks which none can hope to avoid.

In a more profound sense, reading is necessary for building the capacity to think, and for putting learners in touch with aspects of society and culture they could not otherwise expect to encounter. Competences, the principal one of which is thought, are constructed to some degree on knowledge and imagination, and reading is a primary source for both of these.

Writing, like speech itself, is an indispensable tool for clarifying thought and achieving clear communication:

The constancy of the written language, grafted, so to speak, upon the immediacy of the spoken language, enables a speaker to reflect upon meanings and by doing so acquire a new level of control, a critical awareness of his/her own thought processes. (Britton, 1987)

The next sections of the guide will deal with processes important in the development of reading and writing; however, the teacher should always keep in mind that SEAL does not conceive of these as separate language skills which can be learnt in isolation from other skills, nor from natural contexts for language use. The processes of reading and writing will appear in the following order:

- Response to reading
- Writing process
- Journals and the inner voice

Response to reading

How should one read a book?...Even if I could answer the question for myself, the answer would apply only to me and not to you. The only advice, indeed, that one person can give another about reading is to take no advice, to follow your own instincts, to use your own reason, to come to your own conclusions...[to guard] that independence which is the most important quality that a reader can possess. (Virginia Woolf, 1932)

Reading is not passive, nor is it just what we call a receptive skill; it is creative. It brings the

whole imagination (informed by the reader's experience) into play. It involves not only discerning meaning in text, but making meaning.

We find little in a book but what we put there. But in great books, the mind finds room to put many things. (Joubert, *Pensées*, 1842)

And therein lie both the problem and the solution. The problem is the tendency of educators to suppose that what they should be doing is feeding their own interpretations of what they read to their students. Students have been putting up with this for so long that they have lost faith in their own ability to read; they do not know, or do not believe, that they have a personal word to say; they must find the right answer, the one correct interpretation. Now, this may have something to recommend it in the sciences, in the matter of comprehending objective facts, but even there, room must be left for readers to contemplate what the texts they read mean to them, how the facts they have absorbed by reading fit into what they know already, why that which they have read is important in terms of their own experience and where this new knowledge will be situated in the way they see the world.

The notion that literature can be read objectively makes no sense, unless to a hidebound critic. The reader is not a calculating computer, and literature is not written to be objective truth. Literature is a construct principally of the poetic function of language, language used for its own sake, for delight and the play of words. Literature is not computation, nor calculation, nor is it fundamentally a reporting of facts.

For these reasons SEAL adopts the basic tenets of response theory in its approach to teaching the reading of literature. It aims to strengthen in the reader the right to read, the right to interpret what is read. Below, in outline, is the essential process that SEAL proposes, and though this process may take many forms, its essential characteristics remain the same.

Outline of the process of response to reading

In any situation where the fundamental task for learners is to read a literary work:

1. The learner makes direct contact with the text or a part of the text; that is to say, the learner reads, or listens to the text being read;
2. The learner responds to the text, that is to, reacts in a personal way to it;
3. The learner makes this initial response to the literary text explicit, that is, puts it into words;
4. The learner shares this initial response to the text with others and hears their responses. This serves in part to show readers that others' interpretations and responses to the text vary, and thus reinforces the right of readers to read in a personal way;
5. The learner returns to the text to develop its meaning more fully and in order to clarify the initial response, confirming it or modifying it.

Once these first steps have been carried out, there may in fact be research into objective details such as the historical significance of ideas in the text, the life of the writer of the text, etc. There may be formal analysis of the work's structure, for instance. However, the underlying theory here is that these steps in the reading and understanding process should be built on, and so be subsequent to, the learners' first, very personal contact with and response to the literary work.

As to variations of the five steps of the process outlined above, many are possible, but they tend to be variations of classroom set-up, grouping of learners, and responsibility for leading the process, rather than changes in the process itself. We now offer outlines of several possible variations, the third of which has nothing to do with literature in the pure sense, but is offered as an example of how the response process can be employed with other types of discourse.

Variation 1: a poem

1. The teacher reads the poem out loud to the whole class, then reads it a second time, and asks for students' first responses to the poem. These responses may be of the sort "I like it because it sounds nice, like music," "I don't think I understand it, at least the part at the end," etc.
2. The students get into small groups, re-read the poem aloud together, and continue the response process, working together to develop their interpretation of the poem.
3. During the group work on the poem, the teacher offers help only when groups ask for help. When intervening in the groups' work, the teacher refrains in particular from offering an 'official' interpretation of the poem, and concentrates on helping to guide the learners in a process of discovery. As in all good teaching of adults, the learners are encouraged to take responsibility themselves for what they are doing, and as much as possible are left to choose how to proceed with their task.

Variation 2: a short story

1. Learners in small groups read the first two pages of the short story. They may decide how to read: one member of the small group reading the pages out loud for all to hear; each member reading one section of the first two pages of the story aloud, in order; each member of the small group reading the two pages silently, etc.
2. Learners in the small group formulate their responses to the text they have read, and share their responses with each other.
3. Each small group names a reporter to communicate the responses of the group to the whole class; during the reporting, members of the small group can help the reporter if help is needed.
4. The teacher encourages the students to formulate questions about the part of the text

that has been read. These questions might be aimed at predicting the outcome of the story, explaining the actions of characters in the story, finding out what certain details of the story might mean, etc.

5. Students, again in their small groups, pursue answers to the questions that have been raised. They can only do this by continuing to read, responding to what they read, and helping each other interpret the text.
6. Students reconvene as a whole group, led by the teacher or by one of their number, and report on the further reading they have been doing of the short story, concentrating on questions they had earlier raised. This leads either to answers (which may vary, depending on the breadth of interpretation which has been given to the reading), or to the modification of the original questions, or to the formulation of new questions. The process of discovery continues...

Variation 3: a newspaper book review

1. After the students have formed small groups, the teacher gives each group a different book review and asks the students to read the review in order to discover what they can about it. The teacher might suggest that the learners start by reading for gist, and then consider the purpose of the writer and the sorts of information in the review (fact, opinion, etc.).
2. The students in small groups read the review (they may read it silently or aloud, may split it into parts if it is lengthy, etc.).
3. The students in their groups respond to the review, as they would to a literary text, each explicitly sharing the response with the rest of the small group. Such responses might be of the order of “I suppose it’s a review by someone who really didn’t like the book,” “I’m not sure why the review is set up this way; it seems a bit confused,” “It doesn’t seem very interesting; it’s pretty dull and I don’t know why we have to read it,” “It’s just a book review which tells the readers what to expect from the book,” etc.
4. Learners in groups reread to deepen their understanding of the text; and they confirm or modify their initial responses. In each group some time is spent considering the purpose of the writer, and finding and classifying kinds of information in the review (if that was one of the given tasks). Each group prepares to report to the whole class.
5. When all the small groups have gone through these initial steps, the teacher stops the groups and asks them to retell their responses to the reviews for the whole class to hear, and lists on the board points that students have noticed about the purpose, form and content of the reviews. The teacher then guides the students’ questioning and further analysis (comparison, contrast, etc.) of the reviews and their form in order that these be stated explicitly.

6. After these reading, responding and analysing activities, various other activities might be proposed. Students (individually or in small groups) could, for example, undertake to write a review themselves. This writing process will include peer review and feedback at appropriate stages.

What we have tried to demonstrate here is a process in which the learner is given the right to read and react to texts in a personal way first, before undertaking other strategies to build more fully the meaning of what is read.

We have tried to show how this process of response belongs essentially to the reader, the learner, and not to the teacher, whose principal responsibilities in this context are to guide and help where help is needed, but to stand back from taking on the role of expert in a process which should rather be treated as discovery-oriented and generative of ideas and meaning, where the learners are the ones making their own discoveries. It could be argued that the teacher's major role in teaching literature such as poetry is first of all to be intensely interested in what the students make of what they read, and to let that guide the teaching.

If the meaning of what is read were going to be given to the readers by the expert anyway, why, they might well ask, should they bother reading at all?

Writing process

One of the few things I know about writing is this: spend it all, shoot it, play it, lose it, all, right away, every time. Do not hoard what seems good for a later place in the book, or for another book; give it, give it all, give it now...Something more will arise for later, something better. These things fill in from behind, from beneath, like well water. Similarly, the impulse to keep to yourself what you have learned is not only shameful, it is destructive. Anything you do not give freely and abundantly becomes lost to you. You open your safe and find ashes. (Annie Dillard, The Writing Life, 1989)

Writing is giving, a manner of generosity, and what is shared must be given cleanly, in a way which the receiver of the gift will find acceptable.

SEAL conceives of writing as a creative process carried out by someone for someone about something; the program supposes that writing is not linear and additive but evolves through recursive phases of activity which, stated briefly, are prewriting, drafting, redrafting and editing.

That writing itself involves recursive processes does not mean that these processes cannot be treated in sequence in the classroom; they will become more recursive with practice. Once the learning writer understands the importance of the writing processes and has developed the means to practise them, they will happen more naturally: many words misspelled will be corrected en route, new ideas will burst forth and be added while the ones already selected are being written, points of view will become sharper in the choice of particular

phrases and the building of meaningful sentences.

In what follows, the guide will discuss stages of the writing process and then offer two examples of process application based on objectives of the SEAL program.

The writing process may be divided (as by Phillips, 1984) into the five stages described as follows:

1. Prewriting for content

Writing, like thought, needs to be well-informed. The good writer takes the time to gather information appropriate to the subject, to note ideas, facts and opinions which may or may not find their eventual way into the finished text. Teachers ought to plan writing tasks to allow for this stage of writing development. Learners need to become aware that finished writing very rarely springs full-blown from the brow.

2. Shaping for point of view

It is in the point of view displayed in the text that the purpose of the writing becomes clearest, helping the audience to identify the writer's persona. The writer will work to define this point of view while developing ideas during prewriting. Learners generally need practice to become adept at shaping a point of view which is coherent and clear. Teachers should design writing tasks which explicitly encourage learners to consider this aspect of shaping writing.

3. Shaping for organization

Much of the strength of good writing comes from the order given to the ideas it contains and from the relations it builds and demonstrates among ideas. This organizing competence can be improved by guiding learners in the analysis and objectification of the structure and organization of good writing, not for the sake of academic, abstract knowledge, but so that students may then practise applying such organization to that which they themselves write.

4. Completing the style

Here the writer is concerned not with the sequence of ideas but with the words themselves and the form of the sentences to be chosen to carry the ideas. It is at this level that the writer develops lexical competence and variety of sentence structure. This concern for lexical and syntactic flexibility should be practised by learning writers through exercises in paraphrase, rewording, dictionary use and conscious reflection on the level of language chosen, the audience being addressed, and the purpose and message of the text being created. Peer review and feedback can play a part here as well.

5. Completing the mechanics

Editing for form, spelling and punctuation is essential. The learner who has not mastered these will need good references and lots of feedback, but in particular will have to be conscious of their importance. "Why does it matter, if you understand what I mean?" is not good enough. Students need techniques which will raise their consciousness on this

score. Such techniques include reading aloud into a tape recorder and then listening for errors, peer feedback, study and practical exercises using the grammar guide which accompanies the learning material, etc.

Finally, writers dawdle. This resistance to writing is in fact a necessary force, permitting incubation; the seed needs to be nurtured in order to grow: this has been called the 'wise passiveness' of writing. It seems to be a stage of subconscious thought which permits eventual creation. Teachers should keep this in mind when planning writing tasks for their students. Do not expect everyone to be able to put pen to paper as soon as the writing activity is announced. It's not natural and it won't happen.

Offsetting this resistance to writing are several forces which spur the writer on, which exert pressure to compose. Increasing information about the subject or theme is what helps generate a sense of significance for the writer. The writer's concern for the subject grows as information increases. There is the pressure of the waiting audience, partner in the act of communication. Finally, there is the real and commanding necessity of the approaching deadline. Under the burden of these impetuses, and motivated by the will to write, the writing will happen.

The five stages of the writing process itself are seen by SEAL in the context of interactive, cooperative learning, and not as steps undertaken by the learner in isolation. The example below outlines what this means.

Example of a writing process task

Task: to write a character sketch

Procedure:

1. The teacher, building on a series of preceding tasks, introduces the idea of writing a character sketch. This may come about as a result of the students' having read a novel or story, or in relation to discussions of personal experiences, friends, family, etc. The task of character-sketch writing may arise from a vast variety of learning situations and be inspired by listening, viewing films, reading or talk. Suffice it to say that the task should come up in relation to something to which the learners can relate their own interests and experience.
2. If they have already seen and examined examples of character sketches, the learners might progress immediately to discussing the qualities of such sketches (what kinds of information a sketch will include; what form a sketch might take; possible points of view of the writer; sorts of lexicon useful for physical or psychological description, etc.) before starting the process of generating topics and purposes for their own sketches. On the other hand, the task might be set up in such a way that this sort of discussion of potential forms and interesting ideas occurs only once the process of composition is under way, when it will become part of the process of discovery and generation arising out of the doing of the task. It is based on this second possibility that the rest of this

writing-task example will unfold here, but the teacher ought to keep it in mind that there is a difference in the two procedures.

3. Together in groups of three, learners talk about the sorts of character traits, physical characteristics, feelings and other observations they might include in a character sketch. With the teacher's guidance, the idea will arise that the content and the style of the sketch will to a great degree be determined by the point of view and the tone adopted by the person who is writing, on the one hand, and by the identity of the person about whom it is being written, on the other hand. The students, in considering the information they could include in the sketch, will discover that they will have to identify the person they are writing about, and that this identification is likely to be more detailed if the person is someone the writer knows and the readers do not than if the subject of the sketch is a well-known person. Making this idea explicit will reinforce the idea that writing is done with an audience in mind, and that the writer's message and point of view, to be clear and complete, depend on the writer's ability to conceive of and write for, a particular audience.
4. Evidently, the next step will be for each writer to choose an audience for the sketch: For whom will it be written? This is an individual step, a decision to be made by each writer. Once the reading audience has been determined, the process of gathering information for the sketch, and the initial stages of note-taking, can start. This is the stage called prewriting for content, wherein the writer will start to rehearse, perhaps in no particular order, the messages that the sketch will eventually contain.
5. Now the learner needs to define a point of view, even if as it turns out this point of view is modified as the development of the writing continues. Which face will the sketch-writer show: the impassive observer of events, the humorous commentator, the ironic participator, the first-person reporter, the historian...?
6. As the point of view solidifies, the writer will continue to select, organize and develop the content of the sketch. This process has of course already been embarked on during the very noting of potential information as described in point 4 above; now it becomes the principal focus of the writer, rather than being an adjunct to a more specific gathering process. At a certain moment this part of the writing process needs to be complemented by the perusal of other eyes. It is appropriate now for the writer to solicit the review of a peer, to ask another member or two of the small task group to read the first draft and comment on it.
7. It is a good idea for the peer reviewer to have guidelines for the desired feedback. What exactly does the writer want in the way of commentary? If the writer does not specify, the feedback may come in any form: "It seems all right to me," "Not clear enough," "Keep trying". For this reason, the writer specifies the criteria to be used by the reviewer: "Please focus on the flow of ideas; is the information well organized?" "Are the ideas related to each other well enough?" "Does anything seem to be missing; am I taking too much for granted in supposing that the reader will understand

everything I'm trying to say?"

8. The reviewers give their feedback orally or in written notes. The writer considers the feedback, asking for clarification if necessary.
9. The writer revises the sketch, keeping the first feedback in mind and modifying the writing in accordance with appropriate review. During this revision, many things may occur: new ideas arise; faults of form stand out; infelicities command attention. The revision may turn out to be quite extensive...
10. The writer asks peers for further review. This time, the request might be for the reviewer to mention something that seemed particularly well expressed in the sketch, something that could be improved or clarified, something which could be made snappier, structured in a more interesting way, etc. Or if the writer is happy with the content and ideas, he might now ask for the reviewer to pay attention exclusively to matters of form and style: "Is there anything misspelled?" "What about the punctuation?" "Are the beginning and ending effective?"
11. The writer should be ready now to do final editing, to produce a final version of the sketch. The last revision will take into account feedback offered as to the form and style of the previous draft.
12. Evaluation criteria should focus on the same elements which have been the focus of the different steps of the whole writing process. Typical evaluative criteria, then, might be: Is the point of view consistent? (How many different people seem to be writing?) Does the sketch interest the reader? Has the writer made explicit what the reader will not otherwise understand? Are there errors of form, punctuation, spelling?

Note that this example is worked out in some detail. Not all students will need to take all the steps suggested here, at least not as separate steps. These students are the ones whose development in composition skills makes it unnecessary, for example, for them to get outside help with sentence structure or spelling. But writers of this sort are rare, and all writers profit in some way from the review by other readers. Learners whose written skills are already developed can still be of use to their peers, and will not waste their time by putting into comprehensible form for their peers the competence they themselves have already acquired by these same or other means.

Journals and the inner voice

One could wish that the psycho-analysts would go into the question of diary keeping. For often it is the one mysterious fact in a life otherwise as clear as the sky and as candid as the dawn. (Virginia Woolf, "The Captain's Death Bed")

If writing is most fundamentally an attempt to make sense of experience, and "the interest in life does not lie in what people do, nor even in their relations to each other, but largely in

the power to communicate with a third party, antagonistic, enigmatic, yet perhaps persuadable, which one might call life in general” (Woolf, *The Common Reader*), and if, as Oliver Wendell Holmes said, “life is a great bundle of little things,” then maybe journal keeping could be seen as an attempt to trap, organize, reflect and comment on the little things that make up a (writer’s) life — what one learns, knows, thinks one knows, as days and experience pass together otherwise out of memory. Of course, this is to look at the matter of diary or journal writing very broadly. Though we may write journals as private and mysterious as Woolf suggests, or with the intent to persuade ‘life itself,’ we may also have more immediately practical reasons.

Teachers may use a log book to remind themselves of what has been done in class, what worked and what did not, to prepare from such a record for the continuation of the learning under their care. Such a journal can serve as a means of predicting sense for the classroom, how to relate activities and content, and when to present appropriate material.

Readers may keep a journal as a means of keeping track of and interpreting reading, of relating readings from different sources, and thus pursuing the reader’s task, which is making meaning as an active creator while reading and while reflecting on what has been read.

Students may make journals with a view to mastering examination content, or simply because the teacher has insisted that they do so. The more astute student journal-writers will write to make sense of what they learn.

Writers will keep journals as preparation for writing — gathering information, trying out ideas, working out on paper what is inspired by the inner voice — but also because it is practice in writing and helps break down the formidable task of writing into more manageable stages which can be pursued regularly. The writer, just like the reader, the student and the teacher, needs the distance from subject and task that time can give most effectively, in order to clarify his or her relationship with them as creator and actor.

Attending to one’s responses while reading, working, writing, provokes creativity by adding response itself to the field from which creation will grow. The distance and reflection afforded by the time and effort taken to keep a journal can hold the reader/writer/teacher aware of how bias changes with experience and in this sense, particularly, writing a journal regularly is an encouragement to clear thinking.

Almost all of the proposed learning material which is provided to accompany the SEAL program by level incorporates the principle that learners (and teachers) can profitably keep journals during their courses. The reasons for this are discussed above, and can be summed up by the following. Journals are:

- a privileged place for learners to keep track of their learning;
- a useful context for learners to develop their thinking;
- an excellent way for learners to develop writing skills;
- a private place; they belong to the learners themselves, and are thus a motivation for learning.

Speaking and listening

At every level of the SEAL program there are specific objectives, with related content determined in the form of discourse types, for speaking and listening.

As composition, speaking is considered by the SEAL program to be as important as the compositional competence of writing. Communicating effectively by talking means rehearsing, articulating response, choosing the channel, the level and the form, presenting, eliminating barriers to communication, etc.

As response, listening is considered by the SEAL program to be as important as the related response competence of reading. Communicating effectively by listening means predicting, locating, organizing, evaluating, getting involved, modifying response, interpreting, etc.

Talking and listening help us think things through; they further conceptual thinking. They help build and maintain the affective relationships necessary for cohesive social behaviour, which is the ground of learning. Talking and listening then, are media for learning. And neither can be considered alone; without listening, talk is one hand clapping. The composition of talk and the response of listening are essential components of the interactive classroom.

Composing and responding are together the two principal and general intellectual operations of the language learning process. Together, through the recursive and cyclical use of all the four skills for sending and receiving language, they are the means by which learners explore (speculate, imagine, recall, search, investigate, delve...), select (scrutinize, discriminate, sort, glean, choose...), organize (classify, arrange, group, synthesize...) and present (articulate, write, tell, share, record...) their experience, knowledge of and attitude to the world.

It behooves us, then, to reflect on some of the typical and fundamental classroom activities which specifically bring talk and listening into play in learning. On the following page, we list some of the most important talking and listening activity forms, with brief explanations for each. The well-organized teacher will make sure that the use of these in class is varied and carefully planned. As we remarked for small group work earlier in this guide, there is no guarantee that adult learners will know how to carry out a disciplined discussion, for instance. The teacher will help learners organize the dynamics of such talking and listening activities until they are autonomous enough to do so on their own.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Conversing

The least formal talking context for learning and sharing experience. There are explicit conversation objectives at levels 612 and 621 of the SEAL program and of course conversation tasks may be designed for any level.

Questioning

Acting on the need to know, the use of questions to discover and extend the truth. Appropriate at every level and in every situation of learning.

Answering

Appropriate at every, level hand in hand with questioning; the explicit sharing of knowledge and values.

Explaining

The speaking objective at level 611 of the SEAL program is to explain a process orally. Needless to say, explanation, as a constant function of dealing with information of all kinds, is necessary at all levels of learning.

Discussing

Working together to solve problems, achieve goals, share information, accomplish tasks. There are discussion objectives at levels 631, 632, 641 and 651 of the SEAL program, and discussions can be designed appropriately for all levels of learning.

Oral presentations

The most formal and highly organized form of learner talk in classrooms (with the possible exception of debates), demanding research, preparation and rehearsal. There is an objective calling for oral presentations at level 652 of the program; certain less demanding presentation tasks are proposed in the learning material at other levels as well.

Role-playing

Taking on the actor's part, or another persona; the place of drama in language development. There are specific objectives requiring role-playing at levels ENG 4062-3 (where learners, as applicants for employment, participate in job interviews) and ENG 5061-3 (where learners participate in a dramatization of part of a play), but this activity can be applicable at all levels, and in many different circumstances, depending on the task design and the objectives to be accomplished.

Panels

From overheard conversations to more highly organized presentations, panels range from formally prepared speech to quite informal spontaneous speech. They can be organized with the learners themselves, or with experts from outside the class when these are available.

Debates

From carefully organized parliamentary-style debates with explicit rules, to unprepared argumentation on both sides of an issue, debates are always applicable where values and attitudes need discussion, and are wonderful practice in marshalling and timing arguments and their support. Robert's Rules of Order is the principal source for the parameters of formal debating in the parliamentary style.

Games

From board games, such as Scruples, which require talk, to participatory television game show format, games can be used in and out of class to give a framework to talk while involving learners in cooperation or competition.

Story-telling

At level ENG 2061-3 of SEAL there is a story-telling objective. As a remnant of the original oral tradition of our cultures, story-telling is a good means for learners to organize thought in speech through the exercise of creativity. As an oral stimulus to imaginative listener response, story-telling is probably excelled only by song in our time.

Interviews

They are to be found as specific objectives for both listening and speaking in ENG 4062-3, where learners participate in interviews of different kinds. In the learner's life outside the classroom, oral interviews are frequent sources of information and entertainment in the news and other media programming, as well as being an essential part of what is demanded of people when they apply for employment (and sometimes schooling). In SEAL, the role of the learner as the person interviewed is given more weight in the employment context, but in other interview situations some of the learning material proposes roles for the learner as interviewer (in polling activities, information gathering, etc.)

Learners' attitudes

It is one of the aims of the SEAL program that learners should come "to value the ability to participate effectively in the communication process" and "to value the ability to use language effectively in formulating their ideas".

Whereas responding relates to the active participation of students in their learning by reacting to the phenomena of the learning situation with interest, willingness, enjoyment or satisfaction, valuing refers to the students' recognition of worth in learning phenomena or behaviour, or the personal attribution of worth to these phenomena. The degree of worth which the student recognizes in or attributes to learning and behaviour ranges from straightforward desire (e.g., the learner may want everything to go well in a class discussion) to a more active involvement (e.g., the learner takes on his or her part of responsibility for making the discussion work).

Although the process of valuing is founded on principles that learners hold most personally and privately, principles of worth and worthiness which they have made their own, it is evident in the way they behave. Willingness to share in the learning process with peers, participation in group decision-making and learning-task performance, respect and concern for the rights of others, appreciation of the contributions of others, readiness to ask questions and search for answers, these are but a few of the ways in which students demonstrate the values they possess.

There is no simple formula for the development of values in the learner. The teacher needs to be aware that successful performance and lasting learning are strongly influenced by the student's attitudes and values. Reinforcement of good work leads to stronger values, on the other hand, and the concerned teacher will take every opportunity to offer reinforcement when it is appropriate, without being false, patronizing or overbearing. In this sense, success is the key to further success, especially when the success is appreciated. Teachers should endeavour to be the best role models they can for valuing, which means that teachers need to display the values which they themselves hold dear.

The role of the teacher

...if shared social behaviour (of many kinds, verbal and non-verbal) is seen as the source of learning, we must revise the traditional view of the teacher's role. The teacher can no longer act as the 'middle-man' in all learning — as it becomes clear that education is an effect of community. (Britton, 1987)

Needless to say, the teacher is a part, though only a part, of the community of which Britton speaks. It is the teacher's role to create and maintain a literate, varied and supportive environment for learning. Included in this notion is the idea that it is up to the teacher to provide structured learning tasks which nurture the students' innate competence while allowing them as much as possible to guide their own learning, and to encourage them to initiate learning situations for themselves, both inside and outside of class, which will augment their autonomy as learners and their sense of responsibility for their own learning.

The notion that shared social behaviour is the beginning stage of learning throws responsibility upon those who interact socially (with the learner). By interacting in such a way that their awareness of approaches to skilled behaviour, their awareness of snags and obstacles to such behaviour are made available to learners, they are in fact...lending consciousness to those learners and enabling them to perform...tasks they could not achieve if left to themselves. (Britton, 1987)

The teacher must be expert at knowing when the learners are capable of carrying out tasks by themselves because their experience has made them ready to do so, and when they need the mediation, or performance assistance, which may be furnished by interaction between teacher and learner, by tutoring by peers in the classroom, or by activities and tasks done in groups of learners together.

Learning in Multi-level Classrooms

Myth 1: There's no point in having the weak work with the strong. The weak will feel incapable; the strong will waste their time.

Wrong. The weak will learn from the strong in the group, insofar as the stronger members respect the guidelines for group work laid out above. To say that the weaker group members cannot profit from sharing tasks with the stronger members is like saying that students (who are 'weaker') cannot learn from teachers (who are 'stronger').

The strong will not waste their time when they work with less advanced learners. Helping others understand, peer teaching, is just as much a communicative task as anything else we do with the name: it requires both understanding and producing language. Speaking, like writing, helps us think things through. To explain something to another, whether weaker or stronger, means that the speaker must clarify and make explicit what had, until the moments of explanation, remained inside the head, formulated at most only in the inner voice.

Myth 2: Trying to organize learning in multi-level classrooms is a fool's errand. Since learners at different levels have different learning objectives, there is no sense in hoping that multi-level classes can work out.

Nonsense. This myth is equivalent to saying that every teaching/learning situation should consist of one teacher and one learner, for every adult learner has some learning objectives which differ from the aims of his peers.

Since adult learners should be spending a good deal of their class time either working individually or working at group tasks, there is every reason that the teacher should have time to give help to each when it is needed, as a general rule, but this presupposes a certain autonomy on the part of the learners and so the time spent by teachers in helping their charges to become able to carry out tasks by themselves, with a sense of timing as to when to ask for teacher intervention, is time well spent.

More specifically, why not make use of the differences of level and program objectives that obtain between varying levels in a single class? Here are some strategies that will pay off:

1. When it's time for students to give oral presentations, or to ask for peer review of writing assignments, have students from other levels join the audience, or the group of peer reviewers. They can be involved not just passively, as listeners in an audience, but actively as advice givers, evaluators, responders to performance.
2. At the beginning of a class, have learners from different levels share with each other their objectives for the class; this helps all learners clarify for themselves, as well as for their peers, what their intentions and tasks are for the day. At the end of the class, have the same students get back together to report to each other how far they have

progressed towards their stated objectives, to reflect on their progress. This sort of task-based and reflective communication has the advantages of any good formative evaluation or self-assessment: it puts the students in a situation where their self-assessment has to be formulated for others to understand, and thus to be formulated clearly for themselves as well. Time for such across-level activities must be limited, to leave time for level-specific tasks. However, there are many occasions when such strategies can pay off, and teachers should be on the look-out for them.

There are many other ways to exploit the multi-level situation. Flexible teachers will let themselves be guided by time constraints, by the possibilities for interaction which the different-level learners' present objectives and tasks allow, and by their knowledge of the personalities and capacities of the learners concerned. The key words are flexibility, imagination and patience for teachers and learners alike.

The Place of Grammar

Myth 1: Correct grammar is indispensable to all good communication.

The question What is correct or standard English? is a thorny one, which raises passions to the boiling point and has occasionally caused all-out intellectual war. What is standard in Australia differs from what is standard here, in Scotland or in Alabama in terms of idiomatic usage, some structural basics, accent, etc. The point here is not that we have no concept of correctness, but rather that as soon as we raise the banner of correctness, we have to be able to define and describe that which we are demanding.

In a conversation between friends, is the following exchange correct or not?

- Can't have it both ways, Jack. She ain't what she used to be.

- Right you are, no way. But look, gotta go, okay?

Three sentences in the exchange, by some standards, have no subject, and so do not even really qualify as sentences. "Ain't," as we have all been taught, is awful. But Virginia Woolf uses it; and who are we to put ourselves higher than Woolf as masters of the tongue? At any rate the exchange is drawn from a conversation between people who know each other well, and who share a rather particular, abbreviated and vernacular use of language; they understand each other. Indeed, this exchange would probably be out of place in any other context and therein we find a further example of how discourse is affected by the distance between the receiver and sender, and between the communicator and the message

The fact is that communication often happens with little regard for the standards we claim to be able to set. It depends more on what is agreed to and understood by those who are communicating than on the rules laid down by anyone exterior to the communication. This means that with my friends who like ain't and gotta, I'm on fair ground when I use them, but that with those who will not put up with ain't and gotta, I have to be careful if I want to be polite.

This is part of what students must be brought to understand: the level of language appropriate to any situation of communication depends on the participants in the communication and their roles vis à vis each other, the message with which the communication is concerned, the sociolinguistic aspects of the situation, the function of the communication, etc.

Myth 2: So, grammar instruction has gone the way of high-button shoes.

No. In spite of what is said above in response to Myth 1, grammar still needs to be learnt by those whose competence in the forms and structures of language is insufficient. This Guide has already argued just that, in its remarks about the aspects of communication which must

be understood by the learner. The formal and rhetorical characteristics are an indispensable component of language in communication. The question is whether one standard fits all. The answer is that we need to know certain things about the context of the communication in question, and its other components (such as the purpose of the communication, the roles of the communicators, the level of language required...) before we can judge the formal characteristics necessary to the situation. If we always spoke the way we write, speech would become affected. If we always wrote the way we speak, the beauties of written language would suffer serious impediment.

Generally, the learning materials which have been prepared to accompany the SEAL program at each level do not deal explicitly with the formal study of grammar. However, in addition to these materials, an extensive series of practical exercises is provided in a workbook. Under the title Grammar Guide, this workbook contains study and exercises for word-level, sentence-level and paragraph-level competence. The charts on the following pages, reproduced from the appendix to the SEAL program, display the content of the grammar guide, showing its elements keyed to pertinent levels of the program.

ELEMENTS OF ENGLISH USAGE

Word Level

Spelling

	Sec 1		Sec II		Sec III		Sec IV		Sec V	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
commonly misspelled words	•	•	•							
homonyms & look-alikes	•	•	•	•						
troublesome plurals	•									
suffix-ending rules & "ie" rule	•									
capitalization		•	•	•	•					
hyphenation	•	•								
abbreviations	•							•		
apostrophes		•								
quotation marks & italics for titles					•				•	•
numbers	•	•								

Morphology, Vocabulary

irregular plurals	•									
irregular past forms		•	•	•						
prefixes & suffixes	•	•	•							
synonyms & antonyms					•	•	•	•	•	•
denotations & connotations					•	•	•	•	•	•

Sentence Level	Sec 1		Sec II		Sec III		Sec IV		Sec V	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Punctuation										
end punctuation (periods, question and exclamation marks) & capitalization	●	●								
commas		●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
semi-colons & colons					●	●				
dashes, parentheses & brackets									●	●
quotations marks & ellipses				●	●				●	●
Grammatical Agreement										
subject-verb		●	●	●						
pronoun-antecedent			●	●						
tense			●							
person				●						
Coordination										
coordinate clauses					●	●				
coordinating conjunctions & sentence connectors					●	●				
Subordination										
relative clauses & subordinators							●	●		
noun clauses & subordinators							●	●		
adverbial clauses & subordinators							●	●		
conditional clauses & subordinators							●	●		
Parallelism										
parallel structures							●	●		
coordinating & correlative conjunctions							●	●		
Sentence Problems										
fragments		●	●	●						
run-together sentences			●	●						
choppy sentences				●	●	●				
stringy sentences				●	●	●				
wordiness						●	●	●	●	●
dangling modifiers							●	●	●	●

	Sec 1		Sec II		Sec III		Sec IV		Sec V	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Paragraph Level										
Consistency and clarity										
person				●	●	●				
tense				●	●	●				
number				●	●	●				
tone					●	●	●	●	●	●
Coherence: Transitional devices										
transitional expressions of										
-agreement					●	●	●	●		
-opposition & limitation							●		●	●
-cause, effect, purpose			●			●				
-condition & qualification							●		●	●
-support					●		●		●	●
-time	●		●	●				●		
-space				●						
-summarizing							●	●	●	●
word & phrase repetitions									●	●
parallel structure repetitions									●	●
antecedent-pronoun pairs									●	●
Rhetorical focus										
use of active vs. passive voice					●	●	●	●	●	●
use of formal vs. informal language		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
use of simple, compound, complex and parallel construction									●	●

Applications of the pedagogical approach

The proposed learning material

The ministère de l'Éducation du Québec provides a complete set of learning materials to accompany the SEAL program. These materials can be obtained by schools and school boards through the Direction des services éducatifs aux anglophones. In the following pages the reader will find a general description of the proposed learning material, an outline of principles for lesson planning, and lists of the titles and units of proposed material for each level.

Material available but not obligatory

We offer these suggestions for readers of this guide who are teachers of SEAL, for it is important to understand that whether or not to use the official MÉQ material is up to the schools and teachers involved. While the objectives of the SEAL program are obligatory for all adult learners enrolled in general secondary English courses, the proposed learning material demonstrates only one possible way of going about accomplishing the objectives. This way may be suitable for some and not for others. Also, if it suits the situation to do so, there is no reason not to use only a part of the material rather than all of it.

Those teachers working with students in mixed-level classes, and those schools whose students have to be left to their own devices for a significant part of their course time, have every reason to consider using this material, which is addressed to the learners themselves and gives them directions designed to enable them to handle most of the material on their own, or at least without constant guidance.

General description of the proposed SEAL learning material

The material:

- covers the objectives and indicators of the SEAL program; respects the whole-language approach;
- addresses the learner and not the teacher;
- comes in self-contained units, perforated for binders.

As has been mentioned, in addition to the ten sets of learning material (corresponding to the ten levels of the SEAL program), there is a single comprehensive grammar and form guide which covers structural points appropriate to the attainment of the objectives of the program. A teacher's Resource Book is also available.

Planning lessons: general principles

Generally, lessons should be made up of activities and tasks which allow the learners autonomy of organization and interaction. Teachers will need to keep in mind that learners who come to adult education courses may have no experience in working closely with their

peers and taking responsibility for their own learning performance. The teacher will thus need to work closely with learners on these all-important aspects of class work until learners are judged able to carry on without constant teacher guidance.

The teacher's organizational task will be greatly eased if necessary equipment (such as tape recorders and VCRs) is readily available and if students know how to operate it properly. The same goes for other sorts of material needed for everyday class work (such as chalkboards or flipcharts, paper, dictionaries, etc.).

It is strongly recommended that teachers set up a system of individual portfolios, folders, or whatever is best given the particular situation, so that students can easily hand in and get back pieces of work, exercises and assignments of one kind or another. By the same token, teachers ought to organize, in concert with their learners, progress sheets to keep track of the material and activities that individual learners have used or accomplished, and thus to indicate what still needs to be done. Such sheets, available to teacher and student alike, serve formative and reflective purposes, as well as being a clear record useful for organization and planning.

At the beginning of each class, either the teacher or the learners ought to be able to state what the principal tasks or activities for the period will be, that is, what the learning objectives are and how they will be met. It is always a good idea at the end of the class period to re-cap what has been done and by what means; this gives to both the teacher and the learners the opportunity to see what impediments may have been encountered, what has gone well, and what remains to be accomplished for any lesson plan. Also at the end of classes it is useful to foresee with the students the content of the next class to come. This often has the effect of motivating students, since their anticipation can be based on upcoming activities of interest to them.

It probably goes without saying that many adult students have in the past faced failure at school in their earlier years. It behooves teachers, then, to make sure that their adult learners experience learning success from the very beginning; this is the greatest motivating factor. The success in question need not be enormous, but it does need to be noticed.

Below are some questions to ask yourself when planning lessons.

- What objective(s) of SEAL will the lesson be centred on? (the program)
- Which indicators of the SEAL objective will be performed in carrying out the tasks and activities which make up the lesson? (the program)
- What is it that I want the learners to do? (the path of the lesson)
- Where will the path take the learners; how will they act along it? (learner behaviour, strategies)
- What strategies will I use to get learners to behave in ways necessary to perform the tasks set for the lesson? (teacher strategies)
- What material and equipment do we need to accomplish the tasks of the lesson?
- Will the learners be able to use the material and equipment without me?

- What are likely to be the sticking points during the lesson, the parts where I will have to intervene, guide, direct, explain?
- What are the occasions for distinct cognitive process practice during the lesson?
- Which organizational strategies will be useful to the learners as they perform the tasks? Do they know how to use these strategies?
- What will be the most appropriate moments during the lesson to have learners stop to consider and reflect on what they are doing or have been doing?
- What is the best way to establish the dynamic, set the scene?
- What is the best way to sequence the activities and tasks that make up the lesson?
- Which of the activities and tasks will be best done in small groups, in larger groups, in the whole class, individually?

Other resources

Appendix A of this Guide gives some information about various services available to teachers in Quebec for the rental and borrowing of films and videos useful or necessary as accompaniments to the learning material.

Using the electronic media

Myth: The electronic media are the devil's work and only distract students from doing the work they should be doing to learn to read and write properly. Films, videos and television are only vehicles of crass mass culture. What students really need is formal education in reading and writing, the true channels of good thinking.

Why should students of English not work on the discourse of film, the talk of the radio and the television? One of the arguments against using television as part of the English curriculum is that television isn't pure, that is, that it supports its use of the spoken language with a fully developed visual context. That such an idea be levied against television's being made a legitimate part of curriculum or syllabus is just an indication that some pedagogues think language-learning should be made as difficult as possible. We don't agree. And at any rate, since writing began, it has often been illustrated. The discourse of television is an extension of this practice.

Another charge levelled against television is that its English is beneath the standards we should set for our learners. This is a propitious moment to remind the reader that the SEAL program has been developed with the every-day language needs of the learners in mind, and that these most certainly include the kind of language that is used on television. Anyway, what is the standard? Whenever we try to describe it, we are reminded of the dialectical differences that characterize the English speech community, the accents with which English can legitimately be spoken, and the varieties of idiom that have blossomed with the spread of English into every corner of the world.

Appendix B offers reminders about the laws governing copyright protection.

Appendix A: Film and video resources

Other than local video rental outlets, which might be convenient for teachers and learners wanting films for SEAL learning, there are also the following services:

National Film Board of Canada

The pre-eminent public film producer in the country, the NFB is renowned for its work. It has an extensive repertory of films and videos of its own making, including everything from animated short films to full-length feature presentations. A number of the films and videos cited in the various levels of SEAL learning material come from the NFB. The general catalogue of the NFB is available for a small fee from any of the NFB regional offices. There are no membership fees at the NFB, though one must pay for film and video rental. Details of the fee structure, including regulations for the securing of rights of exhibition and reproduction, are given in the catalogue. Municipal libraries often serve as lending centres for NFB material. Indeed, there are several ways to obtain access to NFB films: “Video and Film Rental from NFB Audiovisual Libraries, Video and Film Purchase, Borrowing NFB videos circulated by public libraries, Electronic Reproduction Agreements and licensed Off-air Taping” (from the NFB catalogue, page 6).

Below is a list of the Québec regional offices of the National Film Board.

Complexe Guy-Favreau
East Tower, Room 102
200 René-Lévesque Blvd. West
Montréal, Québec H2Z 1X4
Tel.: (514) 283-4823

350 St. Joseph Street East
Québec City, Québec G1K 3B2
Tel.: (418) 648-3852

165 Bank Street
Sherbrooke, Québec J1H 1G8
Tel.: (819) 822-6019

1225 Place de l’Hôtel de Ville
Trois-Rivières, Québec G9A 5L9
Tel.: (819) 372-4630

207 Cathedral Avenue
Rimouski, Québec G5L 5J1
Tel.: (418) 722-3086

74 Taschereau Street East
Rouyn-Noranda, Québec J9X 3E4
Tel.: (819) 762-6051

530 Jacques-Cartier Street East
Chicoutimi, Québec G7L 1Z5
Tel.: (418) 543-0711

Québec School Television (a service of Radio Québec)

The catalogue of material available, revised periodically, is available from the following address:

Québec School Television
Radio-Québec
600, Fullum, 5e Etage
Montréal, Québec H2K 3L6
Tel.: (514) 521-2424 (Local 4287)

The service known as Québec School Television (QST) has established connections with many Québec school boards. Check with those in charge at your board to see if someone is already responsible for liaison with Québec School Television. QST offers copying rights for some of the videocassettes in its repertory; the catalogue indicates which may be copied without limits by Radio Québec (and thus be made available continuously) and which are only available for a limited period of time. QST also provides written learning material for some of its films and videos, but it is to be kept in mind that this material has generally been designed to complement secondary youth sector lessons, not the adult learning context.

Other sources

Your local or school librarian may be able to give you information about other sources for films and videos. It is worth keeping in mind that both American Public Broadcasting channels and such public organizations as TV Ontario (broadcast through some cable systems in Québec) do offer some of their fare for sale on videocassette. Generally, you may not legally make a videocassette recording from television for replay in class more than once. However, the law tends to be more severe with illicit tapers who try to profit financially by their copying.

Appendix B: Notes on copyright protection

Notes on the reproduction of copyrighted written material.

Since 1984, it has been legal in Québec, because of an agreement between the provincial government and the Union des écrivains québécois to make photocopies of copyrighted works by Québec authors for use in education, as long as certain basic regulations are respected. First, the work copied must appear in the “Répertoire des oeuvres admissibles à la photocopie”.

The copied part must not be longer than 25 pages, or 10% of the total work, whichever is the lesser. Articles, periodicals, stories and anthologized poems may be copied in toto as long as they do not make up more than 25 pages or 10% of the larger work from which they are drawn. Clear citations must be made on the copies, identifying the author(s), publisher, title, publishing date and page numbers of the work. Finally, those who make such copies for educational purposes must cooperate with their school board to furnish all pertinent information about what has been copied to the “Union des écrivains québécois”.

If you have questions about copying privileges for works by Québec writers beyond those explained in the foregoing notes, get in touch with:

Union des écrivains québécois
Service des droits
1030, rue Cherrier
Bureau 510
Montréal, Québec H2L 1H9
Tel.: (514) 526-6653

As for texts not included in the Repertory mentioned above, they are generally copyright free if the author has been dead for at least fifty years. Also, newspapers are usually generous with their permission to use articles or other texts from their pages as long as the articles or other works are not taken out of context, are not modified in any way, are given appropriate citation and are not used for financial profit. Some organizations, such as the CBC and Time-Life to name just two of the mammoth ones, are notoriously stingy. If you are rich and willing to pay, you can sometimes get what you want...

Note that all texts appearing in the proposed SEAL learning material by writers other than those who developed the SEAL material, are used by permission.

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