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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

MULTIMEDIA SUPPORTED INSTRUCTION

OF POETRY FOR ESL CLASSES

BY

HARRY HESS   ©

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND

RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREME NTS FOR

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN

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DEPARTMENT OF ADULT, CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

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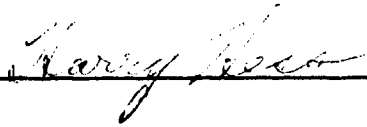
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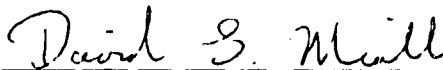
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Date: _____Feb. 2, 1993_____

DEDICATION

To all the teachers, professors, and students who over the years have helped me to enlarge my perspective of life.

To all my family and friends who provided encouragement along the way.

To my wife, Mary Anne, for her understanding, patience, and support.

To my mother who always encouraged her children in education.

To the memory of my father who often said, "Son, get as much schooling as you can."

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of a particular teaching approach upon the language development of ESL students. The teaching approach used was to present lessons to certain, selected ESL classes using poetry supported by a variety of multimedia as the means of instruction.

As part of this study, an extensive literature review was conducted in order to establish a sound theoretical base and rationale for the research. With ESL students in mind, this literature review was built around the themes of: 1. *needs and motivation;* 2. *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT);* 3. *Poetry in the ESL classroom;* 4. *media;* 5. *methodology and materials.*

Two detailed lessons were prepared, the first on a long narrative poem and the second on a short lyrical one. Each lesson contained carefully prepared backgrounding material, using various media in order to provide motivation and interest. As each poem was read to the students, it was supported by the projection of illustrative slides and the playing of recorded music. Extensive discussion preceded and followed the presentations.

Ten classes were used, totalling 152 students. Following the lessons, the students did a questionnaire in which they indicated on a five point rating scale to what degree they had *enjoyed* the presentations and to what degree they felt the presentations might be useful to their language development in the basic language skills of *listening, speaking, reading,* and *writing.* The students were also invited, if they wished, to make written comments on the space provided. Classroom teachers used a separate but similar questionnaire.

The data thus gathered were tabulated and analyzed in terms of enjoyment and language skills and formed the basis for the conclusions and recommendations of this report. The researcher felt that overall the students and teachers responded favorably to this approach. Accordingly, he recommends its use for teaching ESL. He also recommends further research in this problem area.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER I: THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Introduction

With the growing number of immigrants into Alberta, there is a concomitant need

for more ESL instruction in the province and a need for more research into instructional

techniques for this clientele. A February, 1991 article in the Edmonton Journal highlights

this need. An introductory abstract for the article states:

> **Language backlog:** More than 8,000 adult immigrants are in need of English
> training in Alberta, and the bill will be almost $13 million. [This] means
> newcomers are on social assistance awaiting job training instead of contributing to
> society. (Feb. 7, 1991, A2; main article B1-2)

The article argues this is a need which should be met; it would be a good investment. Such

an investment, although initially costly, would in the long run add much to the total

economy by enabling the people thus trained to be more readily gainfully employed.

Questions relating to ESL instruction provide a fertile area for educational research.

Some time ago (1988) this researcher took a course in ESL instructing at the University of

Alberta from Rosalie Banko. During one of these classes the instructor spoke about using

poetry in ESL classes. She spoke of the appropriateness of using poetry as a basis for

discussion, to solve language problems by negotiating meaning in large and in small

groups, thus giving rise to authentic discourse. To illustrate a point she quoted Tennyson's

short poem, "The Eagle." Long having had a keen interest in poetry, and upon hearing

Ms. Banko's lecture, I began to reflect upon incorporating poetry into a research problem.

Further thought suggested that it would also be an interesting idea to combine the study of poetry with multimedia support. Then I began to wonder how well these ideas would be received by ESL students and their teachers. Would they find these approaches interesting, enjoyable, and useful? How might students and teachers best be approached to find answers to these tentative questions? How difficult would it be to gain access to various classrooms to make inquiry?

It is well known to educators that when students derive pleasure (and therefore interest) from a learning activity, they become better more efficient learners. According to Wittich and Schuller (1969) in their book, <u>Audio Visual Material: Their Nature and Use,</u> "...pupils who have the advantage of reacting to well-selected and wisely used media learn more efficiently" (preface). They also say that media stimulates interest and motivation.

I continued to reflect about using multimedia supported instruction of poetry for ESL classes, seeing multimedia not as an end in itself but rather as a means of focusing students' attention upon the text. Media was seen not as something competing with the text, but rather as illuminating the text by capturing and focusing the students attention and making the text more accessible to them. In other words, the multimedia might make the text more comprehensible as well as more enjoyable. Was it possible that the motivating quality of multimedia could increase interest and so promote the language acquisition process of ESL students? Finocchiaro (1981) makes a close connection between "...pleasure and success in language acquisition" (p. 68).

This would be a new approach, a new way of doing things. Knowels (1980) observes, "Because of the need for new experience, people are motivated to seek new...interests, new ways of doing things, and new ideas" (p. 85). Further by way of introduction to this study I shall quote from Crookes and Schmidt (1991):

Interest is closely related to curiosity, and given standard SL teaching practices, developing curiosity means using less orthodox teaching techniques and/or materials....Also, change is an essential part of maintaining attention, because otherwise habituation will set in. Therefore, a too-regular pattern of classroom routine (as may be produced by adherence to the traditional SL texts that use the same format for each unit) should probably be avoided. (p. 508)

It was with ideas like these in mind that I formulated my research problem.

The Statement of the Problem

This study was guided by the following research question: Do ESL students at the Intermediate I level or higher, and their teachers enjoy classroom study of poetry, when coupled with multimedia support, and further do these students and their teachers perceive such study to be useful for English language development?

The Subproblems

The research question was further sub-divided into two subproblems focused on the two groups of respondents, the students and teachers.

The first subproblem. The first subproblem was to determine, by use of a survey instrument, the overall enjoyment of the selected ESL students in experiencing exposure to in class study of poetry when it was coupled with multimedia support, and further, to determine if the students perceived such experience to be beneficial to their English language development in the following areas:

a. their listening ability?

b. their speaking ability?

c. their reading ability?

d. their writing ability?

The second subproblem. The second subproblem was to determine, by means of a survey instrument, how ESL teachers of the students involved evaluated the merit of multimedia supported study of poetry for their students' language development as to:

    a. their listening ability?

    b. their speaking ability?

    c. their reading ability?

    d. their writing ability?

The Delimitations and Scope

This study excluded those ESL students who were deemed by their language scores to be below the Intermediate I level. (The exception of one class will be noted in chapter three). It included students, regardless of age, who were deemed to fall within or anywhere above the Intermediate I level. The purpose for setting this lower limit was to ensure that all students would be able to cope with the reading and the understanding of the survey instruments once the said instruments were thoroughly explained with clarifying examples prior to completing same. And in addition for the sake of economy the varieties of multimedia were limited to realia, recorded music, posters, slides and overhead transparencies.

The Limitations

Even while the study is still going on, and as it finally comes to completion, the researcher invariably becomes aware of certain limitations of the total effort. Surveying the study as it progresses and in retrospect one sees numerous vales and hills, fens and heaths which could possibly have been fruitful and interesting to explore, but which explorations were not always feasible because of the constraints of time and space. In an initial study

into a new area such as this, the investigator cannot possibly chart the entire region. But some aspects of the lay of the land may be pointed out inviting further investigation by the initial researcher and hopefully by others as well. The initial research should note significant limitations of the foray into the new territory with the view to providing cues for further avenues of investigation and to provide some guidance into the interpretation of the data gathered for the initial research.

Anyone working in the field will soon realize that the whole discipline of ESL research and teaching in western Canada is really very new. Even more new is the approach to the discipline that this study suggests with its resort to the use of multimedia and poetry for teaching purposes. This is clearly evidenced by the paucity of literature directly related to the study. This paucity will be discussed further somewhat later. Meanwhile we will consider some of the primary limitations of the research design for this investigation.

This preliminary study has not attempted to explore all the numerous possible aspects of the problem. Much has been left for future investigation and consideration. For example, no attempt was made at this time at pretest and posttest comparisons as employed in an experimental paradigm. It was not a comparative type of study with built in variables and controls. Rather an attempt was made to describe and document a situation following the intervention of the multimedia supported poetry lessons used with the ten ESL classes involved in this study.

This approach brings to mind a primary limitation in the basic research design. An intervention of this type will invariably produce an ensuing Hawthorne effect, independent of the quality of the lessons presented. To compensate for this possible distorting effect to the data it might be useful in subsequent related studies to work with each of fewer classes over a much longer duration of time to allow for the initial zest of novelty to wear off. Each class could be given a greater number of lessons with data collected from each lesson. Thus by comparing the data from numerous lessons one could see if the data remained

consistent. This form of triangulation could lend more credence to the overall findings if the data tended to point in the same direction.

Because this study was limited as to the availability of time and resources, an ancillary limitation arose common to many survey studies: limited numbers in the sample. The students in the study numbered only 152. This may be considered a relatively small group from which to draw conclusions and make projections. Such conclusions and projections would have to be considered as tentative. An ever greater problem and limitation lies with the group of teachers. There were only ten teachers in the study and from these only eight returns were forthcoming.

Furthermore, the questionnaires, as examination will show, cover a very limited range of information. These questionnaires, one form addressed to the students and another form addressed to the teachers, sought to obtain and assess the direct and immediate reactions of the participants in the study once they had been exposed to the multimedia supported poetry lessons. Again because of the limited time available and because of the desire on the part of the researcher for an immediate, first impression response, the questionnaires were kept brief so that they could be completed in short order within the classtime along with the lessons that had just been presented. Having the students do the questionnaires for homework or the next day may have rendered the responses less reliable because of possible outside interferences.

In retrospect it could have been useful to ask the students about the extent of their previous experience with poetry both in their first language and in English since the time they had begun to take ESL. It could have been both interesting and useful to see how such past experience would have impinged upon the other responses. But further questions would have meant further time, and time was already short to cover all the materials that had been planned for. Similarly the teachers might have been questioned about their past teaching experience with poetry, both in and out of ESL classes. Would the amount and type of their experience have had a bearing on the way they assessed the

usefulness of the lessons presented? To address this limitation, namely the brevity of the questionnaire, further similar studies might investigate the omissions referred to.

In the same general area of concern the use of self-report questionnaires as the main instrument for data gathering can also be seen as a limitation. The study did make some attempts to gather data from sources other than the questionnaires but these attempts were admittedly rather limited. For example, supplemental to the questionnaires for both the students and the teachers were open ended invitations for the participants to respond to the total experience by writing of their impressions. Eight of the ten teachers provided responses. One hundred of the one hundred fifty-two students responded, providing useful data. Further, as will be discussed in a later section, some useful data were also derived from the researcher's own direct observations which were recorded for later reference in a research journal. However, further efforts at triangulation might have been tried in the form of one-on-one interviews with both teachers and students. This would have necessitated the preparation of guiding interview questions and the scheduling of interview sessions which would have been very time consuming. Hence it was felt that such additional measures to address the aforesaid limitation might best be left to a subsequent investigation.

In the light of these various limitations, some caution will be advised in making inferences from the findings until such time that further supportive studies have been made in the field. Some of the implications of these limitations will be further addressed in the last chapter of this study where conclusions and recommendations will be considered.

The Definitions

ESL student. An ESL student is one who is learning English as a second language. They may range in English ability from virtually nothing to competencies enabling the student to function in university classes taught in English.

Intermediate I level. The Intermediate I level refers to ESL students who score between 250 and 299 on the TOEFL language placement test.

Multimedia. Multimedia refers to combinations of teaching aids which appeal to the various sensory receptors of students, e.g., realia (such as physical objects like hand tools, which appeal to the tactile sense); audio equipment (for reproducing music, which appeals to the aural sense); visuals (like posters, photographic slides and overhead that appeal to the visual sense).

The Assumptions

The first assumption was that the respondents to the survey instruments would understand the survey items and would respond honestly. This assumption is based on the belief that ESL students are concerned not only about their own language development but they are also concerned about the language development of their peers. It is to their mutual benefit to develop their language skills so that they can communicate more readily both in and outside the classroom setting. It was also noted while conducting this research that students often expressed concern about the English language development of their friends and relatives outside their classes. They spoke of their wish that these people might also enrol in ESL classes. Students often indicate that they have a stake in the promotion of language research and would have no reason to answer the survey questions other than as candidly as possible.

The second assumption was that there is always room for improvement in the teaching/learning process.Teaching methods are always under scrutiny with the view to finding improvements. Methodology in a healthy teaching environment is never static. These improvements can evolve over time with observations and the application of those

observations. This general assumption is widely accepted by educators. Accordingly, even well established, effective educational practices can be further refined.

The third assumption was that although many of the students involved in the study may have had a rich background in poetry in their native language, they had as yet a very limited background in English in general, and in the study of English poetry in particular. Therefore it was assumed that the use of multimedia would be particularly advantageous for students in these early stages of their English development. It was assumed that the use of multimedia, as demonstrated in the lessons used in the study, could help to provide meaningful, experiential background to enhance the understanding of the poems used. The foregoing does not assume that all poetry study, at all levels, needs to be supported by multimedia. The assumption is that the use of multimedia in the early stages of language development might help foster an interest in poetry such that the student would maintain this interest and continue to enjoy poetry apart from the classroom and apart from multimedia. Further, the assumption acknowledges that even at the early stages of language development, students may respond intelligently and with enjoyment to many simple, poetry texts without media support.

The Importance of the Study

This study endeavored to show that combining the use of multimedia and poetry has useful application in an ESL classroom. It has been the observation of this researcher that ESL students can be motivated to respond very positively to the use of poetry as learning material. This is not to suggest some bandwagon approach that advocates this to be *the* method, *the* approach to teaching ESL. Rather, the idea is put forward as something that teachers might consider to incorporate into their practices along with numerous other techniques and approaches.

All good teaching, ESL included, tries to incorporate a wide variety of techniques in order to stimulate students' interests, and in order to achieve learning. In the case of the ESL setting, improving the competence of students' use of English is certainly an important concern. Accordingly, ESL teachers continually seek materials and techniques towards that end.

The use of multimedia has long been recognized as a useful avenue in most fields of education. However, the use of poetry supported by multimedia to teach ESL classes appears to have had very limited use. Maley and Duff (1989), in their book, The Inward Ear: Poetry in the Language Classroom, complain about the general lack of the use of poetry for language learning. The scant use of poetry is further evidenced in that one finds very little of it in published materials prepared for ESL classes. Poetry, of any kind, in such materials is largely conspicuous by its absence.

Is this due to a lack of demand for such materials? And could such lack of demand be due to a lack of confidence about handling such material? Students and teachers sometimes shy away from poetry. Lack of interest may be a problem. But could this problem be overcome by combining the study of poetry with the use of multimedia support, thereby opening the door to the use of poetry with its richness of universal, human experience as an avenue for learning in ESL classes?

The literature (Maley and Duff 1989; Widdowson 1981 and 1988), suggests there is a need for poetry in the field of ESL. Further, it appeared that a survey study would be a good means of investigating this area. Boone (1985) in, Developing Programs in Adult Education, states, "The survey is perhaps the most common approach used by adult educators to identify the educational needs of their target publics" (p. 119). The "target publics" in this case being the ESL students and their teachers in the Edmonton area who are in Intermediate I level classes or higher as indicated in the definitions given earlier. The procedures will be outlined in the section on methodology.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction and Criteria

The literature dealing specifically with using poetry coupled with multimedia for teaching ESL is sparse. Therefore, in setting up the criteria for literature selection, the study included the literature of ancillary, related fields. By looking to tangential literature, it was hoped to build a sound theoretical base for proceeding into the study. The related thematic areas called upon are those dealing with:

    a. psychological and educational needs and motivation,

    b. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT),

    c. poetry in the language classroom,

    d. media,

    e. ESL methodology and materials.

When consulting these five thematic areas, a great deal of overlap is found in the literature. The areas are not mutually exclusive. A particular piece of literature might logically fall under any of several areas. Nevertheless, this schematic layout seems appropriate for organization and discussion.

Needs and Motivation

This study is not directly concerned with needs identification, but it does have in mind the needs of ESL students pertaining to their motivation for language learning. Boone (1985), in Developing Programs in Adult Education, deals extensively with educational needs. He asserts, "...needs identification is the most important facet of adult

education" (p. 113). It might be added that this applies to any education, not just adult

education. To ascertain what these needs are he advises that the educator must go out

among the client population and their leaders and "interface" with them - speak to them, and

listen to them. Let them make their needs known.

Freire (1972), in his Pedagogy of the Oppressed, thinks likewise with respect to

dialoguing with students in order to determine their needs, or "thematics," as he calls them.

"... the investigation of thematics involves the investigation of people's thinking - thinking

which occurs only in and among men seeking reality" (p. 100). Early in the educative

process, he suggests, "... the investigators begin their own visits to the area, never forcing

themselves, but acting as sympathetic observers with an attitude of understanding towards

what they see" (p. 102).

This sympathetic "attitude of understanding" is important to all good teaching, but

nowhere is it more so than in the ESL classroom. Gnida (1991) documents this vital aspect

of classroom tone in her Master or Education thesis, Being a Teacher in an Adult ESL

Class. Writing on the importance of a positive classroom atmosphere in the classes that she

observed she states:

> ...teachers used the content of their classes to 'reflect reality'; however, the kind of
> class atmosphere which they attempted to foster in their classes was meant to
> protect students on an emotional level, from that same reality....Language learning
> was seen by most of the teachers to be a potentially stressful activity....Therefore,
> they attempted to make the classroom a place where the students could relax --
> informality, tc' .ance, and humor were all used by teachers to set the tone of their
> classroom" (pp. 94-95).

Brown, (1989) also recognizes the necessity of positive tone to motivation and

learning in the classroom. Writing about adult learners, he observes:

> their motivation will be affected by some of the same factors as will affect children
> (interest and enjoyment, perceived links with their own experience) (p. 6)...Class
> atmosphere needs to be relaxed and friendly and the tutor has to bear in mind that
> the relations of the learners with each other are as important as their relations with
> him or her. (p. 12)

Further, Ralph (1989) would support Brown cited above. He relates that research informs us that a positive "socioemotional climate" is essential for productive student morale. And he holds the teacher responsible for the maintenance of such a climate so that "...students feel accepted by both the teacher and their peers as being worthwhile, contributing members of the class" (p. 137). Abetting this climate is the teacher's enthusiasm and commitment to the tasks at hand. They plan and are well prepared with interesting material. "Competent teachers not only plan and prepare for meaningful instruction, but they habitually engage students in interesting learning situations" (p. 141). He also advocates the use of various media for the sake of variety so as to capture the interests of the students.

In a similar vein, Proulx (1991), writing on the importance of preventing undue anxiety in the classroom, warns us that for want of a positive atmosphere there may be "impaired intellectual performance" (p. 54) on the part of the students along with manifestations of "psychosomatic illnesses" like headaches, withdrawal and sleep disturbance. Not meeting the needs of the students for security also has its negative impact upon the teachers. Proulx notes, "...classrooms with anxious students produce anxious teachers" (p. 55), thus impairing the all-important student-teacher relationship. Proulx believes the most effective means of reducing anxiety is for the teacher to show "...personal concern for each student as an individual..." (p. 59). He suggests that this will frequently involve meeting and speaking with students individually about his or her concerns, or if the student appears too shy to be comfortable in a one-on-one situation, then he advises meeting in small groups of two or three. All of this is, of course, especially important to language learning and presumes a strong, stable, well-prepared teacher with interesting lessons who can give of self for the benefit of the students' emotional and educational needs. Richards and Rogers (1986) remind us that, "Low personal anxiety and low classroom anxiety are more conducive to second language acquisition" (p. 133).

According to Ryan-Fisher (1990), anxiety level and self esteem are closely associated. Although she is speaking about adult upgrading students, what she says about the importance of having a positive self-image could be applicable to all students, at all ages. She observes, "Returning to the classroom can be traumatic for any adult" (p. 26). If this is true for an English speaking adult coming to an English speaking classroom, how much more difficult must it be for a person of another language venturing into an ESL classroom? As Ryan-Fisher suggests, it behooves teachers to make every effort to calm anxiety of their students and to help them build positive self-images for success. Having self-confidence is essential for all students, ESL students included.

Weber (1990), in his article, "Building Students' Self-esteem", characterizes an effective school as one which not only concerns itself with physical appearance and climate but also with the quality of human relations:

> Self-esteem influences a person's self-discipline, self-confidence, identification with others, trust in others, ability to assess people's actions, academic achievement, sense of security, capacity to love, and success in life....There even appears to be a link between self-esteem and how one communicates with others. (p. 6)

Keep (1988) states the case even more strongly in her article, "How to Build Positive Self-esteem." She maintains, "A healthy measure of positive self-esteem is the single most important characteristic that we can have" (p. 6). She tells us that a person with a healthy self-concept will be more willing to take the risks associated with learning new tasks. Risk taking, as all experienced ESL teachers know, is so essential in language learning. As to the "how?" of the problem that she raises, Keep answers in part by encouraging teachers to ensure that their students have responsibility and success followed by sincere, generous praise. This is facilitated by calling on students often to participate in discussion and to listen carefully to what they have to say.

Finocchiaro (1981) also sees a close connection between classroom tone, students' needs, teacher's influence, motivation and learning. She speaks of a methodology that

"...must be in harmony with the teacher's personality, the students' needs and strategies

for learning" (p. 60). She feels that motivation stems from the positive attitudes of both the

students and the teacher, which attitudes "...should permeate every stage of the learning

process if this process is to lead to pleasure and success in language acquisition" (p. 59).

Although she recognizes the student contribution to classroom tone and motivation,

Finocchiaro places the primary responsibility for the development of these important

aspects of education squarely upon the shoulders of the classroom teacher:

> Motivation is the feeling nurtured primarily by the classroom teacher in the learning
> situation as he or she engages in carefully planned as well as empirical and intuitive
> practices which will satisfy one or more of the basic, universal, cognitive, and
> affective human needs identified by psychologists such as Maslow: the need for
> survival, belonging, identity, self-esteem, and self-actualization. (p. 59)....All
> students need to be exposed to a wide array of interesting, challenging
> experiences....They nee i in fei l that they belong to a group and that they can hope
> for many small successes, 'he; need to e er their language classes not with fear but
> with a feeling of enthusiasm. (p. 68)

Brown (1987) affirms Finocchiaro's views. He also sees a close connection

between self-esteem and motivation. He says, "Self-esteem is probably the most pervasive

aspect of human behavior" (p. 101). Brown tells us that without a good measure of self-

esteem and a sense of belonging, successful learning is highly unlikely. He sees social

interaction as vital to motivation and to the basic human need for stimulation from the

environment. In itemizing needs he notes, "...the need for stimulation, the need to be

stimulated by the environment, by other people, or by ideas, thoughts, and

feelings;....finally the need for ego enhancement, for the self to be known and accepted and

approved of by others" (p. 114).

In discussing her experiences in an ESL classroom with students of high school

age, Mackwood (1991) touches upon several important needs. She speaks of the need for

"...accurate communication between speakers of different languages" (p. 32). Although

this is not always achieved, this is the goal towards which teachers and students must

strive. And in the process there is a need for the working together of "...several minds,

lots of patience and determination..." (p. 32). Mackwood, like previous writers cited, also stresses the need for a positive tone in education. To be effective she says the process should be enjoyable, tempered with "...humor...cooperation and mutual respect" (p. 33).

Another important need that Mackwood cites is the need for belonging, for identity, or as she put it, a "sense of family." She relates, "...one of the most wonderful lessons I've learned from teaching foreign students is their special 'sense of family' in and out of the classroom" (p. 34). And in such a family she says it is very important to listen to and observe the students' communication, both verbal and nonverbal and to be ever sensitive to the students needs.

We have been looking at needs from the teacher's view. We will now consider the question from the position of two students, both of Chinese background. Agnes Yu (1991), herself now an educator in ESL, recalls her experience upon first arriving in Edmonton of high school age from Hong Kong in 1967. She recalls her frustration and embarrassment in that although she already "...spoke English, of sorts..." (p. 35) the school insisted upon assigning her to the guidance of an interpreter, another Chinese student. Unfortunately Yu could not understand this "interpreter" because they both spoke vastly different dialects. This insensitivity led her to wish that someone would "...just listen to me -- to what I had to say, in my English -- to see me for what I was" (p 35).

The experiences of the second Chinese student, Zhou Wu (1991), are recorded in the journal, Phenomenology and Pedagogy (1991,V. 9, pp. 267-275). His article is entitled, "The Lived Experience of Being a Foreigner." Wu, who is from mainland China, is currently doing his doctoral work in Education at the University of Alberta. Although he has been studying in this country for a number of years, he still has strong feelings of ambivalence and dislocation as he relates to the foreign Canadian culture. He poignantly reflects as he surveys the vast changes in his life:

> This "me" is not the "self" one is familiar with. I am not only a stranger to others, but also a stranger to myself. (p. 269)....In my mind, only that part of the world [China] remained as a whole continent on which I could stand and move with freedom. My new world consisted of ice flows. I could recognize their existence as separate pieces, but they were too slippery for me to step on, nor was it possible for me to predict the directions of their movement. (p. 272)

The vivid, poetic imagery here almost begs for a poem to be read or written. In fact this is true of the experiences of both of the students just referred to previously. Poetry, which so often deals with   sal, human experiences, would be an ideal genre for focusing and verbalizing the felt emotional needs of foreign students in such situations.

The foreign student away from country, home and family is often very vulnerable to the emotional pain of homesickness. Winning (1990), like Wu, felt a deep sense of loss, and felt her identity threatened when she moved to Canada form Australia. She refers to a feeling of being "uprooted" (p.247) from "...the place from which we have our sense of who we are" (p.257). Norris (1990) closely observing and relating to her ESL students, upon reading their written work states, "...to live in a land of strangers is to live in a place where their past and ours do not cross -- as if we have no history" (p. 240). Shaw (1990), commenting on the stranger's feelings about his country, when away from its familiar surroundings, says, "It is the known as opposed to the unknown; it is certainty as opposed to uncertainty, security rather than insecurity..." (p. 227).

Evans (1989) also recognizes this sense of dislocation, when people find themselves in strange, unfamiliar surroundings. He observes, "...we stumble over ourselves" (p. 28). In spite of the rich resources of experience that adult learners bring to the classroom, they have "...great vulnerabilities, and internal barriers. These are powerful forces with the potential to completely sabotage the learning process" (p. 28).

These "powerful forces" are of course emotional in nature and can have positive as well as negative motivational influences on the learner. Teachers should be very cognizant of their "potential." We should ever be aware of our students' feelings. Jeffreys (1968)

asserts that modern education is often deficient in its consideration of the emotional aspects of students:

> ...although the traditional emphasis in our formal education has been on the education of thinking, there is quite as much need to educate feeling as to educate thinking...we still attach too little importance to the education of feeling, and we certainly know too little about it. (p.128)...An essential part of our job as educators is to help people to achieve depth and sincerity of feeling....(p. 131)

Jeffreys goes on to say the "wholeness of personality" is dependent upon the understanding and healthy expression of feeling. Without doing so we are impoverished personally and in our relationships with other people (p. 159). This is why I believe that poetry has an important role to fill in the ESL classroom. To say that poetry has no place in the lives of such people, such as we have been discussing, who are suffering the trauma of dislocation and homesickness, is to be rather insensitive to some very important emotional needs. It is to miss opportune teaching/learning situations. These people have a great need to articulate their emotions. Carefully selected and sensitively presented poetry could help to fulfill that need and at the same time give students valuable language experience as they participate with their teacher and classmates in discussion. And from these discussions there could evolve productive writing experiences as well.

Now looking at needs from more of a psychological perspective, we find Hoyer and Huyck (1982) maintaining in their Adult Development and Aging, "All we know about the world comes to us through the senses. Without the information provided us by the processes we call vision, hearing, touch, smell, there would be no mental experience, consciousness or life" (p. 106). In other words, we are constantly in need of sensory stimulation and so people continually seek out new and interesting experiences. It would seem that experiencing multimedia supported study of poetry could very well bring to the student "...the world [that] comes to us through the senses" that Hoyer and Huyck refer to.

Furthermore, this experience could take place in a communicative, social context as the students listen to, talk and write about the poetry under consideration.

The Communicative Approach to language study, which will be discussed in the next section, seems to bear out that language fluency is only "acquired" by meaningful language use in a situation where people are relating to people, thus gaining confidence, esteem and self actualization.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The discussion of learning approaches in this section will be limited to those related to, and arising from, what is called, "The Communicative Language Teaching" (CLT). It is one among many approaches for teaching languages. Many teachers in the field hold that this is probably the most effective approach for use with ESL students. The name, CLT, arises from the earliest writings of Hymes (1972), wherein he coined the expression "communicative competence," which was subsequently expanded to, "The Communicative Language Teaching Approach".

Hymes (1972), in his article, "On communicative competence," appearing in Sociolinguistics (pp. 269 - 293), discussed a distinction between what he called "linguistic competence," and "communicative competence." The former refers to the ability of an individual to manipulate *rules about* a language, without necessarily being able to communicate in that language. The latter refers to the ability of an individual to manipulate *the language* for the purpose of communicating, even though all the rules may not be known. It is a common experience among ESL teachers to find foreign students who have studied English in their homeland and who can do very well on various grammar exercises requiring the manipulation of rules, but who are woefully lacking in "communicative competence." They are unable to *speak*, in English, that is.

Richards and Rogers (1986) in their book, Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching, write about CLT at length. They suggest that the advocates of this approach "...saw the need to focus in language teaching on communicative proficiency, rather than on mere mastering of structures [grammatical rules]" (p. 64). Learners are motivated to work at using language in many different ways - listening situations, written work, and most important, interacting with their teachers and with each other to get and share information. This interaction is facilitated by group discussions on topics of interest, in small and in large groups; that is, committees of two or three and/or plenary sessions with the whole class. Written work often evolves from these discussions.

Richards and Rogers further state that proponents of CLT see:

> acquisition as the basic process involved in developing language proficiency and distinguish this process from learning. Acquisition refers to the unconscious development of the target language system as a result of using the language for real communication. Learning is the conscious representation of grammatical knowledge that has resulted from instruction, and it cannot lead to acquisition.... [acquisition] comes about through using language communicatively, rather than through practicing language skills. (p. 72)

In a lengthy discussion of some current concerns for language education in Canada, Tremblay (1990) also endorses the communicative approach. While doing so he reviews and dismisses some of the methods of previous decades, such as the audio-lingual method of the 1950's and the 1960's, and the structural method of the 1960's and the 1970's. He feels that the communicative approach that came to the fore in the 1980's will produce better results in that "...it emphasizes the importance of placing students in authentic communication situations" (p. 8). That is, they are put into situations in which the students have to communicate, for example, like working out problems in groups.

Tremblay, however, makes note of a problem in this approach, which is the sparsity of developed teaching materials. He suggests "...resolving this issue by getting teachers to develop their own teaching materials as part of a professional development initiative" (p. 14). He recommends further that these developed materials be shared with

colleagues locally and nationally through conferences instituted for that purpose. Although Tremblay deals primarily with the teaching of second languages like French and German, he notes that these suggestions "...could easily be adapted for teaching ESL" (p.15). Regarding materials, it was with similar thoughts in mind that I developed my own teaching resources for this research study. I can concur with Tremblay as he says, "The experience of producing teaching materials would enable teachers to develop an understanding of...their [material's] practical implication in their own classroom" (p. 14).

Nattinger (1984), like Tremblay, also emphasizes the group dynamics aspect of CLT. Communicative competence is its goal. "...interaction between language users and their environment is a primary objective" (p. 391). This objective is achieved by using language to negotiate meaning. Further, Nattinger observes that CLT sees "...language as a communicative rather than a grammatical construct, and would define meaning as that which emerges in students' communicative interaction with each other" (p. 394).

Walker and Sumara (1991) adopt similar views in their "whole language" teaching approach which is akin to CLT advocated by many ESL authorities in that people learn language best, whether first or second language, when they are engaged in meaningful language experiences which they enjoy. The authors assert:

> By immersing children [or ESL students] in literature and allowing them many opportunities to write about topics that interest them, whole language teachers believe that fluency in reading and writing will grow as effectively as does fluency in oral language....Whole language teachers use a wide variety of children's literature -- nursery rhymes, chants, songs, poems, stories and novels. (p. 36)

In my own experience I have found that by using children's literature and adapting it to the more mature levels of adult students that these principles advocated by Walker and Sumara work very well in the ESL classroom.

The aforesaid authors also promote the friendly, sociable atmosphere that is characteristic of the CLT classroom. They stress, "Human beings learn best in friendly situations, in which they can cooperate and learn from one another" (p. 37). This is not to

suggest an "anything-goes" attitude. If anything, the opposite is true. More is required of the teacher by way of planning and organization. "Whole language teachers carefully plan programs that allow [students] to feel comfortable with the kinds of risk taking associated · with natural learning" (p. 37). Walker and Sumara suggest that errors in language production are not to be ignored, but neither are they to be pounced upon. Errors are "corrected" incidentally in an unobtrusive way. They are accepted as part of the learning process and are gradually corrected by the user as positive experience is accumulated.

Crawford (1990), in his article, "Emphasizing Communication in Second Language Learning," speaks specifically of learning French, but makes numerous remarks about learning any second language, thus his ideas are applicable to ESL. Like Walker and Sumara cited previously, Crawford also advocates a whole language approach wherein the learner is free to experiment and profit from errors. He observes:

> More and more it is believed that a second language is acquired much the same way as is the first. In our own language we correct ourselves when we make mistakes. ...research...indicates that given the opportunity to enter into discourse in the target language, the learner will self-correct even in the second language. (p. 26)

Crawford does not suggest the total abolition of direct instruction on points of grammar, but says it should be minimal, consisting of "mini-lessons" when necessary, on such things as adjective placement, the addition of an "s" to form plurals, "...when it is apparent that self-correction is not taking place..." (p. 26).

Another writer who also repudiates the audiolingual approach of the 1950's with its emphasis on grammatically organized, error free drills is Tarvin (1990). He favors instead the whole language, communicative approach. However, Tarvin expresses regret that in the wake of the demise of the audiolingual approach there did not appear a wide spread use of literature in language classes. This literature, he suggests, might have been profitably employed to generate intensive classroom interaction and concomitant language acquisition. He says, "In the communicative approach, since reading is an important source of input,

the reading of literature should not be unduly delayed" (p. 31). Tarvin recommends that the literature be carefully selected so that it is neither too easy nor too difficult, so as to assure interest by the students. He also expressly recommends the inclusion of poetry in the language program. It is his experience that more and more teachers are pressing for the inclusion of literature in the communicative language methodology. He asserts, "The inclusion of short authentic literary prose selections and poems will show students who are just commencing their study of English that English can express feelings and ideas about love, death, hope, fear, etc." (p. 34). Halpern (1989) has similar views when she asserts, "The heart and soul of whole language is authentic text" (p. 60). In other words, she argues for real, meaningful literature, written by real authors, instead of the contrived texts and isolated words employed so much in prepared materials for language students.

In his book, The Input Hypothesis, Krashen (1985), who also advocates real communication, explains what he calls his "input hypothesis." He suggests in language learning, that the learner, for optimal benefit, continually be involved in language situations that are a little above his present level of ability. As Krashen states, "If the acquirer is at a stage or level i, the input he or she understands should contain i+1" (p. 100). Thus the learner would still be able to understand and would be challenged to make progress. It would seem that carefully selected poetry could fit this theory well. It could be discussed and kept at a level to continually challenge the students with "i+1."

Sarah Hudelson's (1986) article, "ESL children's writing: What we've learned, what we're learning," also deals with learning language through using language for communication. Although she is speaking specifically about children, most of what she says could be applied to adult ESL situations. Hudelson points out, "Child ESL learners and children of limited English speaking ability can compose in their second language, before they have "mastered" that language, before they have total control over the systems of English" (p. 26). She recommends that students be given much opportunity to listen to and respond to "... various literary forms and genre..." (p. 27). She also includes poetry.

Her experience indicates that as students become increasingly familiar with the different genre they will "...create their own literacy pieces" (p. 27). These can then be discussed and revised with classmates and teacher. Hudelson does not suggest that they will be creating literary gems, but rather that they will be gaining valuable experience through using the language, particularly since they will be having a personal interest in the production.

Some thirteen years before Hudelson's writing, we find Michael Halliday (1973) anticipating this communicative use of language for learning, as he writes in his book, Explorations in the Functions of Language. He systematically describes numerous language functions, including such practical ones as getting and imparting information, and interacting socially with other people. But of particular interest to this study is what Halliday calls, "The personal function [which] allows a speaker to express feelings, emotions, personality, 'gut-level' reactions. A person's individuality is usually characterized by his or her use of personal function of communication" (p. 14).

Whether referring to the use of the first language, or a second language that is being learned, this "personal function" is a very important aspect of language. Poetry, it could well be argued, provides a useful medium for expressing this personal function, not only for the native speaker's own language, but also say for example, for a foreign student learning English. A poem might very aptly express some strong, as yet to this point, inexpressible emotion (in English) for the student. This idea will be explored further in the subsequent section on poetry.

Meanwhile, to conclude this section, some consideration will be given to Douglas H. Brown's (1987) book, Principles of Language Learning and Teaching. Brown, reflecting upon the emotional nature of human beings, seems to echo Halliday's statement about, "gut-level reactions" cited earlier. In discussing "affective consideration" when considering language learning, Brown states:

Human brings are emotional creatures. At heart all thought and meaning and action is emotion. As "intellectual" as we would like to think we are, we are influenced by our emotions. It is only logical then, to look at the affective (emotional) domain.... (p. 49)

....

...the learning and teaching of language have become personal encounters. The affective domain has taken on primary importance as we recognize in human communication the building of interpersonal relationships through social interchange. (p. 247)

It is indeed heartening to anyone with an interest in poetry to see linguists and language theoreticians acknowledging this dynamic, affective factor of human nature and of language. This is something that poets have known and celebrated for thousands of years. That is why poetry has so much to recommend, so much to offer in the classroom, including the ESL classroom. It arises from, and communicates human experience, to which all human beings can relate and about which, if encouraged, they can communicate.

Brown (1987), who has already been quoted at considerable length, reminds us about the importance of intuition, he says that, "Intuition involves a certain kind of risk-taking....language learners take risks.... Language teachers too must be willing to risk techniques, methods, or assessments that have their roots on a 'gut-feeling,' a hunch, that they are right" (p. 249).

Poetry in the Language Classroom

There is available a tremendous wealth of general information on poetry. By careful reading and reflection, valuable inference relevant to the specific question of using multimedia supported instruction for teaching ESL can be made. Poetry is revealed as an integral aspect of language, worldwide. It is universal. Much of this information ties in well with the concepts of needs and Communicative Language Teaching discussed in the previous sections.

Brown (1987), it has been noted, spoke of the emotional nature of humans.

McConochie (1985) likewise recognizes this human dimension and suggests we should

capitalize upon it by using literature to teach language. She maintains, "...literature has the

potential of providing great sensual, emotional, and intellectual pleasure" (p. 126). And by

sharing this pleasure with students we can help them grow and broaden their horizons

"...to become truly educated men and women" (p. 126). Similarly Reeves-Nigel (1986)

points out that literature can engage us intellectually and emotionally as we imaginatively

identify with the themes and characters of stories, poems and plays. This should be

encouraged by the teacher. She says, "The learner's desire to enjoy literature is absolutely

legitimate" (p. 15).

Sage (1987) in his book, Incorporating Literature in ESL Instruction, gives many

strong arguments for the use of literature in language instruction. A few will be considered

here. As part of his rationale Sage argues, "Literature is inherently human..." (p. 3). It

attracts people because it deals with timeless human concerns and values. Literature has

broad intellectual and emotional appeal. He says it is valuable to ESL students because it

can be used to help fulfill an important need, that is, to orientate themselves to the target

culture:

> Literature is rooted in daily life, the activities that people carry out each day. The
> world of ordering food and drink, catching buses and trains, and making and
> breaking appointments run through all literature. And of course, it is a world that
> ESL students must become familiar with. Literature can help students to become
> comfortable and functional in their new environment. (p. 4)

Stelk (1991) would support Sage on this point as she states, "Words are rooted in the

culture, and definitions are understood through understanding culture....Therefore,

literature is an ideal tool for enriching language and growing into culture" (p. 13).

Besides cultural considerations, Sage asserts that literature has very real practical

language learning value because it displays "...nearly every kind of communicative

technique speakers use ..." (p. 6). Further, when read aloud, it can help to improve

listening ability and oral production through discussion, which in turn can lead to

interesting writing opportunities. "It has in sum, the broadest utility imaginable" (p. 7).

In addition to general comments about using literature for ESL, Sage specifically

deals with using poetry for these classes as well. He suggests that most of what we learn

takes place through what he terms as a "metaphorical process" (p. 12). We relate the

unfamiliar to what we already know. Most poetry is basically metaphorical and so it may

offer a model of deep, abstract thinking and expanded perception. This analogical way of

thinking is important to the higher thought processes, important to the understanding of self

and of others, to the understanding of our emotional being. As Sage points out:

> Poets lead readers to fuller experiences, not only of ordinary moments, but also
> special moments. Poetry uses language to evoke and exalt special qualities of life,
> and suffuses readers with feelings....Lyric poems -- perhaps all poems -- are
> written at moments when the poet is so full of feelings that he or she must express
> them or burst. Such a poem allows the reader to look on as the poet releases this
> emotion....Feelings are aroused in harmony with the poet's own. The reader's
> emotional response is to some the ultimate and healthiest benefit of poetry. (p. 13)

We also find these themes of emotion and perception in Kirkland and Davies

(1984), in their volume, Inside Poetry. They begin by drawing our attention to the way we

speak, noting that our spoken word is much different than the way we usually write. In

our speech, sentences often become long and tangled, or they may be very chopped and

brief, with repetitions and stops at unusual places. They say:

> Our open, more informal talk is not like written prose; it is more like poetry. And
> since we speak poetically, reading poetry is important: it keeps us in touch with our
> natural voice and helps us to think and feel with greater understanding. (p. 1)

Later Kirkland and Davies (1984) observe, "Human beings are poetic creatures

from the outset. Poetry is our natural language" (p. 43). Noting Homer's, "The Iliad" and

"The Odyssey," they point out that poetry was the earliest literary genre to be developed in

the Western world. Discussing why poets write, they maintain that "...poets write to

express themselves, to gain emotional release" (p.97). Again, "...just as the poems help

them to understand themselves and their world, these same poems might help others in a

similar way" (p. 97). McGuire (1988) would concur. She holds that through literature

students "...learn about life and about who they really are; they learn self" (p. 18).

Similarly, Boynton and Mack (1985) in, Introduction to the Poem, note the dynamic power

of poetry in using "...the devices of compression and comparison that enable it, once inside

the mind, to explode with a power of meaning that can literally make one's day or even

change one's life" (Preface).

This power is noted by Rooney (1991), an elementary school principal. Rooney

tells of the success her school had a few years ago when her school launched a "Poetry

Week" featuring an emphasis on poetry at all grade levels. Children and teachers shared

some of their favorite poems in class. Outside resource personnel were enlisted to come in

and read poetry to the students. These resource people included parents and a professional

poet. The week was such a success that the school decided to make it an annual event.

The success was felt not only in the classrooms but in the community at large. Rooney

relates, "Many of the readers were surprised to discover how much poetry had impacted

their lives at some critical point" (p. 47). Northman (1970) tells of a similar experience.

Writing of the pleasure and power of literature, in this case poetry, he recalls a man he

knew who was going through great sadness because of a severe family problem. His

gloom was compounded by the fact that he was lonely and in a big city with the weather all

foggy and dreary. Suddenly "...his outlook brightened and his whole life cheered by the

recurrence to his mind of a simple verse of poetry by an almost forgotten poet" (p. 21).

Cline and McBride (1983) echo this sentiment when they say that literature can help people

learn how to "...meet hardship and good fortune and even face death" (p. 95). A little later

these same authors observe that literature provides "... readers with the pleasure of

transcending their problems and their own lives while they are reading" (p. 96).

In this same context, the question arises as to how deeply many lives were

changed, and for the better, by the ringing, moving poetry of Dr. Martin Luther King that

day he spoke at the great civil rights rally in Washington in 1969. His words are recorded

by Homer Hogan (ed.) (1970), in Poetry of Relevance, in King's poem, "I Have a

Dream," reproduced here in part:

> I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of
> difficulties and frustrations of the moment,
> I still have a dream ....
> I have a dream that my four little children
> will one day live in a nation where
> they will not be judged by the color of their skin
> but by the content of their character. (p. 199)

Again in the same context we should consider the words of Wendt (1988) as she asserts,

"Words used well have power. Words newly connected, can make new ideas....They can

change our awareness of ourselves, each other, and the rest of the world" (p. 47).

These ideas would agree well with Maslow's (1970) concepts of "self

actualization," which he discusses in his book, Motivation and Personality. Maslow

maintains that people cannot really gain self actualization without self understanding and

understanding of others. These are needs not only for ESL students, but for all students,

for all people. Therefore, teachers should not shy away from poetry in ESL classes, as so

often is the case. Poetry can be used profitably as an avenue of inner exploration, giving

rise to both oral and written expression.

Benton and Fox (1985) in Teaching Literature, endorse poetry. These writers

discuss how in ancient times (and among more isolated, primitive people of the present),

traditions, concepts of being, and values were passed on from generation to generation in

the form of oral stories and poems. These oral traditions were used to make sense of the

world, of themselves, and of their fellows. "...such tales linked inner and outer

worlds....The value of shared story and poetry today is no less important than it was for

the tribal community" (pp. 101-102). In Understanding Poetry, Brooks and Warren

(1976) have also recognized the ancient wellsprings of poetry. They contend that it has existed since "...the emergence of the human race and has survived, in one form or another, in every society since that time....it does spring from deep human impulses and does fulfill human needs" (p. 1).

Steinbergh (1991) also sees poetry as having an important cultural dimension, arising from human needs. She encourages teachers to use poetry in language classes because, "Growing numbers of our students come from backgrounds where poetry is an integral part of the culture" (p. 57). Although students are often of very diverse backgrounds, teachers can help them to forge a common bond through a study of literature. She observes, "While language and custom influence literature and thought, broad themes recur in every culture. These themes include: family, memories, dreams, the spiritual life, and the familiar environment" (p. 59). Steinbergh suggests we can utilize these themes to generate interest in reading and also in writing poems in language classes and so provide useful input, useful language experience. And so she sums up, "...we see how poetry truly is 'the language of the heart'" (p. 59).

Like Steinberg, MacLean (1990) also believes we should capitalize on the cultural background of students. She says many of these students have rich cultures which include a strong tradition of sharing literature. She raises the rhetorical question, "Must they wait until they are fluent in English before they are allowed to share stories and poetry...?" She answers her own question in the negative, saying that from early on in the language learning process, students should be exposed to English literature. She affirms, "It is my contention that literature is the strongest bridge that teachers of English can provide to help children, and indeed learners of all ages, to a new language..." (p. 244). Collie and Slater (1987) would answer MacLean's question similarly. Both ESL teachers of long experience, they affirm, "In our view, the sooner learners start to enjoy literature in their new language, the better" (p.2). The reason they give is that literature offers such a rich

variety of interesting material and deals with "...fundamental human issues, and [it] is enduring rather than ephemeral" (p. 3).

Returning again to MacLean, who now discusses what she sees to be three important "links" that help to make up the "bridge" that she referred to. These are, as she states them: "the sound of the language, the universality of story, and the cultural information present in stories" (p. 244). She holds that by listening to well-read stories and poems students can gain an important sense of the sound of the language. Later by attempting their own oral production they can gain valuable practice in pronunciation. Thus literature serves to provide a useful model. Under the universality of story she reminds us that many genres such as legends, myths and fairy tales have universal counterparts, so making them useful and enjoyable resources for language study. Often these stories come in the form of poetry as well as prose. These same stories and poems can also be used to convey much needed cultural information to language learners. MacLean observes, "Through the rich and growing collections of Canadian literature for children we can teach newcomers about the values, customs and social attitudes of Canada" (p. 248). By bridging gaps between cultures, literature can help to fulfill a very real human need and at the same time facilitate language learning.

Following further on this theme of poetry fulfilling human needs recalled that Maslow teaches that the basic human needs of survival and safety have to be met before going higher up the scale to affection, esteem and self actualization. Poetry often grapples with these basic human needs, but probably no more so than in poems about war. It is in the extremes of such dangers as war that the need for survival becomes most urgent. Eckersley (1968), the editor of the anthology, Impact, introduces a section on war poems with these words:

> Twentieth-century man lives in the shadow of war - war past, war present, and wars to come....Here, more than anywhere else, the poems show the poet to be distressed by modern society; not just by its constant warring but also by its apathy toward any solution. (p. 115)

One example of a war poem given is the poem, "Dulce et Decorum Est," by Wilfred Owen (1918), the last few lines of which will be quoted. If we could see the agony on the faces of men dying from the ravishes of war, Owen tells us:

> My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
> To children ardent for some desperate glory
> The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
> Pro patria mori. [Sweet and fitting it is
> to die for one's country.] (p. 123)

No other language than the language of poetry, could so powerfully impart the message for man's need for survival and safety, for man's hope of living beyond the fearful shadow of war, for man's need to live at a higher plain of self actualization.

Also writing about poetry as something important to meeting the needs of people, Perrine (1963) in Sound and Sense, holds that, "...it has been regarded as something central to each man's existence, something having unique value to the fully realized life, something which he is better off for having and which he is spiritually impoverished without" (p. 3). Perrine continues on how poetry deals with human experience; clarifies, broadens, and heightens this experience, to enrich our lives. In the light of these ideas, it seems appropriate to use poetry extensively with ESL classes. It appears that in our haste to provide these students with the "nuts and bolts," the "coke and chips," of practical, everyday survival, we forget that they also have emotional needs that have to be met. This is not to deny the importance of the practical, but it is to remind us that at the same time we should not overlook our student's inner needs.

Arnove and Gaff (1987) make some interesting observations about how people seek to satisfy their inner needs. They discuss some of the most successful national literacy campaigns of this century and their attendant efforts at "...consciousness raising aimed at human liberation" (p. 203). They suggest that there are lessons to be drawn from them. Referring to the success of the literacy campaign in Russia, subsequent to the revolution, they say, "...despite intense efforts at censorship, Russians pursue their own

(often escapist) reading interests today" (p. 204). They note that readers check out of

libraries far fewer books on politics than on biography, travel and spy stories. The same

tendencies prevail in other authoritarian regimes too. They point out, "Similar accounts of

reading habits from Tanzania and...China suggest that peasant workers may be less

interested in reading about how to construct a latrine or organizing a cooperative than in

reading stories of romance and adventure" (p. 204).

There is a good deal of kinship between literacy campaigns and ESL education.

Both stress language skills for empowerment. It should be suggested to those ESL

teachers who opt to concentrate on "practical" matters to the exclusion of studying

literature, including poetry, that they take note of the Russian, the Tanzanian, and the

Chinese experiences. We should be cautious about being overly "practical" when dealing

with human beings. As important as they are, we must go beyond such "practical" matters

as constructing latrines. Granted, everyone needs a latrine, or a reasonable facsimile

thereof. However, the human heart also needs and enjoys flights of fancy. Let us give

scope to the imaginations of our students by indulging them in literature.

Tomlinson (1986) answering critics who say we ought not devote valuable class

time to the study of poetry, counters that sometimes he finds that the use of poetry "...as

the basis for intelligent communication activities has contributed far more to the acquisition

of language and the development of language skills than a total concentration on the

presentation and practice of language items" (p. 34). He continues:

> The recent focus on language functions has unfortunately led to courses consisting
> almost entirely of the learning and practice of exponents of such functions as
> inviting, instructioning, accepting, declining, greeting, and inquiring, and such
> interactional 'routines' as ordering a meal, buying a ticket, and asking for
> directions. While the content of such courses is obviously important for 'survival'
> in a second language environment, it is of trivial educational value and has
> contributed to a narrowing and restricting of the content of language lessons and a
> diminishment of language learners. It has been my experience that poetry (if
> chosen carefully and used intelligently) can open and enrich the content of language
> lessons, can provide useful opportunities for gaining experience of the world, and
> can contribute to the development of the 'whole person' as well as the 'learner of
> the language'. (p. 34)

David Swanger (1989) in his article, "The heart's education: Why we need poetry," also justifies the use of this genre. People need more than just practicality and technology. Swanger argues that unfortunately the philosophy-based education of the past is being swept away by "...the current tide of technology-based education ..." (p. 46), and its attendant indifference to the important spheres of human emotion and feeling. "Poetry-based" education, Swanger asserts, would be a useful antidote to the "Big Lie," that technology has all the answers.

Ted Hughs (1967) in Poetry in the Making, also sees poetry as an emotional expression of human experience. He says that for describing something even so simple as the flight of a crow, words often seem inadequate. He holds that we are continually struggling "...trying to work out exactly what is going on in and around us and exactly what we are or could be....And all this is our experience" (p. 123). As humans, for centuries, engaged in the struggle of expressing experience, they invented the arts, such as, music, song, dancing, painting, sculpture, and poetry. "And when words can manage something of this and manage it in a moment of time...we call it poetry" (p. 124).

Vogel (1991), like Hughs, also sees a useful potential in poetry for the expression of "our experience" and as a versatile tool to be used in class to comment on it too. He tells of some unacceptable behavior that he witnessed in one of his classes. A fat boy was being treated very cruelly by classmates. Vogel took issue without confronting the class directly. Instead, he addressed the problem by engaging the class in the study of Stephen Dobyn's poem, "Bleeder," wherein a boy, who was also very "different," was being emotionally abused. This indirect approach proved very effective in rectifying the situation. Vogel says, "Poetry is one of our most versatile tools ...simply because poems on a variety of subjects can be interjected quickly into the curriculum.... poems...can serve as tools for successful improvisation -- the heart of good teaching" (p. 50).

Robert Mead's (1980) article, "On teaching literature in today's world," pursues similar ideas. Mead takes issue with the people who have given up on the teaching of

literature, resigning themselves to the apparent disinterest of students in this subject. He

maintains that with enthusiasm truly, dedicated, sensitive and imaginative teachers can still

reach the majority of students and attract them to literature. He says, we must present

literature, including poetry, as part of humanity's cumulative experience:

> Literature properly understood, is the attempt of an author to communicate to his or
> her own generation, and to later ones, what the universal experiences of human life
> have meant to one human being who, at the same time, is a living part of a larger
> culture and way of life. (p. 538)

The need for enthusiasm is also recognized by Edwards (1986) in her, "Reflections on

poetry," as she states, "Children and poetry have to be brought together by a caring

enthusiastic person who loves poetry and can share that joy and appreciation with children"

(p. 22). On the same page she indicates that she includes adults in her assessment when

she speaks of "...poems that can delight us whether we're seven, 37, or 70."

Silverman (1990) specifically justifies the use of literature with adults in her article

"Children's literature for ESL adults." She too sees a universality in literature that makes it

ideally suited for language teaching. She points out:

> Literature is concerned with the deepest human preoccupations, which are common
> to all people and transcend cultural differences. ESL learners can recognize familiar
> feelings and sensations even though they may be described through a new language
> and/or culture. It can encourage inquiry, interpretation, character analysis and
> discussion. (p. 202)

A full discussion of the literature on this subject of universal themes is impossible

here. But a few brief references will suffice to illustrate the point. It is critically important

in an ESL class, composed as they often are of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds,

that they be presented with materials to which they can readily relate. The universal themes

found in literature can provide such materials. They can provide a meeting ground for all

cultures. It makes it so much easier for students to cope with new terminology if the

concepts behind that terminology are already familiar. The terrain that they will be

travelling then will already be partially known. They will not be treading entirely new ground and they will be able to proceed with a good deal more confidence than if all were new and unfamiliar.

I will now go quickly through several references which illustrate one of these "deepest human preoccupations" to which Silverman was alluding, in this case the deep concern of humans about their mortality. The references chosen draw their images from the natural world and emphasize the transitory nature of human existence, comparing human life to the fading beauty of a flower. We flourish for a while but soon fade and are gone. This is a universal problem and truth that confronts all people, regardless of culture. It is an old, old theme, appearing again and again in literature in variant forms right from the most ancient writings to modern times. And so often the imagery used to convey this theme is very similar. We are told we are like a flower that presently withers, or like a bird that flits briefly here and there and soon is seen no more.

In The Old Testament:

Job observes: Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also like a shadow, and continueth not. (Job 14: 1 - 2)

....

Isaiah laments: All flesh is grass and the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth. (Isaiah 40: 6 - 7)

In The New Testament:

Matthew speaks of man as: ...the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven. (Matthew 7: 30)

....

Peter reflects: For all flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away. (1 Peter 1: 24)

In Anglo-Saxon Literature:

Leaping forward to the Anglo-Saxon period in Briton we find Bede (731/732) also ruminating on man's condition. Bede records an Anglo-Saxon lord commenting to his king on the fleeting nature of human existence. With powerful imagery he avows:

> ...it seems to me like the swift flight of a sparrow through the banquet-hall where you are sitting at dinner on a winter's day with your thanes and councillors. In the midst there is a comforting fire to warm the hall; outside, the storms of winter rain or snow are raging. This sparrow flies swiftly in through one door of the hall, and out through another. While inside he is safe from the winter storms; but after a few moments of comfort, he vanishes from sight into the wintry world from which he · came. Even so, man appears on earth for a little while....(p. 127)

Shakespearean Period:

Centuries later Shakespeare (1603?), in Hamlet, reminds us of our mortality:

> Thou know'st tis common; all that lives must die,
> Passing through nature to eternity. (I, ii, 70 - 71)

Modern Poets:

In a more recent century we read John Keats (1795 - 1821) as he honors the fading vitality of youth in his, "La Belle Sans Merci":

> I see a lily on thy brow,
> With anguish moist and fever dew;
> And on thy cheek a fading rose
> Fast withering too. (ll. 9 - 12)

Closer to our own time Housman (1858 - 1936) sorrows over the death of a young athlṳe with these words:

> And early though the laurel grows,
> It withers quicker than the rose. (ll. 11 - 12)

The ideas of the foregoing authors, both ancient and modern, agree well with the

Communicative Language Teaching approach discussed earlier, which emphasizes the

importance of having students use language to express and communicate experience. For

example, when students engage in the discussion of poetry which deals with such universal

themes as happiness, sorrow, fear, love, hate, birth, aging, and death, they will be able to

relate to these themes out of their own immediate experiences and observations. As they

attempt to share these common experiences in class, they will have something to

communicate which will require that they use words, whether oral or written. The students

helping each other to negotiate meaning, and with the teacher's help, can develop the

vocabulary and sentence structures to express their ideas. The vocabulary may arise from

the poem itself or from words presented by the teacher or classmates. Under the guidance

of the teacher this vocabulary can be woven into discussions, both with the class as a

whole or in smaller groups. The vocabulary may also be used to advantage in writing

exercises arising from the discussions.

Writing in his article, "Oral and dramatic interpretation of literature," Michael

Navascuea (1988), concurs with Mead, discussed above, as the latter encourages teachers

to persist with literature. Although Navascues speaks about teaching Spanish to American,

English speaking students, his ideas would also be applicable to ESL classes in Canada and

elsewhere. He says:

> It is clear that American education has been very remiss in not teaching students,
> from an early age, to enjoy the beauty and power of language through oral recitation
> of poetry....as teachers we must strive toward the positive, and show that poetry
> deals with very human feelings and emotions [experiences] which they can
> recognize and express in their own personal way. (p. 188)

Even before Navascues, William Preston (1982), questions the neglect of using

poetry as a source of teaching material for foreign students. In an article, "Poetry ideas in

teaching literature and writing to foreign students," he states that so little is done:

...to tap this potentially valuable resource as a means of directly and actively involving foreign students in communicative, creative uses of English....much more can be done to exploit this largely ignored, yet potentially relevant resource. (p. 489)

Preston suggests that teachers of foreign students should not concern themselves with a technical analysis of poetry. Rather, they should focus on the experience the poem conveys. Like Hudelson, discussed earlier, Preston also believes that foreign students can profit from writing in English even though they may not have yet mastered all the English forms. He concludes the article by telling of his highly successful experience of using poetry with a group of Thai students. He would read and discuss an English poem with them, one that was not too difficult. Using this model, he asked the students to write their own poems. The results, some of which he recorded in his article, he felt, were gratifying.

In accord with Preston above, Blake (1991) likewise protests that poetry has in our modern times been down-played by our unquestioning acceptance of the "'scientific' method" (p. 16). It is not that Blake is against science , but that he is *for* poetry. He points out that there are certain important things that mathematical, scientific thinking cannot teach us. Among them he mentions cultural values like living with, working with, and loving others. Nor will it teach us about giving audience to others in order to share thoughts, aspirations and feelings. Poetry, Blake maintains, will instruct us in these vital areas. Poetry is a means of "knowing about one's culture and of inevitably and necessarily becoming a member of that culture" (p. 17).

This enculturation, as has been pointed out previously, is certainly of critical concern to all ESL students. McConochie (1981) supports the idea that poetry is effective in the enculturation process. She states, "...without some study of poetry -- as well as other literary genres -- our students are deprived of an understanding of the full nature of English..." (p. 232). Again a little further on in her discussion she asserts, "...by far the most effective way to help students learn the cultural values underlying the English language is to arrange for them to discover those values for themselves, with literature

being a convenient medium for the discovery" (p. 236). And, as it were, anticipating Ramsaran, who will be discussed next, McConochie concludes, "Finally, for any study of poetry, it is critical that the poems be read aloud" (p. 239).

Susan Ramsaran (1982), also enjoins language teachers to use poetry. Her article, "Poetry in the language classroom," states that her aim is to "...demonstrate how poetry may be used in language classes to develop the students' knowledge of English" (p. 36). Ramsaran suggests that poems be carefully selected with specific language purposes in mind. By using these poems as teaching models, the teacher may promote such language skills as pronunciation, intonation and rhythm; vocabulary and meaning; grammatical structures; and stylistic devices, like colloquialisms. For example, pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm could be promoted simply by having the students listen to a poem read by the teacher. This could then be followed by choral reading by the whole class. One of the interesting advantages, she points out in this method, is that the shy student who may be uncomfortable to speak alone, could gain practise by speaking along with the class.

Clark and Silberstein (1987) would support Ramsaran as they say, "Poetry is especially good for reinforcing vocabulary from context skills, using syntax clues and for drawing inferences" (p. 247). We also find such support in Leech (1969) as he discusses poetry from a linguistic point of view. He notes how modern poets like Pound and Eliot have promoted a trend towards "...everyday usage...and the easy acceptance of colloquialism, even slang, as fit medium of poetic expression" (p. 23).

We have noted above that both McConochie and Ramsaran have emphasized that poetry should be "read aloud" in order to derive such language benefits as listening skills, vocabulary expansion, and pronunciation improvement. Sumara (1989) would add that another language benefit would accrue from such reading. This is the skill of visualization which is so important to communication, whether oral or written. Reviewing his approach he says, "I asked all of my students to listen to the poems as I read them. All I asked was that they listen carefully and try to picture the images..." (p. 11). After the reading,

Sumara would ask his students to take a few minutes to jot down these images which would later be used as the basis for discussion. He would not be concerned if these images varied widely since such variety would produce wide ranging discussions.

Wiseman (1992) also sees literature, including poetry, as a avenue for the facilitation of language skills. Although Wiseman discusses using literature for the teaching of reading to children who are native speakers of English, much of what she says could be applied to the teaching of ESL students, both children and adults. She indicates:

> The basic characteristics and activities associated with literature-based instruction are supported by the principles of learning language....reading literature supports the development and understanding of all forms of written language....responses to literature can also provide a time for using many of the language processes. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are ways of responding to a variety of literature....[Students] are encouraged to discuss, write, share, debate, compare, and enjoy literature together. Since most of what is known about language is learned in the presence of others, interaction associated with literature enhances and supports language development. (p. 25)

Wiseman continues her discussion of the use of literature for language learning by specifically encouraging teachers to use poetry for its use of condensed language for exploring events and feelings, not just of the but of the very experiences of the students themselves (p. 39). Widdowson (1988), in his article, "Poetry and Pedagogy," would concur. He sees poetry as a valuable asset to language learning, as he states, "A study of poetry alongside conventional discourse can...draw attention to language, not as an abstract system but as a communication resource" (p. 194).

We refer again to Widdowson (1981). Writing some years earlier in his article, "The use of literature", he discusses some "practical" aspects of language learning. He takes exception to those who would claim, "There is no need of literature in courses designed to meet the demands of practicality" (p. 203). To counter such arguments Widdowson takes a bemused look at some of the materials advocated by the exponents of "practicality." He notes:

Textbooks are full of fiction. Mr. and Mrs. Brown, son David, daughter Mary pursuing the dreary round of their diurnal life, breakfast, lunch, tea and supper, father reading the newspaper in the sitting room, mother in the kitchen, children in the garden, cat on the mat....There are occasional excursions. We follow their adventures at the theatre, at the railway station, in the post office and from time to time, daringly at the disco. Here they [now the Miller family] are at the restaurant ....familiar paste board figures...:

Barbara: Run Jimmy!
Jimmy: Where?
Barbara: To the empty table!
Jimmy: Which table?
Barbara: The big one!
Mrs. Miller: The square table!
Jimmy: Is this it?
Barbara: No, not the round table. That's a small table. Run to the square table!
Mrs. Miller: Sit down! Sit down! Jimmy! That's the table. (pp. 205 - 206)

Jimmy finally finds the table, but in the process the writer has lost his audience. Why bother to relate to such hackneyed banality?

These writers dispense with literature because of its fictional qualities, but then proceed to create fictions of their own, lame creations hobbling along in the name of reality. This, sadly I have found, is all too often typical of the dull prose found in ESL texts. Consequently, as Widdowson pointedly states, "Students solemnly participate without being humanly engaged" (p. 206). He asserts that like literature, these pieces are fictional in that they have no referential basis, no reference to actual people or happenings. But unlike real literature, these "textbook creations" are utterly devoid of verisimilitude or any real human interest which might attract and hold the attention of students.

When these writers argue that their writings are simulations of ordinary speech and events, Widdowson counters, "But they are not simulations at all; they are dissimulations" (p. 207). They do not represent the actions or the speech of real people. But rather represented here are "...stereotypic dummies, humanoids mouthing sentence patterns" (p. 211). Real people do not talk and act like the Millers. Subjecting students to such contrived dialogues, Widdowson contends, "...is bound to diminish the human stature of

the language user" (p. 212). He says this is so because there is nothing to negotiate, no problems to solve. Everything has been made plain, and dull, by the text.

On the other hand, Widdowson argues, the speech and action in true literature is far more authentic, far more believable. And when taught well literature "...leads to discourse which represents language as essentially a matter of creating meaning by procedures for making sense....We are engaged at the discourse level; we infer, anticipate, adjust, interpret. In short, we make sense as we go along" (pp. 212 - 213). Widdowson holds that this is true for poetry as well as prose.

It should be noted that none of these advocates of the use of poetry recommend in their approaches the use of "explication", which is so often the bane of many classroom treatments of the subject. Bugeja (1992) in his article, "Why we stop reading poetry," defines "explication" as "...a method of studying each part of the poem to determine its relationship to the whole" (p. 34). This minute dissection, Bugeja holds, is the reason so many people become disinterested and "stop reading poetry." He suggests instead, as the previous writers have also done, that poems be appreciated for the human experiences that they convey, for the thought and emotions that they evoke.

The last reference to be discussed in this section will be that by Alan Maley and Alan Duff (1989) entitled, The Inward Ear: Poetry in the Language Classroom. It is a slim volume (180 pages), but it contains a wealth of useful information, especially in the earlier parts where they lay out their rationale for using poetry. Subsequent sections give specific suggestions for dealing with specific poems. However, these suggestions may be adapted for use with other poems of the teacher's, or students' own choosing. Attention will be given to the rationale.

Maley and Duff begin by stating that their book was designed with ESL students in mind, but they maintain that the ideas could be adapted to the teaching of any language. Besides plenary sessions, where the whole class my be introduced to a poem(s), the principle technique they advocate is having the students work in small groups of two or

three students. They feel that this would encourage more exchange of ideas. The students would be discussing questions put forward during the introductory, plenary session. Of course the students would be encouraged to add their own ideas and questions. And from these discussions would come writing, as the students set down, in prose, some of the ideas they had been discussing in their groups.

Later, these small groups would report back to the group as a whole for further discussion and exchange of ideas. Thus, on the basis of using poetry, students develop the various language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, all in accordance with the useful approach of CLT, discussed previously. In selecting poems, Maley and Duff say that one need not be too concerned about the quality of the poem, nor about the poetic inclination of the teacher. They observe, "A poem does not always have to be 'good' (whatever that may mean!) in order to be useful. Nor does the teacher need to be a poet in order to use poetry" (p. 5) That should be of comfort to many people.

Maley and Duff continue by justifying their choice of genre. They say it is unfortunate that poetry is not being used more extensively in language programs. Because they make their points so well, and in such interesting fashion, they shall be quoted below at some length:

> And it is rare to find poetry integrated into the rest of the student's language learning process. Poetry, if it is included at all, tends to be treated as a slightly anachronistic side-show run by a poor relation. (p. 6)
>
> ....
>
> We would like to suggest: Poetry offers a rich resource for input to language learning. As such it is at least as relevant as the more commonly accepted types of input (e.g. contrived dialogues, isolated texts for reading comprehension, simulations, etc.). So it should be given at least equal weight. (p. 7)
>
> ....
>
> Poetry as a form of language use is universal among all human beings. No known language is without it....The themes which poetry deal with are common to all cultures, although the way they are treated, naturally differs. Love, death, nature, children, religious beliefs, despair ... the list is familiar. (p. 8)

Maley and Duff argue that this universality of poetry, that is, poetry as a genre, oral or written, and its common themes, can and should be capitalized upon. The concepts of poetry and its themes will be familiar to most foreign students. But on this common turf, the signs, the language codes, will be different. Now from this common base the teacher, working in " a dialogue among peers" (Mead, p. 538), helps to build decoding skills, and so helps to provide for the students' practical needs of communication, and for needs of esteem, and also of self actualization. Progress in communicative competence is very uplifting.

Media

As we have seen, the literature staunchly supports the idea that poetry is important to society and to the individual. There is also much support for the use of poetry for ESL classes, but more work has to be done in that area. We need to consider more ways, other than the traditional, didactic lecture, of helping all students, but particularly ESL students, to access and understand poetry. Some good progress has already been made under the influence of the CLT approach, with its emphasis on dialoguing, and its movement away from didactic instruction.

Another approach might be to use more media to enhance the study of poetry for ESL students. If poetry can be made more effective by coupling it with media, or even better, with multimedia, then this is something that should receive careful consideration. Multimedia simply means using more than one media for presentation, either in sequence, or concurrently. For example, a teacher reading a poem would be a single media presentation; add some music and/or slides and you would have a multimedia presentation. If carefully planned for and used, it can prove highly effective.

The first reference supporting media use is to Catherine Bellver (1989) and her article, "Literature and visual aids." This article, appearing in Hispania, discusses the

advantages of using visual aids in in the teaching of literature in the second language classroom. Bellver asserts that visual aids are useful motivational devices because of "... the possibility they offer for explaining, situating and breathing life into literature..." (p. 1088). And since teachers often deal with people who are "...nurtured more on visual images than the written word, we need to resort to visual aids to introduce them to the exploration of literature" (p. 1091). Oxford agrees, advocating the "...extensive use of pictures and diagrams to highlight important material and spark interest" (p. xi). He goes on to say that visuals are important in that they can readily provide language learners with "...an invaluable context to which they may relate the spoken form" (p. 75).

Bellver also gives an interesting, historical sidelight on the use of visual aids. She points out that their use is nothing new, but that they predate printing. She refers to the intricate art of the medieval miniaturists who skillfully decorated hand written manuscripts with "...fanciful renditions of heaven and hell and designed painstakingly elaborate upper case letters...to...enhance the reading experience" (p. 1088).

Continuing on another sidelight into the even more distant past, it may be of interest to note one of the earliest recorded instances of the use of sensory aids. The Bible states how David, in his youth, was a noted psalmist, a singer of songs, who supported his songs with music. It is recorded in I Samuel how that King Saul suffered from what would today be called deep depression. The king's advisors, noting the king's condition, suggested that David be called to administer to Saul. This was done. So it is told how David, the robust, stalwart youth, came before the troubled, old king to bring the comforting cheer of music and song:

And it came to pass, when the evil spirit ...was upon Saul,
that David took the harp, and played with his hand:
so Saul was refreshed and was well,
and the evil spirit departed from him. (I Samuel 16:23)

Now returning to more prosaic, present times, the next reference is to Wittich and Schuller (1969) and their book, Audio Visual Material: Their Nature and Use. In their

preface they assert that they are more convinced than ever of the importance of media to instruction, because media help provide motivation and bridge the gap between the concrete and the abstract. According to their observation, "...pupils who have the advantage of reacting to well-selected and wisely used media learn more effectively....Well-chosen educational media presents concepts in such manner as to create interest and motivation" (preface).

Similar ideas are stated by Edgar Dale (1969) in his book, Audiovisual Methods in Teaching, where he produces his "Cone of Experience" (p. 42), which characterizes learning as taking place along a continuum, from the more naive, concrete level, continuing to the more abstract and sophisticated level using verbal symbols. In lower and median positions along this continuum, Dale advocates extensive use of media like realia, photographs, film and audio equipment. These ideas would be applicable to an ESL situation where students could progress from spoken vocabulary for concrete objects that they handle, to the verbal sophistication of written symbols, being helped along the way with media representations. Levine (1990), writing many years after Dale, has similar insights. He observes, "...visual presentations appear to lead to higher levels of retention and should thus be recommended ....vocabulary should be presented by a variety of techniques [and] should capitalize on the attraction of novelty" (p. 45). He is referring to the "novelty" of various media. Later in this study it will be demonstrated how by using the "novelty" of multimedia ESL students were helped with vocabulary.

Anita Jenkins (ed. 1986) and her staff writing for Language Services, Alberta Education, in their publication, English as a Second Language 10A, Basic English, strongly endorse the use of multimedia and literature for ESL students. They see this combination as an avenue for stimulating and motivating students to more enjoyable and higher levels of performance:

> Students learn best when they have many varied opportunities to experience language aurally, visually and kinesthetically. (p. 4)

> A rich environment stimulates students. Visual aids, when used extensively, provide a starting point for students; concepts are then reinforced through multimedia presentations and projects....By using a variety of teaching methods and resources, including literature, which suit the abilities and interests of students, the teacher can accommodate individual learning styles. (p. 24)

Wright (1989) has a particular interest in the use of pictures as learning aids. He devotes a whole book to the subject. Like Jenkins, he recommends that the language teacher use a wide range of resources. "And the resources must include pictures....through their representation of places, objects and people they are an essential part of the overall experiences we must help our students to cope with" (p. 3). He recommends pictures because they help create interest and motivation for students. They also provide a very important sense of context for language learning. And Nodelman (1988) would add that these pictures should be in color because of the way that color stimulates and motivates the mind. He notes, "Of all the variations in the picture plane, those of color are the most immediately noticeable, and, like shapes, colors have emotional connotations that allow them to act as signifiers of states of mind" (p. 141). Levin (1987) notes the prevalent use of pictures in educational materials right from elementary levels through college. He feels that this is well justified, "Because of our purely sensory apprehension of visual forms [and because] they are well suited to the expression of ideas..." (p. 118).

Trotter (1991) also approves of the use of the various electronic media in that they appeal to students. But he sounds a cautionary note lest the *overuse* of "...the image-laden technologies will push reading further into the background" (p. 21). Trotter observes, "Teachers need technology as a tool...but they shouldn't depend on any single electronic approach any more than they should depend on a single text" (p. 24).

Although Guy Lefrancois (1988) in his book, Psychology for Today, does not speak specifically about media, it could readily be inferred from his statements about arousal, that media would have a positive effect on motivation. He states that when performing activities, "... there is a level of arousal at which performance will be optimal

[and] at any given time, an individual behaves in such a way as to maintain the level of arousal that is most nearly optimal for ongoing behavior" (p. 34). He maintains that this optimal level is a moderate level, somewhere between the extremes as typified by sleep and panic. It would seem reasonable to infer that the wise use of multimedia, to heighten awareness, would tend to help produce that optimal level of arousal, conducive to a good learning environment.

Fuhrmann and Grasha (1983) in, A Practical Handbook for College Teachers, would support such a view. They are writing for the college setting but many of their remarks would apply to education generally. They give a broad definition of media that includes chalkboards and textbooks. But their special concern is with the technological media such as slides, transparencies, filmstrip, audio recordings, films, T.V., and video, which have influenced students so much. They maintain:

> Students who have grown up vicariously experiencing world events ranging from war to space exploration are difficult to motivate with only printed and spoken word....Our society has progressively become multimedia oriented, instantaneous, and rapid moving. Teaching methods must keep pace, or we face the possibility of losing the attention and interest of our students. (p. 223)

Wesley Meierhenry's (1983) article, "Educational materials for teaching adults," cautions us though, that in our efforts to "keep apace," as Fuhrman and Grasha have suggested above, that we as teachers should not yield to the temptation of just using media as a casual little extra. Meirerhenry says, "I he decision to use a particular learning resource should be made within the total context of the instructional plan....the resource should not be an 'add-on' feature, but should be an integral part of the learning experience" (p. 6). He proceeds to say that well selected materials will promote learning by increasing motivation and by occasioning "...increased dialogue and interaction among learners as well as with the leader" (p. 11). This corroborates the CLT approach, advocated earlier for ESL classes.

Writing in the same year, Brown, Lewis and Harcleroad (1983) in their book, A V Instruction: Technology, Media and Methods, have adopted the same view, saying, "Creative, effective uses of learning resources increase the probability that students will learn more, retain better what they learn, and improve their performance of the skills they are expected to develop" (p. 2).

"Visual materials are a source of help throughout this long process...." (preface), of learning new concepts, says Andrew Wright (1976), in his book, Visual Material for the Language Teacher. Not only can visuals help with motivation by increasing interest, they also help to clarify concepts. In speaking of the quality of pictures [visuals] in texts, he says that they "...need not be stark and dreary..." (p. 10). Unfortunately, he does not follow his own advice. Throughout his book he uses many illustrations, but almost all of them are exceedingly, "stark and dreary," simple, line drawings, hardly anything that would create much interest among students.

It has been noted above that Brown (et al.) believes the learner will learn more and retain it better with the use of media aids. Although Jerrold Kemp (1980) in Planning and Producing Audio-Visual Materials, would agree, he takes it a step farther. He asserts that the wise use of media will, "...make education more productive through increasing the rate of learning..." (p. 6), provided that we select or "...design material that will attract the attention and hold the interest of the learner..." (p. 13).

Writing in the journal, Hispania, Alice Homstad (1987), produces an interesting article, "Neurolinguistic and psycholinguistic research on learning models of older language learners: Classroom implications." This article is especially pertinent because sometimes the needs of older learners (over 50 yr.) are overlooked, even though they may form a sizeable portion of those who need ESL. Homstad believes teachers have to make a special effort to "hold the interest" of these students, as Kemp says above. After extensively reviewing research on the implications of neurolinguistic and psycholinguistic studies of older learners, Homstad concludes, "...older learners will have stronger

receptive language skills than productive skills. They will experience more success in listening and reading than in speaking and writing" (p. 378). She says the wise teacher will capitalize on these strengths by arranging for activities such as listening to radio broadcasts, listening to vocal music, attending plays, reading newspapers and short stories and by "...taking advantage of mixed media presentations ...[like] recordings available of ...poetry set to music" (p. 378).

In her book, Preparing and Using Aids for English Language Teaching, N.A. Yunus (1982) develops a section about the advantages of using slides. She maintains that in some respects slides are more versatile than some other media, say like film strips, in that, "Slides can be handpicked to suit particular learning situations..." (p. 105). This allows for maximum control during showing. The teacher can choose the order of presentation and decide how long to keep them on the screen. Yunus observes, "Another advantage of slides...is the need for verbal commentary..." (p. 106), always an important consideration in an ESL class. The commentary can either be done by the teacher and/or students.

Marilyn Kiss (1989) in her article, "Integrating slides into the lesson plan," seems even more positive in recommending the use of slides as she states, "Slides are an exciting way to stimulate reading, writing and speaking activities in the foreign language [ESL] classroom ..." (p. 422). She recommends using slides to illustrate a story or poem, thereby helping the students visualize and understand the setting and motivating the students to read. A sequence of slides could be used to sum up a story or poem and prompt students to give verbal or written summary. Kiss says, "Sometimes even a few slides or even a single photo can help students to remember the content of a poem or short story..." (p. 423), thereby promoting discussion -- learning language by using language.

Kiss suggests that because projected slides make such powerful images, they can be used to make even ordinary things appear more engrossing. She observes, "For a visual generation of students, slides can be an effective learning/teaching tool and a

constant stimulus for writing, reading and speaking activities...and can help make learning a multi-sensory experience" (p. 425).

Writing thirteen years earlier in Selecting and Developing Media For Instruction, Ronald Anderson (1976), held a similar view, stating, "...one of the most compelling reasons to use slides for instruction is that they can serve as both instructional aids to support an instructor's presentation, or as an instructional medium when combined with recorded sound" (p. 55). Anderson's suggestions can be ideally adapted to presenting poetry to ESL students in a multimedia context of slides and recorded music as this present research study will suggest and demonstrate.

We have been looking at the use of slides. Therefore it would seem appropriate to think about their preparation. Accordingly, Jack Child's (1987) article, "Preparing and using 35 mm slides for teaching Latin American students," will be considered. This article appears in the journal, Hispania. Although his remarks are directed towards teaching Spanish, they could obviously be applied to any language teaching situation, ESL included. The article discusses the equipment and techniques to be employed by the teacher in preparing his or her own slides for the classroom. He recommends the use of a 35 mm, single reflex camera with through the lens viewing so as to avoid any problems of parallax when doing close up work. He also recommends close-up rings or close-up lenses for doing copy work.

Child suggests that the teacher not only make original pictures, but might also help augment a personal library of slides by making copies of post-cards, cartoons, postage stamps, maps, and pictures, etc. He observes that he had "...known some particularly effective teachers who had skillfully employed [such] visual materials" (p, 403). Sources, he says, are limited only by the teacher's time and imagination and "...his interpretation of the 'fair use' provisions of the new copyright law" (p. 405). Not only can the teacher make use of these slides, but Child suggests that they be made available to the students as

well to be used for guiding short oral presentations, thus giving them very useful language practice. This agrees with the CLT approach which is so effective in the ESL situation.

In this section of the literature review on *media*, we will yet consider briefly Biddle and Rossi (1966), before continuing with a discussion of ESL methodology and materials. Although they wrote their article nearly thirty years ago, it is still relevant today. They are concerned with the teacher factor in the media equation. They assert that media has the power to help "enlarge horizons" for both students and teachers. But they point out, "A medium that is imposed on a nonsympathetic teacher is likely to spend most of its time in the closet gathering dust, while the teacher continues to teach in ways that are familiar to her" (p. 21). To overcome this problem, the authors suggest that teachers be provided with adequate training programs to instruct them on how to use the new resources. It is understandable that teachers, busy as they are, might be reluctant to learn how to use some new resource without getting some outside help.

ESL Methodology and Materials

In the previous sections of the literature review, dealing with needs, CLT, poetry, and media, many things have already been written, which by implication impinge upon ESL methodology and materials. Considerations relative to the first four areas would seem to suggest certain parameters for the latter. In other words, it appears logical that our methodology and materials should evolve from the ideas explored earlier. What transpires in the classroom should not only be practical, but should be firmly based on theory as well. It now remains, in this section, to develop these implications for methodology and materials more fully.

The first writer to be considered in this section will be Burnaby (1991), who addresses her remarks specifically to the selection of materials. With respect to reading materials for ESL, Burnaby suggests practical things:

Common places to start include street signs, advertisements, packaging and labels on supermarket products and clothes, and forms that they are likely to have to fill in ....literacy exercises based on filling out real forms, leaving telephone messages, reading paychecks, finding a number in the phone directory, reading classified advertisements and so on, are preferable to more abstract reading, spelling, and writing exercises. The point here is that materials must be chosen for their authentic, practical language and literacy. (p. 175)

In some of my earlier remarks I have made light of being *too* practical when dealing with human beings. However, I must emphasize that I have no quarrel with people like Burnaby who advocate things practical. This is especially true in the early "survival stages" of ESL learning. There the practical has great legitimacy. My objection is to when teachers do not want to move beyond the practical level. There is ample evidence in the literature examined previously to support my contention that early on in the ESL learning process we should begin to introduce literature. This is not to denigrate the practical, but rather to assert the place of literature in language instruction. Such inclusion will help to maintain a balanced program and help to obviate the tedium of the stilted "practical" dialogues referred to earlier by Widdowson. It was with this in mind that I chose to use poetry in this research study.

The apt use of poetry also lends itself very well to the support of the ideas put forward by Crookes and Schmidt (1991) in their discussion of group work in language learning. They see group work as promoting a healthy sense of belonging and of positive motivation:

Collaborative group effort serves the need for affiliation and makes it easier for a feeling of achievement to be attained, because it removes, to some extent, the need for one individual's achievement to be attained at the expense of another's; the condition that would obtain in more competitive arrangements. (p. 488)

Long and Richards (1987) would agree with the importance of group work. They say, "Group work is essential....[because students] have to take the responsibility for using conversational resources to complete a task....they also have the chance to use and practice a greater variety of conversational strategies than...in traditional class activities" (p; 189).

Horner (1991) also see the value of conversation in class. She recommends that illiterate non-native speakers first be taught to read in their own language if this is feasible However, "Where there is no choice but to teach ESL children in English, oral language must have a priority" (p. 6). In doing poetry study for this research, group work and provisions for oral language were incorporated into the lesson plans. More will be said about this in a later chapter. But for now it will suffice to say that by organizing the classes into groups of two to four students, and giving them problems to solve, they engaged in listening, speaking, reading and even some writing as they debated and exchanged ideas, and so negotiated meaning and found solutions, through "collaborative group effort", to the problems posed. This is in keeping with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching advocated by this study.

In the introduction to chapter one it was noted that Crookes and Schmidt (1991) suggested "...using less orthodox teaching techniques and/or materials" (p. 508) to stir curiosity and interest in language learning. It would appear that this need for curiosity and interest can be provided for by means of the variety and experimentation that is inherent in using a multimedia approach in the classroom. Murphy (1991) observes, "The potential for variety in classroom activities increases as teachers experiment with integrating options at the level of curriculum design and lesson planning (p. 67).

Krashen (1985) would endorse this experimentation and "less orthodox" approach to language learning. Rather than the traditional language labs where students come to produce and have their output rigorously corrected, Krashen advocates the use of "...taped stories, with pictures to aid comprehension and add enjoyment" (p. 42). This is definitely a multimedia approach.

In the same article Krashen questions another orthodoxy, that is the *excessive* use of grammar based lessons with their heavy reliance on using rules and drills. He notes, "Simply, the best materials will be those that supply comprehensible input, that do not force overuse of grammar, and that keep the student off the defensive" (p. 42). Warawa

(1988) also questions the orthodoxy of grammar. She reviews several studies which seem to indicate that grammar study is, at best, of questionable value. Referring to the results of the various studies Warawa says, "The writing of students studying traditional or transformational grammar showed no significant difference in overall quality from that of students studying no grammar at all" (p. 11). Although Warawa is thinking in the context of high school students, what she has to say would have application for ESL as well. This is not to suggest that ESL teachers should avoid grammar altogether, but that they should use moderation, avoid "overuse of grammar", as Krashen cautioned above. Rather they should use the occasional "mini-lessons" urged previously by Crawford (1990 et al). These would arise as needs dictated from time to time, thus avoiding the day-by-day, interest-stifling, grammar lessons with their systematic, plodding, structured sequences of language items, devoid for the most part of any authentic corr,nunicative value.

A far simpler, more interesting, more authentic and more useful approach is envisioned by Ecroyd (1991) as a means of stimulating interest in language. Ecroyd discusses the importance of reading aloud to the class. She believes this is a good motivating device, stimulating students to take up reading. Ecroyd teaches high school, but she believes in the value of this type of reading for elementary students as well. Similarly, my experience as an ESL teacher, convinces me that reading aloud to ESL classes is also beneficial. As Ecroyd states, "When students listen to a teacher read, they are receiving a message that reading is important" (p. 77). Besides, such reading can be the basis for very absorbing discussions, which can then be culminated in useful writing exercises.

Brown, J. (1988) has similar ideas about reading aloud which he feels will benefit the students. He clearly gives strong support to the concept of using multimedia to support literature in instruction. It will also be seen that he supports the practice of giving students the advantage of having much background material as part of the multimedia approach. He states:

> When we read aloud, we cannot assume the students will understand what they are hearing. We therefore provide the following extra help with meaning whenever possible: (a) visual aids to provide contextual meaning for the reading, (b) spoken introduction to the material, and (c) a lot of talk *about* the meaning of the material ....Then the teacher reads the text aloud (usually from an overhead transparency) in its entirety. [Or]...the teacher can simply read a good story aloud (with pictures and background information available as necessary) without showing the students the text. (p. 20)

Carrell and Eisterhold (1987) in their discussions of, "S   a theory and ESL reading pedagogy," certainly agree with these practices of b   unding when new concepts and ideas are being presented to a class. They refer to "the importance of background knowledge" (p. 218) because, "Efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate textual material to one's own knowledge" (p. 220). Further on they again remind us of, "...the importance of providing background information, explaining high-frequency but culturally loaded terms, and using illustrations with reading passages to provide additional meaning to the texts" (p. 225).

Cira (1991) provides a further argument for reading aloud, or for a "live performance" as she terms it. She feels that it would be advantageous for the teacher to be able to "perform" before the class. She suggests, "There are many materials on the market that will perform very well for you in the classroom, but there is nothing like the magic of a live performance to mesmerize your students" (p. 149). A poem read aloud with some flair by the teacher, or some other visiting "performer," could answer the need.

Students are fascinated by a teacher's "live performance." It suggests a daring and a commitment with which the students can identify. The teacher becomes "one of us." This is especially important in an ESL class where the students are constantly called upon to take risks as they "perform" in their new language. In a similar vein, Fina (1991) invites teachers to risk sharing their writing with the students. He urges teachers to "...invite students to write a poem" and for the teachers to "...join the children in writing; share your work when everyone is finished" (p. 90). This puts me in mind of my own experience as a high school teacher. I had very little success eliciting poetry from my students until I began

to share some of my own poems with them. Then the poetry began to pour in. It would appear that teachers of writing ought themselves to be writers.

The language concerns that we have been dealing with all involve the fundamental skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In order to facilitate the development of these skills, it is useful to focus on certain themes. If you are to develop communication skills, you have to have something to communicate *about*. The teacher has to plan accordingly. Jenkins (1987) has some suggestions in this regard as she writes in an Alberta government publication, Integrating Cultural Concepts into Second Language Learning. In the introduction is listed a number of cultural themes teachers are urged to consider. Included is "Holidays and Festivals" (p. 1). From the standpoint of ESL classes in Edmonton, our local "Klondike Days" would appear to be a useful theme for consideration. Hence, the appropriateness, at least as to subject matter, of the poem about a Klondike miner, chosen for one of the lessons for this study. The musical component of this same lesson would also be endorsed by Jenkins as she recommends,"...listening to strange-sounding, unfamiliar music" (p. 29). The Klondike music might indeed sound "strange" to foreign ears. But Jenkins sees such activities as an important part of the process of enculturation that language learners should experience.

During this enculturation process the students constantly will be learning new vocabulary. Kruse (1987) has some recommendations to facilitate the matter. She says, as is commonly done, that new vocabulary can just be given to the students, along with the appropriate meanings. Or students can spend much time with a dictionary looking up words and writing "glosses" in their texts. Or a better way she suggests is to teach ESL students the same skills employed by competent native readers of English, namely, "...guessing from context and/or word formations" (p. 312). Kruse advocates that we must encourage the non-native reader to develop this skill so as to become a more adequate independent reader. "The EFL student cannot begin to read with full comprehension until

he has been taught to conquer the unknown word by using contextual aids....both the formation of the word itself and the environment in which it is found" (p. 312).

Fox (1987) has additional ideas about vocabulary building. But whereas Kruse emphasizes reading, Fox places his emphasis on discussion and writing. All three areas of emphasis are no doubt well placed. In his article, "On acquiring an adequate second language vocabulary," Fox says his method:

> ...is to read an essay or article [to his class], discuss it, noting the main ideas and overall organization, and then discuss and write about ideas generated by the text. [He adds] I am convinced that this method produces much better results than spending a great deal of time on grammar drills in class. (p. 311)

Fox's thoughts also lend support to the ideas expressed earlier about keeping grammar studies to a minimum.

All of this vocabulary building, that we have been discusing, will obviously be employing the basic language skills of viewing, speaking, listening, reading, and writing, both by the teacher and by the students as they engage in the various language learning activities aiming at the facilitation of communication. The students will be receiving, as Krashen suggests, "comprehensible input" at the level of "i+1." Now the difficult and often contentious question frequently arises: "At what rate should this input be delivered?" As is the case for so many educational problems, there is no quick, easy answer. Likewise, the answers are sometimes somewhat inconsistent, adding further difficulty to the situation. The authorities do not always agree. Although unanimity among the authorities is not altogether complete, there does appear to be some general consensus which we will examine briefly. This lack of complete unanimity leaves teachers in the familiar position where they often find themselves, namely, having to consider a problem and then use their best discretion and judgement. Nevertheless, I feel it is incumbent upon the teacher to consider and reflect upon some of the guidance that is available.

Roger Griffiths (1990) in his extensive article, "Speech rate and NNS [non native speaker] comprehension: A preliminary study in time-benefit analysis," makes some interesting observations. He cautions though, as a preliminary study, the findings should be considered as tentative. The study examined the effects on the comprehension of non native speakers at the low intermediate level when they were exposed to native speech at different rates: slow (100 words per minute); moderate (150 words per minute); moderately fast (200 words per minute). Griffiths examines and compares the results and indicates that the:

> Results showed that moderately fast speech rates resulted in a significant reduction in comprehension [of a 350 - 400 word oral text], but that scores on passages delivered at slow rates did not significantly differ from those delivered at average [moderate] rates. (p. 31)....[Application]: Speaking at a slow rate, by inserting more and longer pauses in the flow of speech, can be only justified if comprehension is increased; if that is not the case, the practice can be seen as an inefficient use of time. (p. 313)

In other words, if the teacher speaks at a slower rate, less will be covered or more time would have to be used. These are important considerations in order to "...make the best use of that scarce resource, time" (Griffiths, p. 312). Conversely, too fast a rate would also be inefficient since the comprehension would go down.

Blau (1990) too is tentative in her conclusions. She comments on several studies during the 1980's which manipulated speed and pauses in oral discourse and found that the net results were inconclusive in that they seemed contradictory. She cites further studies in the 1990's which also seemed to draw conflicting conclusions. However, these results were less inconsistent. From these studies she concludes:

> At the lowest levels,...slowing may be of some assistance, whereas at the very highest levels neither slowing nor pausing modification is necessary....[At these levels] we should not be overly concerned with speed of speech. Even using a relatively rapid rate of delivery as the norm, mechanical slowing of the speech did not enhance comprehension except at the lowest levels of L2 proficiency. (p. 752)

The two previous authors concerned themselves with the rate of speech speed. Carruthers (1987) also considers rate of speech delivery, but he firmly maintains that the rate should never be artificially varied as is done in some classrooms. To do so, he argues may leave students ill prepared to cope with the real world outside the classroom where they will have to understand normal speech. Carruthers insists:

> Always use real language in the classroom. Many teachers tend to overpronounce and to speak far too slowly with the result that students are seldom exposed to one of the most difficult features of English pronunciation, namely the reduction of unstressed vowels. Real language means normal speed. (p. 196)

Carruthers continues to discuss an aspect of the English language that is often difficult for foreigners, that is the rhythmic patterns of English with its systematic, regular reoccurrence of heavily stressed syllables interspersed with varying numbers of lightly stressed syllables, which themselves vary in their degrees of lightness. It is interesting to note that in order to help train the mind and ear of the foreigners learning English, that Carruthers recommends the use of poetry, particularly rhyming poetry. He suggests as a useful exercise that the students listen to the reading of a poem. Then during subsequent readings the teacher will leave out some of the rhyming words and call on the students to supply them. This is very much like the cloze exercise described later in Lesson One of this study.

Porter and Roberts (1979) address the issue of "real language" as well, in their article, "Authentic listening activities." They distinguish between "authentic" language of the real world and "...listening texts...especially prepared for ELT" (p. 177). They note an important difference between these realms, namely, the matter of pace:

> The typical ELT listening text [tape] has a uniform pace -- and it is slow. The uniformity may be inappropriate to the type of speech, and may prove boring; the slowness may irritate. The learner will moreover not have been familiarized with the relative rapidity and variability in pace of authentic discourse. (p. 177)

Porter and Roberts do not advocate that the model speech of listening texts be

entirely dispensed with, but neither should they be used exclusively. They assert that

"...we must at least expose them to authentic language" (p. 179). They have in mind such

things as radio, T. V., movies (videos), and recordings of popular songs. According to

their view, a positive motivating influence is also derived from such activity. They relate,

"In our experience the closer the learner comes to normal language use, the greater is his

enthusiasm" (p. 179).

Like the three preceding authors just discussed, Richards (1987) too is interested in

rhythmic patterns of authentic, spoken English. He too takes exception to many of the

commercially prepared listening materials because they are too contrived and do not

accurately reflect natural speech. Richards points out:

> English...is a stress-timed language. Within an utterance, only particular syllables
> are stressed, and the remaining syllabled in the utterance, no matter how many there
> are, must accommodate to the rhythm established by the stressed syllables, which
> recur at more or less regular intervals....listeners must be able to identify words
> according to the rhythmic structures within which they occur. (p. 166)....Many
> current commercial listening materials are spoken at an artificially slow pace.
> (p.172)

Producers of these materials, Richards believes, are too concerned that students should

follow and understand every word, every idea in the text, hence their slow, deliberate pace.

Instead of this artificiality, Richards advocates that we evaluate and use materials that stand

up "...in the light of Krashen's (1982) proposal that authentic learning experiences provide

opportunity for acquisition; that is, they should provide comprehensible input...which

contains...features a little beyond the learner's current level of competence" (p.172).

It is interesting to note that the stress patterns discussed by Richards were noted and

documented by the English poet Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844 - 1889) over a hundred

years ago. It is not that we should be interested in Hopkins because of any interest he had

in language teaching or learning but that he had an intuitive sense of the flow of language,

such as is common among poets and which : nguists are now more recently discovering

too. The point is that poets and their poetry can speak authentically about "authentic discourse" and we might well take note.

Houghton and Strange (1968), the editors Victorian Poetry and Poetics comment on Hopkin's style and his theory of verse known as "Sprung Rhythm." They say:

> Sprung Rhythm may be briefly described as a pattern in which the lines have a determined number of stresses, but in which the number and disposition of unstressed syllables are widely variable....He chose to use it because it was [quoting Hopkins] "...the native and natural rhythm of speech, but also because it retained the movement of song." (p. 691)

Collie et al. (1987) sees the same rhythmic qualities in poetry which she asserts are an asset to language learning. Besides offering enjoyment to students and teachers as the poems explore the varied concerns of human experience, "...poems are sensitively tuned to what, for language learners, are the vital areas of stress, rhythm and similarities of sound" (p. 6).

Before we conclude this review of the literature we will briefly reflect on the problem of error correction in language production. In considering the areas of stress, rhythm and sound as they relate to pronunciation, it is obvious that many things could go wrong as an ESL student attempts to learn to speak English. This is true of the other areas of language skill as well, such as in reading and writing. Learning another language is not without difficulty and risk. The teacher will have to be patient and supportive as the students take these risks. The atmosphere in the classroom will have to be warm and encouraging, as has already been documented. Since there is so much inherent room for error in the language learning situation the teacher will have to be consistently tolerant about frequent errors that will occur. In his article about error correction, Hendrickson (1987) addresses this issue. He observes, "When teachers tolerate some errors, students often feel more confident about using the target language than if all the errors are corrected" (p. 357). Hendrickson continues by telling us that errors are made in learning any new skill and that people can benefit from them as they are provided with encouraging feedback. Therefore, Hendrickson maintains, "...teachers need to create a supportive classroom environment in

which their students can feel confident about expressing their ideas and feelings freely without suffering the threat or embarrassment of having each of their oral or written errors corrected" (p. 366). It does not take much imagination to understand what effect the converse attitude would have where there is a strong focus on the correction of errors. This was one of the grave failings of the audiolingual approach to language instruction which emphasized drill and the pouncing on errors. It could hardly lead to authentic discourse, nor motivate the student to risk speaking in the new language.

Conclusion

In conducting this literature review, there was found an abundance of material in the five tangential areas, namely, needs; CLT; poetry; media; and methodology and materials. Most of these areas have been explored at some length. However, if anyone should undertake a similar study, more attention might be given to other language teaching approaches. This review limited itself largely to a brief consideration of the principles pertaining to Communicative Language Teaching. Other studies might profitably explore the perspectives of some of the other language teaching approaches, such as Community Language Learning; the Natural Approach; Total Physical response. These approaches might also profit from the use of poetry and multimedia in the ESL classroom.

As indicated, there is a dearth of material pertaining specifically to the idea of combining poetry with multimedia for the purposes of teaching ESL. This study is virtually moving into a new area. Merriam and Simpson (1984) in their book, Guide to Research for Educators and Trainers, comment on this scarcity of material in a pioneer area. They point out, "Occasionally there is a paucity of literature on a particular topic. This is a sign that the researcher is embarking onto a new area and the study will form some contribution to the literature" (p. 37). It is felt that this research has been moving onto something quite novel and exciting. This has been a rewarding field of study.

CHAPTER III: DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This study was designed to examine the combined use of poetry and multimedia for the teaching of ESL. The objective of this chapter is to describe the design and methodologies employed in sufficient detail, such that some other researcher could follow the procedures outlined and, without too much difficulty, produce a similar study, and hopefully evolve similar results.

The setting for this study was selected ESL classes in Edmonton. The following educational jurisdictions were approached in the spring of 1992 by telephone, by letter, and by personal interviews in order to secure their cooperation for this study: The University of Alberta Department of Extension; Edmonton Public School Board; Edmonton Separate School Board; Grant MacEwan College; and Edmonton Immigrant Services Association.

The study employs an ethnographic, descriptive, sample survey design. In other words, it is eclectic in its outlook. This is much in keeping with the ideas subscribed to by Eisner (1981) in an article about educational research where he cautions about being too narrow in approach. Eisner advises:

> Methodological pluralism rather than methodological monism is the ideal to which artistic approaches to research subscribe....The field of education in particular needs to avoid methodological monism. Our problems need to be addressed in as many ways as will bear fruit. (p. 9)

These generalizations will be expanded upon as the design of this study is laid out and discussed in detail in the following sections.

Research Design

As Ary et al. (1990) in Introduction to Research in Education, state, "Descriptive research studies are designed to obtain information concerning the current status of phenomena. They are directed toward determining the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of the study" (p. 381). This study sets out to explore and describe the nature of the responses of teachers and their ESL students to the study of poetry in conjunction with multimedia use. Further, the study also sought to determine how ESL teachers and their students perceived that such a combination impinges upon language skills. The research problem and subproblems which guided the study are given below.

The Problem. Do ESL students at the Intermediate 1 level or higher, and their teachers enjoy classroom study of poetry, when coupled with multimedia support, and further do these students and their teachers perceive such study to be useful for English language development?

The first subproblem. The first subproblem was to determine, by use of a survey instrument, the overall enjoyment of the selected ESL students in experiencing exposure to in class study of poetry when it was coupled with multimedia support, and further, to determine if the students perceived such experience to be beneficial to their English language development in the following areas:

a. their listening ability?
b. their speaking ability?
c. their reading ability?
d. their writing ability?

The second subproblem. The second subproblem was to determine, by means of a survey instrument, how ESL teachers of the students involved evaluated the merit of multimedia supported study of poetry for their students' language development as to:

    a. their listening ability?

    b. their speaking ability?

    c. their reading ability?

    d. their writing ability?

The survey part of the design was addressed by soliciting information from sample groups of teachers and students, using a questionnaire. They responded to a rating scale reflecting the subproblems listed above. At the end of each questionnaire there was included an open-ended invitation to respond to the whole experience in writing. These matters will be discussed at greater length later in the section on instrumentation. Copies of the instruments are given in Appendices E and F.

The classes used in this research were, with one exception, at various levels upward from, and including, the ESL Intermediate I level, which level has been defined in chapter one of this study. The one exception was a class of senior citizens who were below the Intermediate I level. However, upon examining and discussing my materials with me, their teacher assured me that they could cope with the survey instrument, which was the primary criterion for class selection. There will be more discussion of this in the next section on the description on the population.

The creative focus of the study is apparent in its subjective nature. This was not a controlled, experimental investigation. It frequently dealt with intangibles, such as how people perceived experiences. Ary et al. (1990) speak of the difficulty of dealing with intangibles, in that one "...deals with constructs that are not directly observable but must be inferred from indirect measures" (p. 409). The ethnographic aspect of the study is indicated in that the researcher participated with the students very closely in the study of

poetry, e.g., as a participant observer, or as Mead (1980) put it, as in "... a dialogue of peers" (p. 538). At the same time there was a quantitative dimension to the study in that through the use of numbered rating scales, it was attempted to quantify such constructs as enjoyment, merit, and perceptions of various language skills. These values were used as a basis for analysis and discussion.

Description of the Population and Sample

For this study the population at large was deemed to include all ESL teachers and their students *in Intermediate I level classes and higher* (one exception noted previously) in the following Edmonton institutions teaching ESL:

a. University of Alberta Department of Extension,

b. Edmonton Public School System,

c. Edmonton Separate School System,

d. Grant MacEwan College,

e. Edmonton Immigrant Services Association.

The sample included both teachers and students, from the aforesaid institutions. Teachers and students were questioned by separate instruments. The teacher sample consisted of the ten teachers (8 women and 2 men) of the ESL classes involved in the study. These teachers ranged in age from approximately 30 years to 60 years. They all had numerous years of teaching experience in ESL.

The student sample consisted of learners in the ten ESL classes of the aforesaid teachers. These classes of 13 to 21 people each provided a total of 152 students for this research. From observations, and from discussion with the instructors, an overview profile of the participants is provided. Both genders were about equally represented. The students were mostly young adults in their late teens and early twenties. But there were a few, apart from the one seniors' class, who were probably in their forties and fifties. Most

of the younger people had been in Canada for fewer than three years. Some had arrived less than a year ago. The one class of 13 seniors had an average age of 63 years and ranged from 46 to 80 years of age. Collectively, the origins of these classes were very diverse. They came from different parts of Asia, from the Middle East, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America.

To ensure that the students were able to follow directions and cope with the questionnaire, it was required (one exception noted previously) that they be *at or above the Intermediate 1 level* (scores from 280 to 329) on the TOEFL language test. These scores, or equivalents placements, were obtained from the schools involved.

Instruments for Data Collection

Before looking at the instruments for data collection it will be useful to briefly look at the nature of the lessons used in the study and to which the instruments applied. The lessons were two in number and were each based on a different poem. The first lesson was based on a long narrative poem using a very informal style. The second lesson was based on a short lyrical poem which was more formal. Each lesson provided background information and vocabulary and was supported by extensive use of multimedia which was intended to create interest and motivation and help to clarify the text. For example as each poem was read to the class it was accompanied with recorded background music appropriate to the particular poem. Simultaneously illustrative slides were projected upon a screen. Upon having experienced these presentations the students and the teachers were asked to respond by completing the survey instruments. For a detailed description and discussion of these lessons see Appendices A, B, C, and D.

The survey instruments were developed to answer the research questions posed in the first chapter of this study. (See Appendices E and F for full details and layout). These instruments evolved from the subproblems and are discussed in relationship to the same.

The problem and the subproblems are stated in full on pages 66-67, near the beginning of this chapter.

Data for the first subproblem, determining ESL students' overall response to poetry coupled with multimedia to see if they enjoy such experience and perceive it to be of benefit to their language development, were gathered by a questionnaire. This questionnaire consisted of the following 10 questions soliciting responses using a five-point rating scale (1 - very little; 2 - a little; 3 - moderately; 4 - much; 5 - very much):

1. Did you enjoy this work with poetry?

2. Did you enjoy the pictures?

3. Did the pictures make the poetry more enjoyable?

4. Did the pictures help you to understand the poetry?

5. Did the music add interest to the experience for you?

6. Could such experience help develop your listening ability?

7. Could it help your speaking ability?

8. Could it help your reading ability?

9. Could it give you something to write about?

10 Was this experience helpful for learning English?

In addition, the instrument concluded with one open-ended section for comments. Oral instructions along with examples on how to use the instrument were provided. So as to retain their confidentiality, the students were instructed not to place their names anywhere on the form.

Data to answer the second and last subproblem, determining how ESL teachers rate multimedia supported study of poetry for their students' language development, were obtained by a questionnaire consisting of five questions followed by a concluding open-ended section inviting comment. Teachers used the same rating scale as that used by the students. The questions were as follows:

Do you perceive that this approach could have merit for ESL students' language development, with respect to:

1. their listening ability?

2. their speaking ability?

3. their reading ability?

4. their writing ability?

5. Overall, on the five-point scale, how would you rate the usefulness of multimedia supported study of poetry for the language development of ESL students?

The teachers were those whose classes participated in the study. For the sake of anonymity, the teachers were asked *not* to sign the form. They were instructed to return the form in a stamped self-addressed envelope provided.

In addition to the questionnaires another source of data and general information relating to the study was the research journal. Its use is elaborated further in the next section on procedures.

Procedures

Certain preliminary procedures had to be attended to before administering the surveys. The two lessons used with the study were field tested late in February, 1992, in an ESL class of the University of Alberta Faculty of Extension. Subsequent revisions were made.

Next, in order to proceed with the study, various administrators such as principals and program coordinators in various Edmonton schools were contacted by telephone and by letter before any classes were approached. Requests for permission were made, and advise sought, as how to best contact teachers and classes to seek their participation in the study. Based on those advisements, the 10 teachers were approached. This involved

phoning the teachers, whom the administrators had recommended, at their schools to make the initial contacts In all cases the recommended teachers readily agreed to participate.

This was a long, circuitous, time and energy consuming process, since it involved five different educational jurisdictions and 10 different teachers, as well as numerous administrators at various levels. Many phone calls had to be made to request information and seek appointments with administrators and teachers. Meetings for the appointments themselves took much time. Letters had to be written and replies awaited, again very time consuming. A sample of a request letter is included in Appendix H. Further details of these procedures are laid out in the hand written journal.

Yet another important preliminary had to be addressed. This was the introductory visits to those classes selected for the study, subsequent to the teachers' concurrence. The purpose of these short visits of about 15 minutes each was not only to get acquainted with the classes, but more importantly, to explain to them the nature and purpose of the study, in accordance to the requirements of an Ethics Review Committee. It was explained clearly, so all involved understood that no deception would be used. It was made clear that no threatening aftermath would ensue. All participants participated only with their own informed consent All involved were informed that they had the right to opt out before the study began, or at any point along the way. And if any student choose to opt out, they would be accommodated in the library, according to arrangements which were made previously. I am pleased to report that during the entire study no student exercised their right to opt out.

These procedures, from contacting and dealing with administrators, through contacting and dealing with teachers and their classes, were documented, along with observational notes, in a research journal. Although the journal was not part of the original research design, it addressed the ever present question, "What is transpiring here, and what does it mean?" As the field work progressed, these carefully kept notes, along with reflections about them, also became an important part of the data for this study. This

"audit trail" was subsequently used by the researcher, to reflectively re-examine many aspects of of the study, to assess and weigh the data and conclusions. Such procedures should add to the validity and reliability of the research and add clarity to any attempts to produce similar studies. This hand written journal will be available for those who might wish to consult it.

The researcher teaching the lesson In planning this study, much consideration was given to the question, Should the researcher himself teach the poetry lessons that would be presented to the participating ESL classes? At first it was thought best that the teachers of the classes in the study should be approached to teach the lessons. The idea being that this would obviate the problem of bias arising from the researcher's participation. In discussing the problem with colleagues (my advisor and classmates in a research course), it was speculated that the researcher's own enthusiasm might contaminate the ensuing results.

However, upon further reflection and debate, it was decided that this was a lesser danger than that which might arise from the inconsistency with which numerous teachers might present materials not altogether familiar to them. Some teachers might not be amenable to teaching poetry. On the other hand, some teachers might find the genre very much to their liking. It was concluded that even if they were coached and prepared in advance, their own enthusiasm, or lack thereof, might bias the results. The enthusiasm of the researcher, it was believed, would at least be more consistent. Furthermore, enthusiasm in teaching is not a liability; it is an asset, one that should infuse all teaching. So the conclusion was reached that in the interests of consistency the researcher would present all the lessons.

The choice of materials An equally difficult decision involved the choice of teaching materials. When you have selected a problem for classroom research, you must decide how that problem will be treated and what materials will be employed. Naturally

there will be a close relationship between the problem, the choice of materials and the researcher's interests. Both Ary (1990) and Leedy (1989) stress the importance of the researcher's interests. In this connection, Leedy raises the question, "Where does your interest lie?" (p. 46). And then he sets out a long list of possible interests including "language and literature." Ary states the case for the researcher's interest even more emphatically and I shall quote him at some length:

> The problem should be one in which you, the researcher, have a genuine interest and about which you can be enthusiastic. It should be a problem whose solution is personally important because of the contribution it could make to your own knowledge in an area or to the improvement of your performance as an educational practitioner. Unless the problem is meaningful and interesting, it is doubtful whether you would be willing to expend the time and energy to do a thorough job. [Also] The problem should be in an area in which you have both knowledge and some experience. (p. 53) [The underlining is my own, for emphasis].

The key ideas here are those underlined: "interest," "personally important," "improvemer . your performance," "knowledge," and "experience." They all played a role in my choice of teaching materials fo: this study. As was pointed out in the literature review, as a high school teacher of English I had used a few of my own poems as motivational devises to encourage students to write poems of their own. Not only was I able to motivate students to write, but the limited use of my poems sparked a general interest in poetry which carried over into the anthologies used as texts.

So after much reflection, I decided to use two of my own poems in this research study. Only in this case I decided not to inform the students or the teachers in advance, or even afterwards, that these were my own writings. I was somewhat concerned that if I informed them, it might bias the results of the survey. It was determined that if they asked, I would be truthful. Only one teacher and two students inquired, and that was after the surveys were completed in their respective classes. They seemed pleased when I affirmed their inquiry, but we did not discuss it further even though the surveys were completed.

Two poems were selected which seemed to fit the research design. I wanted a long narrative poem which could be coupled effectively with multimedia and tell an interesting

story, one that people would listen to and enjoy the rhythm thereof. Most people like a story; tales of adventure are part of every culture. This long poem was one that could be used to develop a cloze exercise and subsequently used for choral reading. In addition, I wanted a poem to illustrate "authentic," informal, colloquial English. My poem, "The Gold Digger's Yukon Trail," would do all this. It tells a story in a light-hearted rhythmical fashion, somewhat in the style and tradition of Robert Service. And it lends itself to easy illustration with slides. As a contrasting piece I chose the poem "Bouquet." It is a short, lyrical poem, serious in subject matter and fo .nal in style. I wanted a poem to which all cultures could relate.The theme of this short poem deals with our mortality. It has a subject matter that is of concern to all humanity. It too can be readily illustrated v ith slide

Surveying the students. Before administering the survey instru ... ''

students, the prepared lessons were taught. ᷉᷉ ᷉ ᷉. ᷉n the length of the class period, the lessons were taught in either one or two ᷉ ᷉ 'n consecutive days). Since the narrative poem that was used was quite long, ᷉ ᷉ done first, on one day, thus allowing time ᷉n the second day , if necessary, for the students to complete the instrument. In most case᷉ both lessons were taught on the same day, with a brief "coffee break" between the lessons. For the sake of confidentiality, the students were reminded not to put their names anywhere on the form. The researcher was out of the room ᷉ .dents did the instrument. Their teacher supervised and collected the forms upon completion.

Surveying the teachers. As has been detailed in regards to the surveying of the students, so likewise ethical considerations were discussed with the teachers. Teachers began and continued in the project only with their informed consent and voluntary cooperation. Cooperating teachers whose classes were involved in the study were requested to do the questionnaire for teachers pertaining to the second subproblem, that is, determining how ESL teac᷉ ᷉rs rate multimedia supported poetry study for their students'

language development. To ensure anonymity, each teachers was requested to complete the instrument in private at their convenience and forward same to the researcher in the self-addressed envelope provided.

Conclusion

The research design focused on whether ESL students and their teachers would find a teaching approach which used multimedia supported study of poetry enjoyable, interesting, and useful for their English language d velopment in the language skills areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Findings are examined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV: DATA COLLECTION, VERIFICATION AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

In this chapter I will describe and discuss in some detail both the qualitative and quantitative data that were collected and its analysis as it evolved from the lessons that were taught and from the subsequent administration of the surveys given to the classes and to the teachers selected for the study. Emerging themes will be identified and commented upon as they arise from the data. An important part of the qualitative data includes students' and teachers' written comments given on the survey instruments. Samples of these categorized comments will be reviewed. Included also will be some of the oral comments given to me by students and teachers and which were recorded in the researcher's thesis journal kept during the course of the study and referred to during the compilation of this report.

The data gathering process was a long road in that it involved ten different classes in five different educational systems. This phase of the study occupied somewhat over two months. Each class was given a preliminary, introductory visit of about fifteen minutes duration to acquaint them with the study and to enlist their support in line with ethical procedures. Subsequently each class was presented with two lessons followed immediately by the administration of the ten to fifteen minute questionnaire. Total time per class for the two lessons and questionnaire was about two hours, including a fifteen minute intermission.

The two poetry lessons to which I have referred are discussed in detail in the appendices of this study. The descriptions give the rationale and purposes of the lessons and show how their implementation fitted into the data gathering procedure. These

elaborations could also prove useful should anyone wish to attempt a similar study in the future.

A minor problem arose early in the study. At the outset it had been my intention to use only classes that scored at the Intermediate I level (score of 250-299) or higher, on the TOEFL language placement test. The purpose of this criterion was to ensure that the students could cope with the presentations and do the survey questionnaires. However, upon investigation, I found that these TOEFL scores were not generally available. Therefore, I consulted with the various teachers involved, to examine and discuss the materials I would use and to determine the suitability of the classes for the study. In every case with respect to class levels the judgement of the teachers proved valid.

Data Analysis

In addition to the information gathered by means of the student and teacher instruments, an important source of the data for this study were the memoranda observational notes and reflections recorded in the research journal to which I often referred as I wrote this final document. Thus, the qualitative data to be considered have been from three sources: the research journal; the responses to the open-ended statements from the students; and to those from the teachers. For review the two subproblems (in abbreviated form), and the relevant open-ended statements will be outlined below.

The first survey instrument (directed to the students), addressed the first subproblem, namely, ESL students' overall response to experiencing poetry and multimedia; and ESL students' perceived influence of multimedia supported poetry on language skills. This instrument ended with the open-ended statement: "You are invited to write some comments about this experience, if you wish."

The second survey instrument was directed to the ESL teachers whose classes were involved in the study. It addressed the second subproblem, that is, ESL teachers'

evaluation of multimedia supported study of poetry. This instrument ended by inviting

teachers to comment on the lessons: "You are invited to write some comments about this

study and/or the demonstrations."

Data Reduction. There was a process of data reduction in the exercise of creating

the questions for the survey instruments. This was achieved by limiting the number and

scope of the questions asked and by limiting the range of possible responses. The student

instrument contained 10 questions using a five point rating scale. The teacher instrument

contained five questions also requiring responses on a five point rating scale. Once these

quantitative data were collected they were further reduced into summary tables by manual

tabulation. Frequencies and means were calculated and analyzed. Details are discussed in

a later section.

With qualitative data from three sources discussed earlier, namely, the journal, the

students, and the teachers, there was a continuation of the process of data reduction. It was

a continuation because the reduction already had commenced in the preparation of

subproblems, in the preparation of the instruments, and in the recording of the journal

notes. The latter constitute a record of the progress of the study. It contains observations

about emerging themes and explanations. It addressed the question cited before, "What is

transpiring here, and what does it mean?"

These data were further systematized in written summary form to bring together

related ideas, themes and metaphors into sets and subsets to show plausible patterns and

relationships. That is, there were content and theme analysis in order to give explanations

of the data.

Verification. A research journal was kept during this study. Entries were made

periodically at the end of the day to correspond to major events during the data gathering

and data interpretation phases of the work. For example, efforts and arrangements to

contact and meet administrators and teachers were recorded. Reflections on the lessons and the reactions of students in response to presentations were noted. This information was subsequently used as a means of verification by going back into it to recheck, rethink and assess previous occurrences. The foregoing triangulation procedures were used to ascertain the validity of insights into proceedings.

Notes were also kept on any outliers that arose. These outliers, or pronounced departures from peer patterns, though few in number, were carefully considered as possible alternative explanations for the phenomena observed and recorded in the study. Outliers that might constitute negative evidence were reported, considered and analyzed. For example, some teachers indicated on their surveys that they believed the use of multimedia and poetry was not practical. Likewise a few students had some reservations about this kind of work, as noted in the open-ended responses. These outliers are discussed in a subsequent section.

Observations

During the course of this study there were many non-written expressions made incidentally to me, a few of which I will comment upon briefly before we begin to examine some of the written comments from the student and teacher surveys. Most of the non-written expressions were oral comments, but one might be classified as body language. They took place in different classes. These expressions by students, recorded in my journal, constitute important data. My first quotation:

> As I was packing up after the presentation one young man of European background came to me and volunteered that he had enjoyed the presentations very much. He went on to say that the poetry without the pictures and music would not have been nearly so interesting. I thanked him for his comments....[A later reflection]: It would seem to indicate that some students definitely appreciate a multimedia supported presentation of poetry.

My second quotation is of observations made in retrospect after having finished

with another class:

> Much positive feedback from this class, both from their oral comments to me and
> from their surveys. One young man said to me just before the class started that he
> thought that studying literature with pictures and music would be more interesting
> than just by reading by itself. He made these observations on the basis of my
> introductory remarks yesterday and while looking over my sound and projection
> equipment today. I must note I had been careful yesterday and in all my dealings
> with classes not to say that a multimedia approach would be any *more* or any *less*
> interesting than any other approaches. This student continued, as he thumbed
> through a literature text, "Just reading, reading, reading, gets to be very tedious."
> Another male student from the same class observed to me after the presentation of
> lesson one (just as we were going for our break) "If we had more lessons like this,
> I wouldn't skip any English classes."

My third and final quotation in this series pertains to yet another class and deals

with the body language to which I referred earlier:

> As the lesson began, I noted with some concern that one young woman lapsed into
> apparent indifference. She put her head down on the desk and turned her face
> aside. But a little later, when the gold samples came around, she became very
> attentive, and subsequently crowded into the circle around the tub of water during
> the gold panning demonstration. She was also upright and attentive during the
> poetry presentations which were supported by slides and music. After the class the
> teacher commented on the interest and absc¯ption shown by the class.

The foregoing quotations really need little comment. Suffice to say that I think they

indicate a genuine interest on the part of the students. The young men referred to above,

for example, had no reason to try to ingratiate themselves to me. Their comments, I

believe, were sincere. Coupling multimedia with poetry seems to capture the interest of the

students and can be effectively employed to facilitate language acquisition.

Student Comments from Questionnaire

In the preceding discussions I have been directing attention towards observations

derived incidentally from students. The focus will now be shifted to consider comments

which the students in this study made on their questionnaires in response to having experienced the multimedia supported presentations of poetry. Of the 152 ESL students surveyed, 100 volunteered written responses. That amounts to 66%. The vast majority of these comments were very positive in nature, expressing a great deal of satisfaction with their experience. There were very few of what might be called negative outliers. And some of these were not entirely negative, having positive aspects included. Since these comments, containing negative elements, were so few (only nine) they are all reported. The positive comments were far too numerous to be recorded in their entirety. Therefore I tried to select some representative samples. All samples, negative and positive, have been quoted verbatim, misspellings and all. In a few places I made editorial insertions within square brackets, for the sake of clarity.

Negative comments. The nine comments having at least some negative aspects are reported first. I will report and respond to the student comments at varying lengths:

It is not necessarily to use picture to help me to understand the rhyme.

Although this was the only student out of the 152 that ruled out pictures I have to regard the above student's comment as sincere and take it seriously. It may be that his or her learning style is such that pictures are not important to this student. Maybe this student feels capable of sufficient visual powers such that pictures are not necessary. No doubt there would be other students in a similar population at large who would feel the same way, who would rather not be distracted by pictures as they read a poem. We must acknowledge that a poem may have its own dynamics as it interacts with a reader who gives it his or her own personal interpretation as he or she creates his or her own visual images in response to the text. Further I should reiterate that the approach used in this study is not put forward as the only possible approach to teaching poetry, whether to ESL classes or others. It is

merely put forward as a sometimes useful alternative to other established approaches and it is hoped that teachers might experiment with the technique.

Similarly another student, and possibly for the same reasons, questioned the slides but did not rule them out entirely:

> It's better for those who's first language is English. Because sometimes it's hard to get along with what you [the teacher] are reading, while watching the slice [slides].

The above student apparently found the slides distracting. One of the teachers, as we shall see later, made a similar observation. So although most of the teachers and the vast majority of the students found the presentations agreeable, the presentations are apparently not to everyone's taste, which is to be expected. Some students may prefer, as I have indicated above, simply to interact with the text without the intervention of media.

The next student seems quite traditional in outlook:

> The poetry is very enjoyable, but it's different from the things that we normally read, and it has not enough grammer inside. So it's better that don't have this experience *too* much.

This student, somewhere in the past, has probably been immersed in the study of grammar to the point where he or she finds it uncomfortable to be long outside that sphere. But I would agree with the student that we should not have any "experience too much", not even poetry, nor traditional study of grammar either, for that matter.

The next two comments appear related, so I will give them both before I comment on them:

> I really enjoyed this class, but listening was so hard for us. Anyway thanks.
> . . . .
> Words are difficult for me. When teacher was speaking, sometimes I couldn't understand, because my ears was concentrating the music.

Is it possible that for some few students the music proved to be detrimental? It appears that these students found it so. So one must consider, similarly as was considered

in reference to the slides above, that it is not always necessary or even desirable to present

all poetry in a multimedia context. But I must hasten to assert that multimedia can

frequently be used to good effect in many instances with many students. The many

positive comments from the students which follow later would seem to bear this out.

The last four of the nine negative, or partly negative, comments also have

something in common in that they all allude to speech speed, which is a frequent concern

not only for ESL students but for their teachers as well. So I will group these comments

together for consideration:

> I could learn many informal words that I didn't know. The story about Gold rush
> is good. I glad to see the action to find Gold. I had a good time. Thank you very
> much. Only one thing bad for me is you spoke first [fast].
>
> . . . .
> You speak English just little bit fast for ESL students. If you spoke slowly, we
> could get more wonderful information. These content were very good. I could
> enjoy how to read poem.
>
> . . . .
> I enjoy a lot listening to the music and watching pictures. It helped me a lot. But
> the bad thing was that we [you, the teacher] could read the poem more slowly
> because lot of people couldn't catch it and I thing that way we can understad more
> by reading.
>
> . . . .
> I enjoyed it. But he spoke fast so I sometimes couldn't hear it. I like this kind of
> class.

These comments although largely positive, raise an important question within the

ESL classroom: How fast should we speak? The literature that we have reviewed seems to

suggest that we should resist the temptation, often prompted by the students, to speak too

slowly. It will be recalled that Carruthers (1987) was concerned that many teachers speak

much too slowly and overpronounce, thus depriving the students of experiencing "real

language." I tend to agree with Carruthers when he says, "Always use real language in the

classroom.... Real language means normal speed" (p. 196).

In closing this section of our discussion, I would like to say that I am very pleased

to have had these students express these opinions. I had been told, by knowledgeable

sources, that foreign students would be far too polite to venture a negative opinion. I was glad to find that this was not the case.

Positive comments. We shall now turn our attention to some of the positive comments written by the students. I had somewhat of a problem here in that they were so numerous that it made it difficult to choose from amongst them. However, we will consider only some of the many. It will be recalled that the first subproblem of this study inquired into the overall enjoyment of ESL students for multimedia supported study of poetry, and further if they felt it helped them in their language development with respect to listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It would have been useful had these comments fallen neatly into categories parallel to the divisions of the first subproblem of this study. But they didn't. For that we will have to look at the numerical data, which we shall do a little later.

Nevertheless, as we shall see, the students comments do address themselves to the first subproblem in a general way. They definitely indicate a high degree of enjoyment with the lessons presented. Furthermore, they also indicate in a general way that they felt that their experience was useful to them with respect to developing their language skills. And I think as educators we should place a high degree of credence upon the assessments of students for activities that they experience in learning situations.

Since the students comments did not exactly parallel the divisions of the subproblem, I decided for the convenience of discussion to arrange them into four different categories, or themes, with six examples in each. This did not always make for a mutually exclusive arrangement since the students did not have my convenience in mind when they responded to the open-ended suggestion at the end of the questionnaire which said, "You are invited to write some comments about this experience, if you wish." Some of the comments might have fallen into more than one category. But I simply slotted them according to the direction that they were most inclined. After much deliberation and much

shuffling of questionnaires, I settled on the following four divisions: 1. general enjoyment of the experience; 2. sound and pictures; 3. specific references to poetry; 4. language teaching and learning. Under each category I will list the six selected observations, comment upon them and then move on to the next division.

General enjoyment of the experience:

I think we should have more experiences like this.

. . . .

I really enjoy this study. and I really like the way he teached us. I understood everything that he said to us.

. . . .

I like very much. I learn lot. Yesterday and today I enjoy very much. [Because of time tabling, this class had their lessons on two consecutive days.]

. . . .

After lessons with you, I feel like new born person. I really enjoy your lessons. They are bringing happiness and create life more beautiful. [The restorative balm of poetry.]

. . . .

This experience was very interesting and different than the ordinary lessons. Enriched me in many new matters. I enjoyed it.

. . . .

It was very interesting and I enjoyed it. I learnd so many thing of this presentation. good luck.

The enjoyment is quite obvious here. The implications for ESL teaching, and for all teaching for that matter, are important. Learning sometimes, of necessity, is just plain hard work. But if at times we can make it enjoyable, then surely that is a good thing. The literature strongly supports the idea that enjoyment abets motivation and the learning process. We all do better when we enjoy what we are doing. Oxford (1989), it will be recalled, discussed affective factors stating, "The affective side of the learner is probably one of the very biggest influences on language learning success or failure....positive emotions and attitudes can make language learning far more effective and enjoyable" (p. 140).

<u>Sound and pictures:</u>

It is good experience to learn new things through the poetry with sound and pictures.

. . . .
The pictures helped me to understand the poem[s] very well. In my opinion it'll be very helpful if the poems have pictures, [in future studies] and I'm sure that this'll help new students.

. . . .
I think seeing pictures is very useful to understand poems.

. . . .
I wrote in everything very much, [5 on the rating scale] because pictures and music bring an inspiration in our souls. In this way is easily to understand and to write about different subjects.

. . . .
I liked this work with poetry very much I would like to have you talk in class a gain, the way you teached interesting me. Special the poem about flowers. I love flowers alot. I did enjoy all your flower pictures. Thank you very much.

. . . .
I think music, pictures and objects, make the poetry class more interesting and give us ESL students the opportunity to learn a new vocabulary in an objective way so is easy to understand the meaning of the new words and is easy to remember them.

I could have listed many more such similar students' comments, but I think that even these few would seem to indicate that poetry supported by sound and pictures can reach people in a positive way, can "... bring inspiration in our souls." We have already read in the literature review how that Collie (1987) states, "Above all, literature can be helpful in the language learning process because of the personal involvement it fosters in the reader" (p. 5).

<u>Specific references to the poetry:</u>

It's a beautiful experience because the poetry had a tremendous meaning about our lives that we must think about it and spend it wisely.

. . . .
I enjoyed the pictures very much. Also the poems were very nice. It was an interesting experience.

. . . .
I think that poetry is a way to bring out the most deepest feeling that sometimes we can share with other people. I wish every class [every ESL class] had an hour every day on this subject.

. . . .
I usually feel that poem [poetry] is so dificult. Even if I know the meaning of the word, it often wants to say something which has more meaning. Today I enjoyed poem [the poetry] very much because you explained well. Thank you very much.
. . . .

I appreciate that I would be one of your students today. This lesson was a good expierence for me and I enjoy it very much. I wish you good luck in your work. If you're the author of "Bouquet" -- congratulation! It was beautiful!!!

. . . .

I quiet [quite] enjoy[ed] the both poctry [poems] that was [were] shown to us. It was awesome.

Here again we see much personal involvement with the subject matter. Poetry can

"...bring out the most deepest feeling that sometimes we can share with other people."

This is certainly important to the emotional well being of the individual. I think that this is

especially important to the ESL student. Poetry can afford them an avenue of emotional

expression in English which they otherwise might not have with their as yet limited

English vocabulary. Before leaving this section I would like to add a comment in passing

about the last quotation above. This statement came from an ESL class of young adults in

one of our Edmonton high schools. The colloquial use of "awesome" would seem to

indicate a high degree of Canadianization. Enculturation is well on its way.

<u>Language teaching and learning:</u>

Congratulations!! I think your idea is excellent, a new way to teach ESL and make it more interesting and easier.

. . . .

You really made a good job. The way that you teach is helpful to know and keep new vocabulary and in everything: that we need to practice; spelling, reading, writing and understanding.

. . . .

In my opinion it's an excellent idea not only for us ESL students but also for another people to learn how to understand poetry and language.

. . . .

I wish to see you next time. because I really enjoy lessons that you make. It was a good experience for us. To that time, ESL classes were borring but yours are very colorfull.

. . . .

I think I had a good time in this work because it is not boring. Sometime I want to sleep when I learn English, but not this time   he add the music in, it make me happy.

. . . .

When we keep a long time to study the second language you feel bord sometimes. If we can use this kind of way in the class. It must give students more lively.

A common thread runs through these quotations. The students seem to be indicating that multimedia and poetry stimulates interest and prevents boredom. They feel it helps develop their language skills, giving them new vocabulary and "...practice; spelling, reading, writing and understanding." Referring again to Crooks and Schmidt (1991) we note that they would support these students. Crooks and Schmidt write "Interest is closely related to curiosity, and given standard SL teaching practices, developing curiosity means using less orthodox teaching techniques and/or materials....Also change is an essential part of maintaining attention..." (p.508). I think that the multimedia approach with poetry does provide this change and "less orthodox teaching technique and/or materials."

Teacher Comments from Questionnaire

From the teachers I finally received in the mail, eight out of the ten questionnaires given out. I did make call-backs but that was the best return I could achieve. I will try to order them approximately from less supportive, through neutral, to more supportive. Of the eight, two could be considered negative (but not entirely so), two could be considered neutral, and four were very positive. It is not surprising that among the teachers, as among the students, there should be some reservations about a new approach. I shall deal with these reservations first. In order to be fair, I will quote each statement in entirety and verbatim. And also to be fair, I shall feel free to reply and disagree where I think it is needed. In most cases my comments shall be succinct since most of the relevant issues have already been addressed in the literature review to which I shall briefly refer from time to time.

As was done in connection with the students comments, here also we shall review the relevant subproblem of this study. The second subproblem inquired as to how the ESL teachers involved with this research evaluated the merit of multimedia supported study of poetry for their students' language development in listening, speaking, reading, and

writing. The teachers' written remarks collectively throw light upon this subproblem in a general way. We will look at the more specific numerical ratings later.

Negative comments. Although the comments of the following two teachers are placed under a "negative" heading, these comments do contain some positive elements as well. But they are categorized according to their preponderant leanings which have to be considered. This teacher comments separately on the poems used in the two lessons, first on the poem about the modern Klondiker, and then on the poem about flowers. (The numbers, 1 through 8, placed within square brackets at the beginning of each teacher's comments have been inserted by myself for ready reference.)

[1] The concept of the "Gold Rush" was not really something E.S.L. students could identify with. Some of the vocabulary was really only used in relation to the goldrush, so wouldn't be applicable to their new lives in Canada. The poem was lengthy and some students were probably not following too well without the words in front of them. The mood was great, enhanced by the music and the gold panning demonstration. The slides were quite beneficial to the understanding of the poem. Some words could have been put on the blackboard, or on the overhead (words that were used in explaining gold panning, for example.)

Vocabulary was very hard for this level of English. The time spent was very enjoyable and interesting, but overall, I feel that the lesson really didn't broaden students' ability in the various areas of language development.

This teacher obviously had some reservations about the approach as it was demonstrated in the presentation of the two multimedia supported lessons. The teacher felt that the vocabulary was not appropriate for the students. However, the teacher also saw some merit in that "the mood was great" and "the time spent was very enjoyable and interesting", all of which are important to Communicative Language Teaching. And I wonder if community events like Klondike Days may not be capitalized upon as useful subjects for language exercises such as discussion and writing. In every class that I met in this study some students had at some time attended Klondike Days and they seemed willing to talk about it.

The second teacher's comments follow:

[2] I think the idea of using multi-media in the ESL classroom is extremely useful
& it adds interesting dimensions to the lessons. For this particular program, this
type of lesson is too teacher-centered & and the medium (poetry) is not highly
relevant to the students' lives.

I believe the use of multi-media is extremely useful; however, for the particular
needs of seniors, poetry is not terribly relevant. They need *practical* language for
practical needs. Therefore, it is difficult for me to justify the use of poetry when
we could use an anecdote from their own lives instead.

Teacher number 2 says the "this type of lesson is too teacher-center ed" an I I can

understand that, especially in the early part of the lesson during the demonstration and

during the reading of the poem. But this can hardly be avoided during this type of

demonstration. But the lesson did become more student centered as it later shifted toward

group work and discussion as the lesson progressed. And I reiterate what I have said

before, that I am not advocating this approach as *the* approach for teaching ESL. Rather it

is something to be used from time to time to create interest and motivation along with other

approaches. I concur with the idea of a student-centered approach but it takes time to have

the students comfortably assume responsibility.

Ideally these lessons which I presented should be viewed as part of a much larger

context, not as isolated lessons, but as part of a larger ongoing program. This would be

the situation in my own classroom. The work would not be abruptly curtailed as it was of

necessity in this study. In a larger program there would be scope for further discussion,

which discussion would lead to numerous and varied writing experiences. The

possibilities for writing assignments would be extensive. A few suggestions have been

given in the proposed follow-up activities given with the lessons.

In closing this aspect of the discussion I will quote from Taylor (1987) and his

article, "Teaching ESL: Incorporating a communicative, student-centered component."

Taylor, in turn, is paraphrasing Stevick (1980):

... at the beginning stages of any course both aspects of control [setting up activities and giving helpful feedback] should reside entirely with the teacher in order to create a secure, stable environment for the students; in time, these responsibilities can be shared with the students but only as long as those students feel secure in knowing that this shift in responsibility is part of the teacher's overall plan, and there is no serious disruption of the effectiveness of the activity. Stevick warns that it can be dangerous to turn responsibilities over to the student prematurely. (p. 50)

This leaves me yet to deal with the question of the practicality of poetry for ESL classes of seniors. I can certainly agree with the idea of giving ESL students, seniors or otherwise, "practical" things to meet their everyday needs. They need to know such practical things as how to find their way around, how to ask for directions, how to read travel schedules, how to go shopping, how to order a meal, how to handle money, how to use the telephone, how to make an appointment, etc. But in doing so should we stop there? Might it not also be useful to consider the very real emotional needs of these people?

That is where I believe literature, particularly poetry should come in. I cannot again review all the pertinent literature at this point; rather I would refer the reader to the literature review found in chapter two of this study. In this review will be found ample support for the idea that *poetry is in fact* "...highly relevant to the students' lives," regardless whether they be young or old. It is relevant in that it touches students at the emotional level, at the core of their being. As teachers we can deny this and pretend that it isn't so, but in so doing we are in effect diminishing our students by denying them a growth experience. MacLean (1990) states that in sharing and discussing literature, "...we grow in the knowledge and understandings that rid us of our narrow prejudices and enrich us as human beings in an increasingly multicultural society" (p. 249) Is this not important in Canada?

Neutral comments. The third teacher's comment is rather brief and neutral and needs only a brief reply. It states:

[3] Remember to point out words using a pen on the overhead, not on the screen.

I agree, "Great idea!"

Overall, the fourth teacher's statement would appear neutral. It maintains:

[4] The demonstrations of multimedia supported use of poetry were very interesting. however, it might have been a little too overwhelming since too many senses were "attacked" at the same time. In my opinion, this approach could be more successful with more advanced students.

It appears that this teacher see the possibility of interest being generated by multimedia supported poetry. This seems in agreement with the ideas expressed by many of the students in this study that the method prevents boredom, which is sometimes a problem with regular routines. So we probably need not be too concerned about students having "too many senses...'attacked.'" Finocchiaro (1981) reminds us, "...teachers should plan a wide gamut of activities for each lesson (p. 66)....All students need to be exposed to a wide array of interesting, challenging experiences" (p. 68).

Positive comments. We will now consider the views of the four teachers who were more positive in their outlook towards the multimedia approach to poetry. The fifth teacher chose to express his or her ideas succinctly in point form. I shall reproduce them in the same format:

[5] -- excellent demonstrations
-- *definite* need for *study* and *texts* in this area
-- very *positive* response on the part of students

This teacher's reaction to the demonstrations was positive and she or he perceives the students to have been similarly disposed. An experienced teacher can readily ascertain the mood in a classroom. The second point made by this teacher is of interest in that it concurs with a point that was made by several authors in the literature review of this study, namely that ESL classes should use more poetry. I refer to authors such as Maley and Duff (1989), Sage (1987), and Widdowson (1981 &1988).

The sixth respondent notes the motivational aspect of this approach:

[6] Class was obviously motivated by the presentation which triggered thoughtful discussion. Lots of vocabulary development inherent in this approach. A very stimulating and provocative approach.

Poetry, if skillfully handled, can form an excellent basis for discussion. Collie (1987) would agree with the respondent quoted above. She notes in her book, Literature in the Language Classroom, that:

> Above all, literature can be helpful in the language learning process because of the personal involvement it fosters....Poems offer a rich, varied repertoire and a source of much enjoyment for teacher and learner alike....they often explore themes of universal concern and embody life experiences, observations and the feelings evoked by them. (p.5)

The seventh teacher, in his or her response, notes a similar theme to that which we have been discussing above:

> [7] It [multimedia] helps poetry assume a vital, living presence. The participants can better relate to what life was like then and to realize how relevant poetry can be in expressing life situations across cultures.

The enthusiasm of the students, as noted previously, seems to concur with what this teacher says. Multimedia appears to make poetry more vital. And poetry can in turn be relevant "in expressing life situations."

The last of the group of eight teachers comments on the demonstrations thus:

> [8] It was very well coordinated and skillfully presented. Students learned a lot of vocabulary in a short time and at the same time gained some valuable insight into how a poem is to be interpreted. The audio-visual aspect added an extra dimension to the appreciation and understanding of the poems.

This teacher, like several of those quoted above, obviously felt quite appreciative of, and comfortable with, the multimedia approach to poetry as it was demonstrated. The teacher particularly notes vocabulary learned, insight, appreciation and understanding.

These noted items are all closely related aspects of language learning. There can be little appreciation and understanding without the insight derived through vocabulary learning.

Quantitative Data

We have now concluded our consideration of the written comments on the surveys of the students and the teachers. Now we will turn our attention to the numerical aspects . For this we will be looking at the prepared tables which summarize the relevant data. Here, as will be seen, the subjects are responding specifically to the specific divisions of the two subproblems of the study. The students, whom we will again consider first, respond to the first subproblem, and the teachers to the second. Although we have recently reviewed the subproblems briefly, I will presently restate them fully, for clarity and for organizational purposes. For tabulation purposes the questions of the questionnaires have been somewhat compressed, but their meanings will be clear. For the complete text of the questionnaires, I refer the reader to the appendices.

The numerical data from each of the ten classes were compiled into individual tables for the convenience of study and comparison. But these ten class tables are not included with this report because they are rather lengthy and repetitious. However, for convenient reference which may be more readily incorporated into the text, the data from the students has been summarized and will be presented in two tables. The first table deals with the first five questions of the questionnaire. The second table deals with questions six through ten. The relevant data from the eight teachers were tabulated into a single table. Then on another table, for convenience, and hopefully for interest, we will compare some of the percentage figures obtained from the students with those obtained from the teachers.

The question, "What is transpiring here, and what does it mean?" has been raised several times before, and is raised again for the same reason, that is to act as a reference point, and to guide our thinking as we examine the numerical data. In addition to this

overall general question, I shall also reintroduce the two subproblems of the study in turn and consider the specific questions that they raise and try to draw some conclusions in the light of the data that were gathered.

Table 1 and the first part of the first subproblem. The first subproblem was to determine, by use of a survey instrument, the overall enjoyment of the selected ESL students in experiencing exposure to in class study of poetry when it was coupled with multimedia support, and further, to determine if the students perceived such experience to be beneficial to their English language development in the following areas:

a. their listening ability?   b. their speaking ability?

c. their reading ability?   d. their writing ability?

The data for the first part of the first subproblem are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Perceived Pleasure of ESL Students
Data From 132 Students (10 classes)
Responding to questions about the lessons:
(The first figure in each cell indicates the number of responses.)
(The second figure, after the slash, indicates the percentage.)

	very little	a little	moderately	much	very much	
Scale	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
1.Did you enjoy this work?	0	3/ 2.0	17/ 11.2	40/ 26.3	92/ 60.5	4.5
2.Did you enjoy the pictures?	0	0	14/ 9.2	44/ 29.0	94/ 61.8	4.5
3.Pictures make poetry enjoyable?	1/ 0.7	1/ 0.7	11/ 7.2	48/ 31.6	91/ 59.9	4.5
4.Picture help understanding?	1/ 0.7	1/ 0.7	16/ 10.5	47/ 30.9	87/ 57.2	4.6
5.Did music add interest for you?	1/ 0.66	4/ 2.6	16/ 10.5	48/ 31.6	83/ 54.6	4.4

The issue of overall enjoyment was assessed by the first three question on the questionnaire. All the students gave the first item (enjoyment of the poetry?) a very high rating. None rated it as 1, most rated it as 4 or 5, with 5 netting 60.5% of the responses.

The overall mean for the ten classes was 4.5. The second item (enjoyment of the pictures?) got a similar rating. It had a similar distribution and an overall mean of 4.5. The third item (pictures make poetry enjoyable?) had a somewhat wider distribution, ranging from 1 through 5. However, here again most of the respondents opted for 4 and 5, giving an overall mean of 4.5. So the data would seem to indicate that the sample enjoyed this experience very much.

It would seem logical to expect that in order for there to be enjoyment, for whatever the activity, there would also have to be understanding and interest. You can hardly enjoy some activity if you do not have interest. And you are not likely to have interest without understanding. Question four (pictures help understanding?) and question five (music add interest?) address these issues. Here again we see a similar pattern to those noted above. For these two questions there was a full range from 1 to 5, but here also most of the students chose 4 and 5. Question four netted a mean of 4.6 and question five 4.4. The students apparently felt that the pictures added much to their understanding of the poetry and that the music added to their interest. Both understanding and interest are important elements in the language learning process.

Table 2 and the second part of the first subproblem. We may now direct our attention to the second part of the first subproblem wherein we inquire about language skills: a. listening, b. speaking, c. reading, d. writing. We are interested in seeing if ESL students perceive multimedia supported study of poetry as being of benefit in their development of the aforesaid language skills. The relevant data are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Perceived Language Development by ESL Students
Data From 152 Students (10 classes)

Responding to questions about the lessons:

(The first figure in each cell indicates the number of responses.)

(The second figure, after the slash, indicates the percentage.)

	very little	a little	moderately	much	very much	
Scale	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
6.Help develop listening ability?	0	4/ 2.6	21/ 13.8	68/ 44.7	59/ 38.8	4.2
7.Help your speaking ability?	6/ 4.0	17/ 11.2	51/ 33.6	47/ 30.9	31/ 20.4	3.5
8.Help your reading ability?	3/ 2.0	9/ 5.9	35/ 23.0	57/ 37.5	48/ 31.6	3.9
9.Give something to write about?	7/ 4.6	17/ 11.2	42/ 27.6	50/ 32.9	36/ 23.7	3.6
10.Experience helped English?	0	4/ 2.6	29/ 19.1	42/ 27.6	77/ 50.7	4.3

Question six (develop listening ability?) addresses the a-section of the first subproblem pertaining to language skills. The ratings are again mostly high, with none falling in 1; four in 2; twenty-one in 3; sixty-eight in 4; and fifty-nine in 5. This makes for a combined, top-end percentage in 4 and 5 of 83.6 and a mean of 4.2 on the rating scale. The ESL students in this survey seem to indicate that they perceive that the multimedia supported study of poetry can be beneficial to the development of their listening skills.

Question seven (help your speaking ability?) addresses the b-section of the first subproblem. Here the ratings from the students fall somewhat. Compared to the previous items (one through six) more of the responses, than before, have moved into the lower end of the rating scale. From the 152 students surveyed, we have six responses (4.0%) under number one; seventeen (11.2%) under number two. The largest portion, fifty-one (33.6%) fall under the mid position (moderately) on the rating scale. Forty-seven (30.9%) of the students opted for 4, and thirty-one (20.4%) for 5, giving an overall mean for this item of 3.5. So about one third of the students thought that this exercise would help their speaking ability to a moderate degree. A little over half of the students felt that such experience as

they had had would help their speaking ability either much or very much. I had expected

the rating for the writing component to be the lowest (see below). But in actual fact, the

speaking component got the lowest score, but not by much, only by as little as 0.1. This

small difference is probably not significant but it leaves something to think about. Maybe

in another attempt at this type of study the speaking component would have to have greater

emphasis. Although down somewhat, I think that the mean of 3.5 is still a favorable

rating.

Section c. of the first subproblem is addressed by question eight (reading ability?)

of the survey. Compared to the previous item, the ratings move up somewhat. Fewer

responses fall in the lower end of the scale; they are distributed mostly towards the top.

4 (much) and 5 (very much) each netted 37.5% and 31.6%, respectively, of the

distributions, or combined a total of slightly over 69%. The mean for the item was 3.9.

Section d. of the first subproblem is addressed by question nine (something to write

about?) of the survey. Here we see a wide distribution, so I will set it out in detail. Seven

(4.6%) of the respondents opted for 1 (very little) on the rating scale, this being out of ten

classes totaling 152 students. Seventeen (11.2%) opted for 2 (a little); forty-two (27.6%)

for 3 (moderately); fifty (32.9%) for 4 (much); thirty-six (23.7%) for 5 (very much).

From a broader perspective we see that 15.8% of the students in this study felt that this

type of work would benefit their writing only a little or very little. We also see that 56.8%

of the students felt the activity could be useful to their writing either much or very much.

This item about writing had a mean of 3.6. The issue of speaking and writing will be

addressed further in the last chapter dealing with conclusions.

Number ten, the last question on the student survey asked, "Was this experience

helpful for learning English?" Here the responses were again very favorable. No students

checked off 1 (very little), the lowest position on the scale. Only four (2.6%) of the 152

students gave a rating of 2 (a little). These departures from the mean, or outliers, have to

be considered. It may well be, as I indicated earlier in this study, that some aspects of this

approach may not be altogether agreeable to some students, and to some teachers too, I might add. Different people have different learning styles, and as teachers we should try to find out what they are for our various students, and in so far as is possible w... should try to accommodate them.

But overall, the student's responses seem to substantiate that, for this particular group of students anyway, multimedia and poetry provided a useful experience for learning English. Twenty-nine (19.1%) rated the experience as 3 (moderately), or as moderately so. Forty-two (27.6%) rated the helpfulness of the experience as 4 (much). Seventy-seven (50.7%) gave a rating of 5 (very much). Combined, the categories of 4 (much) and 5 (very much), received fully 78% of the total responses. The overall mean for question ten was 4.3.

According to these figures, and also according to the students' written statements, it would seem reasonable to assume that the vast majority of the students involved in this research found the experience of participating in the study of poetry supported by multimedia both interesting and enjoyable. They also seemed to indicate that they found the experience beneficial to the development of their language skills in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, although in varying degrees, as indicated in the discussions above. And overall they found the experience very helpful for their learning of English.

Table 3 and the second subproblem. We will now look at the numerical data generated from the questionnaires that were completed by the teachers. We will apply this data to the various components of the second subproblem. As was done with the first subproblem, so again I will reproduce the second subproblem here for quick, easy reference.

The second subproblem was to determine, by means of a survey instrument, how

ESL teachers of the students involved evaluated the merit of multimedia supported study of

poetry for their students' language development as to:

a. their listening ability?   b. their speaking ability?

c. their reading ability?   d. their writing ability?

The original teacher sample was small, since only ten teachers were involved in the

study. This small sample was further reduced in that I was only able to recover eight

questionnaires from the teachers. We shall keep these matters in mind as we look at the

results. I shall refer to the four questions of the second subproblem by their respective key

components, namely, listening, speaking, reading, writing. In addition to the above four

components that are investigated, the survey tries to give a composite picture be proposing

a fifth question which inquires into the overall usefulness of the experience for the students

as the teachers see it. The teacher survey uses the same 1 to 5 rating scale as that used by

the students. The results of the teacher survey are summarized below.

Table 3: Perceived Language Development by Teachers
Data From Eight Teachers

Do you perceive that this approach could have merit for ESL students' language development, with respect to:

(The first figure in each cell indicates the number of responses.)
(The second figure, after the slash, indicates percentage.)

	very little	a little	moderately	much	very much	
Scale	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
1. listening ability?	0	1/ 12.5	1/ 12.5	2/ 25.0	4/ 50.0	4.1
2. speaking ability?	1/ 12.5	0	3/ 37.5	2/ 25.0	2/ 25.0	3.5
3. reading ability?	1/ 12.5	1/ 12.5	1/ 12.5	3/ 37.5	2/ 25.0	3.5
4. writing ability?	2/ 25.0	1/ 12.5	1/ 12.5	3/ 37.5	1/ 12.5	3.0
5. overall usefulness?	0	2/ 25.0	1/ 12.5	1/ 12.5	4/ 50.0	3.6

Re value for listening, no teacher gave a designation of 1 (very little). One teacher

(12.5%) gave a designation of 2 (a little); the same for 3 (moderately). Two teachers

(25%) gave a designation of 4 (much); and four (50%) opted for 5 (very much). The mean

was 4.1. So it would appear that the teachers surveyed felt that there was a high degree of

value (75% rating of much or very much) in the listening component of the presentations.

The speaking element rated considerably lower, netting an overall mean of 3.5

which was produced by one teacher in 1 (12.5%); none in 2; three in 3 (37.5%); two in 5

(25%). Collectively, 50% of the teachers rated this item as much or very much.

Reading had the same mean as speaking, namely 3.5. The distributions from low

to high were 1; 1; 1; 3; 2; respectively. Over 60% of the teachers rated this item as much or

very much.

Writing received an overall mean rating of 3, placing it in the middle of the scale.

The distribution pattern here was 2; 1; 1; 3; 1. Even though writing received the least

favorable rating, nevertheless, 62.5 percent rated its value as "moderately" or higher, with

the largest concentration, 3 (37.5%) falling under 4 (much).

Overall usefulness received the second highest rating on this table with a mean of

3.6, and a distribution along the scale of 0; 2; 1; 1; 4. In looking over the figures, the data

would seem to indicate that most of the teachers thought that the presentation of multimedia

supported study of poetry was useful for the language development of their students.

Table 4 and student/teacher comparisons. There remains now, before concluding

this chapter, a quick look at Table 4 comparing student/teacher responses pertaining to

inquiry about the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and the

additional question about overall usefulness. Table 4 now follows below.

Table 4: Student/Teacher Comparisons on Language Development
Comparing 152 students and 8 teachers

Merit for ESL students' language development, with respect to:
(In each cell the upper row of figures pertain to students; the lower row to teachers. The first figure in each cell row indicates the number of responses; the figure after the slash indicates percentage.)

	very little	a little	moderately	much	very much	
Scale	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
1. listening ability?	0/0	4/2.6	21/13.8	68/44.7	59/38.8	4.2
	0/0	1/12.5	1/12.5	2/25.0	4/50.0	4.1
2. speaking ability?	6/4.0	17/11.2	51/33.6	47/30.9	31/20.4	3.5
	1/12.5	0/0	3/37.5	2/25.0	2/25.0	3.5
3. reading ability?	3/2.0	9/5.9	35/23.0	57/37.5	48/31.6	3.9
	1/12.5	1/12.5	1/12.5	3/37.5	2/25.0	3.5
4. writing ability?	7/4.6	17/11.2	42/27.6	50/32.9	36/23.7	3.6
	2/25.0	1/12.5	1/12.5	3/37.5	1/12.5	3.0
5. overall usefulness?	0/0	4/2.6	29/19.1	42/27.6	77/50.7	4.3
	0/0	2/25.0	1/12.5	1/12.5	4/50.0	3.6

To avoid undue redundancy, I will only comment in a general way upon the means found in the last column of this table. Glancing down this column of figures, it becomes evident that in most cases the students and the teachers rated these elements very similarly. For listening and speaking, the scores are virtually identical, the students' mean rating for listening being 4.2; that of the teachers 4.1. For speaking, both groups gave the identical mean rating of 3.5. The mean ratings for reading are similar; students 3.9, teachers 3.5. Among the four language skills the greatest divergence is found in the rating given to the usefulness of the presentations for writing. Here the students gave a mean rating of 3.6 while the teachers gave a considerably lower rating of 3.0. This spread of 0.6 raises the question, "Why?" Are teachers more conservative in their assessments? Or is this just an anomaly due to the smallness of the sample? Without further research and the collection of more data one can only speculate as to the why of this discrepancy. Further data collection

by means of personal interviews with teachers and students to explore this question of writing may shed light on the matter. More research seems indicated by way of another similar study.

There appears to be another significant difference between the students and the teachers with respect to the rating for the overall usefulness of the presentations for the students' language development. The students rated this item at a mean of 4.3, while the teachers gave the same item the lower mean rating of 3.6. Once more it would make one wonder as to why we see this difference and which rating would be more reliable. Again without further evidence we can only ponder the situation. Are teachers more able than their students to assess what will benefit their students the most? Or are the recipients of the intervention more accurate in their assessment? Furthermore, in this study we must keep in mind that we are dealing with perceptions of an intervention. What would give teachers this lower perception of the overall value of the item in question? What would give the students the higher perception? Again are teachers more conservative than their students? Are students less critical and do they have a higher expectation of possible outcomes? Or is a Hawthorne effect at play here, with the students being more influenced by the novel experience than the teachers? Which group is more realistic? As with the previous discrepancy one might find answers to some of these questions through in depth personal interviews with members of either group concerned. But this also invites a further study.

Now, from highest to lowest, we will rank the mean ratings of these four skills, first as given by the students and then as by the teachers. Students: 1. listening (4.2); 2. reading (3.9); 3. writing (3.6); 4. speaking (3.5). Teachers: 1. listening (4.1); 2. speaking (3.5); 2. reading(3.5); 3. writing (3.0)

The teachers' order of ranking was much as I anticipated. I also anticipated that the students would rank listening the highest, that skill being featured. I anticipated that they would rank writing the lowest, since that skill received the least emphasis. However, they

ranked writing third, just a little above speaking. Maybe the students were aware of the writing potential of this type of work but which we did not have time to pursue fully during these demonstrations. Again, maybe that slight difference is not significant at all.

I would have thought that the students, like the teachers, would have placed speaking second, next to listening, since this skill was also featured a great deal in our discussions during the presentations of the two poetry lessons used in this study. But as I have indicated, students placed speaking last; reading second. This leaves much room for speculation. Maybe this reflects a lack of confidence, on the part of the foreign student, to engage in oral production, as is so often the case. Similarly, in placing reading second, the students may again be indicating that they are more comfortable with personal, silent reading and with writing than they are with speaking. It is often noted among ESL teachers that foreign students may be quite proficient in reading and writing, but very weak in speaking. They often appear reluctant to take the risk of speaking. They appear to find silent reading and writing less intimidating. If this study is ever repeated, and I hope it will be, then these areas that I have indicated should be emphasized accordingly. But I shall have more to say on that later in chapter five when I deal with recommendations.

CHAPTER V: REVIEW, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, REFLECTIONS

Introduction

In this chapter I will review the four chapters that have gone before, recapitulating the main ideas, and drawing overall conclusions from the study. Recommendations and reflections follow which suggest some educational implications arising from the study and lead to suggestions for further research.

Review of the Study

I. The problem. The problem for this study was to survey a selected group of ESL students, along with their teachers, to determine how they would respond to poetry lessons, supported by a variety of multimedia. It sought to determine if the students found such presentations interesting and enjoyable, and if they thought such activities benefited their English language development in the four language skills areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Another part of the study sought to determine if these same students' teachers thought their students would profited from such activities in developing the same aforesaid language skills.

II. Review of literature. Even though numerous, extensive, manual and computer searches were made, still I was not able to turn up even one piece of literature, whether book or article, that dealt specifically with the subject of my study. This past spring, during May and June of 1992, after having completed my data gathering, I returned to the library once more for many days conducting yet another search through the latest

publications. Again I found much related literature, but nothing addressing my specific subject. So as before, I had to continue building my literature review from ancillary fields. I strove to build a strong theoretical base for the study by looking into several tangentially related thematic areas. The related thematic areas that were called upon were those dealing with psychological and educational needs and motivation; CLT; poetry; media; and ESL methodology and materials. Merriam and Simpson (1984) in their book, Guide to Research for Educators and Trainers, comment on this scarcity of material in a pioneer area. They point out, "Occasionally there is a paucity of literature on a particular topic. This is a sign that the researcher is embarking onto a new area and the study will form some contribution to the literature" (p. 37).

III. Design and procedure. The study employed a descriptive, survey design, soliciting information through surveys of sample groups of students and teachers . Both groups were surveyed by instruments prepared by the researcher. They responded to a questionnaires using a five-point numerical rating scale, followed by an open-ended invitations to make written responses about the lessons.

IV. Data collection and analysis. Ten teachers were contacted via their administrators in order to gain access to the classes used in the study. The request letter to administrators is given in Appendix H. Having secured access to the various classes according to schedules mutually approved by the teachers and myself, with equipment and materials in hand, I taught each of these classes the two multimedia supported poetry lessons described in the appendices to this study.

Following the lessons, the survey instruments were administered. Subsequently, the data from the instruments were compiled and analyzed. During this time of data collection a journal was kept wherein I recorded observations and reflections on the proceedings. This journal also became a source of data. For instance, some examples of

students' and teachers' verbal observations were discussed previously. In addition the students and teachers made written comments on the space provided at the end of the questionnaires. These were analyzed for themes and discussed. The numerical data were compiled into tables for display, showing frequency distributions and means.

Conclusions

While analyzing the data I inferred some tentative conclusions, which I now develop further. A factor to consider in drawing conclusions from this study is the question of the researcher's own bias towards poetry. I readily admit to my attraction toward the genre. It is out of this interest in poetry that the problem for this study arose. But the question remains, just how much, if any, did this interest influenced the outcome of this study? The researcher himself, and all readers should consider this factor.

Now we will consider the samples for a moment before we try to draw any more conclusions or project any generalizations. The student sample of 152 ESL students was large enough to be representative. They were not randomly selected in any formal manner, I realize. But the sample reflected a wide variety of linguistic backgrounds and was drawn from various institutions throughout the city of Edmonton. They were all adults of varying ages and of both genders. As has already been documented, the classes came from five different educational jurisdictions. So I think it is fairly safe to say that the sample is a fair representation of the student population at large, namely, all those ESL students at the Intermediate I level or higher in the educational jurisdictions that were involved. I have already noted one class of seniors that may have been a little lower in ability than the other classes. But since their teacher assured me that they could cope with the presentation and the questionnaire, I included them.

As to the teacher sample, there are some questions here. Being that they were the teachers of the student sample, they too were drawn from a wide variety of areas and

jurisdictions. They were of varying ages, of varying teaching experience, and represented both genders. So in many respects they would be representative of the teacher population at large. But the problem is a matter of numbers; they were so very few. They were only ten in all, providing eight completed questionnaires. I have reservations about drawing conclusions and making projections from such a limited sample.

Continually keeping the foregoing reservations in mind, I will now try to draw some further tentative conclusions from the previous discussions of data analysis that was presented. These conclusions are stated in relation to the subproblems which are reviewed briefly. The subproblems are addressed in a general way while applying the findings that were collected. I will also include some of my own observations as an experienced teacher.

In the first part of the first subproblem I inquired into the overall enjoyment of the students after experiencing the presentation of two multimedia supported poetry lessons. That part of the subproblem was addressed by the first five questions of the questionnaire addressed to the students: a. Did you enjoy this work? b.Did you enjoy the pictures? c. Did the pictures make the experience more enjoyable? d. Did the pictures help you to understand the pc _ms? e. Did the music add interest? All of these inquiries received a very high mean rating from the students, over 4 on a 5 point scale, with 5 being very much. I interpreted this to indicate a very high degree of enjoyment.

I feel quite confident to conclude that if this study were to be repeated under similar circumstances, the ratings in these areas would be similarly high. Students do seem to enjoy multimedia supported study of poetry, provided it is handled skillfully. Eisner (1981) speaks of "...making the particular vivid so that its qualities can be experienced" (p.7). Multimedia, judiciously applied, has a potential for making poetry "vivid so that its qualities can be experienced" by all students, including ESL students.

But are the ESL students learning language skills? I think we can readily answer this question in the affirmative. If students are enjoying language activities, they will be

motivated, and they will learn. These three elements are always closely related in language learning. As noted before, Collie and Slater (1987) remind us, "...the sooner learners start to enjoy literature in their new language, the better" (p. 2). Finocchiaro observes, "Motivation stems...from positive learner and teacher attitudes which should permeate every stage of the learning process if this process is to lead to pleasure and success in language acquisition" (p. 59).

The survey data support conclusions in conjunction with the second part of the first subproblem which dealt more specifically with the question: Can the use of multimedia supported poetry, as described in this study, help ESL students with the development of the language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing?

This part of the subproblem was addressed by questions six through nine of the student questionnaire: Question 6: Could such experience help your listening ability? This received the high rating of 4.2. Question 7: Could it help your speaking ability? This item received the lowest mean rating (3.5) of any item on the student questionnaire. I have speculated elsewhere that this might be due to the hesitancy of foreign students to risk oral expression. Question 8: Could it help your reading ability? Here the students' response was a mean of 3.9 almost (much). Question 9: Could it give you something to write about? (mean of 3.6). Question 10: Was this experience helpful for learning English? Here the students responded with a 4.3 rating.

So according to the data obtained from the student questionnaire it can be concluded that generally the students felt that the lessons helped develop their listening ability much; their speaking ability moderately; their reading ability moderately (approaching much); and their writing ability moderately.

The second subproblem inquired how, after seeing the demonstrations, the ESL teachers evaluated the merit of the lessons for the language skills development of their students in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Except for the area of listening where the combined mean assigned by the teachers was 4.1 on the five point

rating scale, the means were all in the 3.0 range. Therefore, according to these findings it can be conclude that the teachers felt that these lessons rated 4 (much) with respect to their useic'ness for promoting listening ability. The other items: speaking; reading; writing; overall usefulness; all fell within the 3.0 range. The ESL teachers perceived the multimedia supported poetry lessons moderately helped their students in these three areas.

Recommendations for Further Research

Variations. Many variations on the original study seem possible. I would be pleased to make my materials available to anyone who might care to undertake such an exercise. A useful variation would be to do the study again, much the same as before, only now build in more time for the discussions leading up to the writing exercises that were near the end of the original poetry lessons. In the original study time constraints precluded doing full justice to the writing assignments based on the poems that were studied. To help obviate the time problem I would suggest building in a separate but related lesson for each poem to emphasize the discussions and the ensuing writing. I led up to this with the follow-up suggestions included with each lesson but did not have time enough to pursue it vigorously. It would be interesting to see if this added time and emphasis would raise the mean scores allocated to speaking and writing on the students' questionnaires, that being the main purpose of the variation.

Another variation that I would like to see is to use these same or very similar procedures but with different poems and different combinations of multimedia support to see if similar results would be forthcoming. This would involve much work putting together new lessons and new multimedia support materials. If, by proceeding thus, similar results were obtained, then we could recommend with greater confidence the use of such multimedia supported study of poetry for the teaching of ESL classes. It is my feeling

that the students would, for the most part, respond positively as they did before. However, further confirmation would be useful.

An important variation I would recommend would involve much larger numbers of ESL teachers. The lessons used in this study, or similar lessons, could be presented to larger gatherings of teachers for their evaluation and assessment. The same survey questionnaire could be used again. These presentations might be made in conjunction with teachers' conventions or special workshops designed for the purpose. Other poems and materials could also be prepared and used in varying combinations, thus creating yet other variations. The object here would be to get a much broader teacher sample. Teachers would have to be assured that such materials as I have been advocating would be available, without their having to increase their already heavy load.

Recommendations and Implications for ESL Teaching

As I reflect upon the educational implications of this study, several recommendations arise which are not research orientated as those given before, but are instead more practically orientated toward students hoping to become ESL teachers and toward those who are already practicing in the field.

The data would seem to substantiate the conclusion that since ESL students enjoy it, we as language teachers should frequently use poetry and sometimes try to support it, if possible, with multimedia to make it more interesting. As one of the students in the study said, "It was very interesting and I enjoyed it. I learnd so many thing of this presentation." We know that students learn better when they enjoy what they are doing. This is especially so in the area of language learning.

Some teachers dismiss poetry as impractical for language study. A substantial body of literature in chapter two, the literature review of this study, refutes such a position. As reported, poetry has practical as well as emotional application to the everyday lives of

students, and in fact to the lives of all people generally. Why else is the ubiquitous entertainment industry so replete with songs? After all, a good song is nothing less than a poem that has been put to music. Music and song go very well together with poetry.

In my teaching I have often used music and song as an introduction to poetry. And therein are the beginnings of a multimedia presentation. High school and also junior high school students respond well to poetry when it is introduced via their own popular songs. If you look for it, you can find good poetry in some popular songs. It is these songs (poems) that survive from decade to decade, and from generation to generation. Even indifferent young students soon realize that poetry can in fact touch their lives and in a positive manner too. Similarly, I think it is not at all presumptuous to believe that the same medium, poetry, can be used to good effect in ESL classes. But some would say it is different with ESL classes. They need practical things. True, but after taking care of some of their practical needs, they also need to have their emotional needs addressed. Poetry can help address those needs.

Those of us who believe in its value should keep pressing for more literature, both prose and poetry, in the ESL curriculum. In my own ESL teaching I have found literature far more useful than many of the current ESL materials with their contrived dialogues and unappealing figures to which we saw Widdowson protesting. Poetry brings forth the issues of life, the issues of believable people. If it is taught well, it will appeal to ESL students and help them to grow in language skills. As Widdowson (1988) asserts, "Poetry then can be seen as serving both a pedagogic and an educational purpose in teaching. It should need no apology" (p. 196).

Referring to the literature again I cite Collie (1987) and MacLean (1990) who show us how literature can at the same time address very real practical and emotional needs as we have been discussing. Collie points out that literature has in addition to its emotional rewards, a very real and useful language function. She says, "In reading literature texts, students have also to cope with language intended for native speakers and thus they gain

additional familiarity with many different linguistic uses, forms and conventions..." (p. 4).

MacLean sees literature as helping to integrate people emotionally, a very real *practical*

asset in today's society. She observes that in sharing literature, "...we grow in knowledge

and und 'ndings that rid us of our narrow prejudices and enrich us as human beings in

an inci   ,ly multicultural society" (p.249).

This is, I think, where multimedia has a very useful function. As the literature

points out repeatedly, it can help to capture and hold student interest and make poetry and

other literary genre more meaningful. But I think it can also raise the interest of teachers as

they begin to realize the potential of multimedia. Not only can media be informative, in can

be entertaining, it can set a change of pace, it can bring to the students a new experience

that will help to focus their attention. It can help them to attend to what is at hand. And we

have to attend in order to learn; language learning being no exception.

ESL teachers should be assured of the availability of multimedia materials. This

leads me to my next recommendation with educational implications in mind. Most ESL

teachers are far too busy to be saddled with the time consuming task of building up a large

repertoire of teaching materials for using multimedia supported study of poetry. Therefore,

I would suggest that someone with ESL teaching experience and who is not currently

engaged as a full time teacher, should undertake a project of developing a series of

multimedia supported poetry lessons for ESL. This would be supplemental material to be

used from time to time to add interest and variety to the classroom's day to day routine.

With such materials a teacher could introduce a multimedia based poetry lesson profitably

for the students in most any ESL teaching program. It could be used to good effect as a

motivational device and at the same time promote useful dialogue and language acquisition.

These materials could be passed around, shared, discussed, criticized, improved and

incorporated into larger sets. I would gladly contribute the materials that I prepared for this

study to such a collaborative venture.

Thinking along these same lines one could envision that such prepared lessons could also very well be incorporated into videos and so be more widely disseminated and used for teaching purposes both in the classroom and for home use by individual students. Such videos could spark an interest in poetry and promote language skills for our ESL students. Following viewing and listening, they could provide numerous opportunities to engage the students in useful discussion and writing. Thus the students could practice all the language skills of viewing, listening, speaking, reading, and writing in an interesting, stimulating context. The reading could come from supplemental materials supplied with the video, or appropriately chosen by the teacher or the students.

My reflections now lead to my next recommendation which has to do with teacher training. Although I would not suggest that it be made mandatory, I would highly recommend that all ESL teachers should have a strong component of literature in their training. A liberal arts degree in English would be most useful, or at least they should have a strong major in English somewhere in their background. Thus equipped they would more readily appreciate the significance of literature for all people.

English majors would see the universal themes of literature as a rich and valuable resource for their lessons and would be less likely to dismiss it as being not relevant to the lives of their students. Literature could readily be used in ESL classes, as I have been suggesting, as the basis for meaningful "authentic discourse" and as the starting point for writing. For those who understand and appreciate it, literature has great pedagogical potential. It is a resource that teachers should be equipped to draw upon for the language and emotional benefit of their students.

Naturally when anyone writes a research study they hope that it will be widely read. I am no exception. I think that this could be a useful study for ESL teachers in training, for new ESL teachers, and for those experienced as well, in that it throws light upon a much neglected area in the field, namely, the use of poetry in the ESL classroom. The study demonstrates that through the use of multimedia, poetry is an interesting teaching and

learning genre. It indicates how that poetry can be a very vital part of the growth experience of ESL students, both as to effective language and emotional development. And since in many respects ESL students are no different than other students generally, I can also recommend these materials to a wider audience, to language teachers and students outside the particular field of ESL.

As another recommendation I would encourage students and practicing teachers to try this approach with different poems and stories too, supported by media of their own devising. The possibilities are innumerable. We only learn through trying and in the process we should be willing to risk making mistakes, for we learn from our mistakes too. That is something every language student and every language teacher knows very well.

And now as I near the end of this study, I share an unsolicited letter from one of the participating teachers. The letter came to me long after I received the last of the teacher returns. Subsequently I contacted this teacher and she kindly agreed to let me reproduce her letter here and use her name. I include this letter not just because it is an endorsement of what I was trying to do but also because it underscores the students' satisfaction with the experience and summarizes the essence of the multimedia approach. It also substantiates the point that I made earlier about teachers being very busy people. She writes:

Dear Mr. Hess,

I have finally got the pictures developed which I had taken when you were giving your audio-visual presentation on the poem, "The Gold Digger's Yukon Trail." As you can see, they turned out beautifully.

My class and I would like to thank you again for the opportunity of having a part of Canadian history brought first hand into their world of experience on what Canada is all about. I personally found it refreshing to have poetry brought to life in such a tangible way as I have never seen before!

Your follow-up exercises also helped students to both recall and put vocabulary into context. Just to illustrate my students' retention of vocabulary you had used, one day we came across a word I thought they would not be familiar with, and I started explaining it to them. Suddenly, about five or six people excitedly shouted to me the meaning of the word, saying, "Remember that teacher, Mr. Hess, who came in once to demonstrate the gold panning? Well, he used that same word in his poem." Anyway, I think you see what I mean. I just wish I had had the time to have my class do a follow-up research paper or an oral presentation of some sort on the original history of the Gold Rush era, but we had to finish the course in such a short time.

I'm sorry that I wasn't able to give you feedback a little earlier, but I was teaching a new, higher level of English than I had taught previously, and my days were so overloaded with preparation, marking, and just keeping up, that I couldn't find the time.

I hope these pictures will be a nice souvenir to you. They certainly were like hot cakes to my students. Almost all of them asked for one or two reprints.

Thank you again.

Sincerely yours,

Emoke Munoz

Overall Conclusions

This study has taken a broad look at the question of using multimedia supported poetry lessons for teaching ESL. Using a descriptive, survey approach with an an ethnographic flavor, the researcher went out into the field and presented two such lessons to each of ten different classes in five different educational jurisdictions within the city of Edmonton. Following the presentations the 152 students and the ten teachers were surveyed with paper and pencil questionnaires in order to get their assessments about their experiences with the lessons. The instruments also included an open ended comment section. According to the findings of this study the students and the teachers, for the most part, responded favorably to the presentations. Even allowing for a Hawthorne effect, the students' strong endorsement of this approach would seem to indicate that the approach used in this study has sufficient merit that it should be considered by ESL teachers. Upon the basis of the evidence gathered in the literature review, and in the research study conducted, the researcher recommends further research and also more in class use of multimedia supported poetry lessons for the teaching of ESL. To facilitate this multimedia approach the researcher recommends the creation of materials, similar to those used in this study, for teaching poetry in the ESL classroom.

Epilogue

In adult education we hold to the principle of "lifelong learning." I think it could be argued that Tennyson's Ulysses was one of the earliest advocates of that principle. Tennyson obviously empathized with his character who was away in the Trojan wars for ten years. He finally comes home but is restless, yearning for new adventures, and a new quest for truth. "I cannot rest from travel," he says. He turns his kingdom over to his faithful son, Telemachus, and sets sail once more with his old compatriots "to seek a newer world," eager for the adventure and danger that may lie "beyond the sunset."

So it is for adult educators doing research. We seek the truth but are never quite sure of where, or if, we will find it. The search for better educational strategies always continues. We may never find the ultimate method, but that does not negate the importance of the quest. The important thing is that the search goes on.

I would like to think that my research efforts have been part of such a quest. This has been a long journey, a lonely journey, and sometimes an arduous one, fraught with many misgivings and uncertainties along the way. But now nearing completion, I ask for only a brief respite in some calm harbor before renewing the quest.

Poetry, as I have maintained, has something important to say in language study. I will close with a poem of my own composition, as I too have an empathy with Ulysses as he seeks "a newer world."

The Mariner

"... my purpose holds/ To sail beyond the sunset."
(Tennyson: "Ulysses")

Now storms abate and so does fear,
As steadier hands restow the gear.
Then refit craft disdain to rest,
As waves go washing, washing west.

A dipping sun in florid sky,
Beckons cloudlets floating high,
A glowing hour of light remains,
An eager craft at mooring strains.

Pulling away with sails set wide,
Cutting a wake through rising tide,
Westward beyond the shimmering bay,
The eager mariner sails away.

He sails far beyond known lands.
To set his foot on golden strands,
Far beyond man's daily reach,
On starry isles and sunny beach.

Harry Hess

Note: The quotation of Tennyson in the subtitle of this poem, and likewise those in the paragraphs preceding the poem, were taken from Tennyson's poem, "Ulysses" found in Houghton and Strange, pp. 31-32.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDICES

A. Perspectives on Lesson One

Setting up. Before teaching any of the lessons prior to the data gathering I was always involved in a considerable expenditure of time and effort to get all of the multimedia equipment set up and in order. I would arrive at the class at least a half hour early with my equipment in tow. This included a back pack full of some basic gold panning tools (a couple of gold pans, small spade, hand pick, specimen flask, folding stool, etc.), an ice cream bucket full of gravel, a large washtub in which to do the gold panning demonstration, two large plastic water buckets (20 lit. each) for transporting water to the room, a large water dipper, a slide projector and carousel of slides, cassette player and tapes of music, various extension cords, and a roll of posters. I also had a brief case of papers, and in my pockets, several specimens of gold that I had panned along various streams in Alberta, British Columbia, and the Yukon. Bringing in the equipment always required at least two trips from my vehicle to the classroom.

Having marshalled all the equipment I would hurry to set it up and test it. First I would put up several large, colorful posters about the room. These were posters with "Klondike Days" themes which had been kindly provided to me by the Edmonton Exhibition Association. The posters were of course used in connection with the lesson based on the poem about the Yukon gold digger. Mounting these posters was usually somewhat of a problem since, as I found, most of the classrooms lacked tack boards, or other such facilities. Often I had to mount the posters on the chalk board using scotch tape, and being careful to leave a loose end for easy removal later. This arrangement however

diminished the amount of chalk board available. The chalk board is still an important presentation tool. But I managed to work around the posters.

None of the classrooms in which I worked had running water, so I had to scurry to the nearest washroom, fill a sink and dip the water into the large buckets, and lug it back to the classroom where I emptied the water into the tub which I had positioned conveniently near the front of the room, ready to be dragged nearer to the center later.

Now I would turn to the audio-visual equipment positioning it on stands that I improvised with various pieces of classroom furniture like tables, desks, chairs, filing cabinets, boxes, etc. All this entailed considerable furniture moving for which I had received prior permission from the teachers involved. I was always very mindful of having the right height, angle, and distance. Extension cords had to be run out and all connections checked. The equipment had to be tested and the cassettes and slides positioned for the proper beginning.

Of course these procedures had to be reversed once the lessons and the survey were completed. In all fairness it should be pointed out that if I had been operating in my own classroom, this workload would have been greatly reduced. My equipment would have been there at hand, classes would have come to me, instead of me having to set up and take down after each set of lessons and move from class to class and from school to school. I say this to assure teachers that although much work is involved in using well developed multimedia lessons, it is by no means insurmountable, besides which it is very rewarding in both teacher and student satisfaction.

In addition to readying the foregoing equipment, papers for handouts were laid out and organized, as were overhead transparencies, and lesson outlines and notes for quick reference. The gold panning equipment I put out so that the students could see and handle it as they came into the room. This I encouraged them to do. Myself I was dressed in jeans, a red plaid shirt and a wide brimmed slouch hat appropriate to my role as a gold

panner during the forthcoming lesson. My attire was also part of the visual imagery of multimedia.

By the time the students arrived I would be ready and I made a point of ushering them into the room to some lively fiddle and "honky-tonk" piano "Klondike music" that I had taped for the lesson. This I felt would be an apt introduction, something to spark their interest and set them at ease, for as Cira (1991) reminds us, music is very helpful to making a "...a safe learning environment....music can be such a beautiful way to break the ice and melt it too..." (p. 151). As the lessons began, nc introductions of myself or my purposes were necessary, since that had been attended to during my initial visit.

Presenting Lesson One

Based on the poem, "The Gold Digger's Yukon Trail."

Detailed lesson plans for the two lessons that were used in the study are included in these appendices. Here I will give further elaboration and a rationale for their use. I will try to build the context from which the data gathering processes evolved. I think this context is necessary in order to understand and appreciate the data that were generated.

The purposes of the lesson. Once the class was assembled, the music was cut. During the initial part of the lesson I always made the students aware of our purposes. They were informed that the overall general purpose of the lesson was to help them enjoy a long narrative poem, with the help of multimedia, in order to enhance their language skills in the areas of viewing, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In specific terms our purpose was to help students to expand their understanding and use of both nonstandard, colloquial English vocabulary and standard English vocabulary too. In addition, we wanted them to see how these two forms of English related to each other. These concepts were further explained in simpler terms and with numerous illustrations a little latter.

Backgrounding the lesson. I have already explained the setting up procedures. These procedures anticipated the backgrounding for the lesson. This backgrounding is very important when introducing new concepts to any class, but I think it is doubly important when dealing with ESL classes with their limited vocabulary and limited experience in the new culture. Donna Wiseman (1992) in her book, Learning to Read with Literature, has some very supportive comments in this respect. I have specifically reserved her remarks for this point in my discussion and shall introduce them presently. Wiseman is dealing with teaching reading to English speaking children, but her ideas are even more applicable in the ESL situation. Therefore, when Wiseman says "children", I will substitute the more general term [students]. Wiseman states:

> To comprehend, [students] must have some knowledge of the concepts they are reading about. When [students] do not possess basic concepts about a topic, reading must begin by building concepts and establishing some knowledge. Discussion, nonprint material, reading other material, and related activities help build conceptual understanding before independent reading on unfamiliar topics. (p. 155)....Technology can be used to develop concepts. Pictures, slides, film strips, video recordings...can familiarize [students] with topics they will read about. (p. 156)...The more background a reader possesses, the more chance he or she will have to understand the text. (p. 306)

With these concepts in mind, early in the class, having just introduced the purposes of the lesson, I would direct the students' attention to the Klondike Days wall posters and to the gold panning equipment. We would briefly discuss our local Klondike Days and ask if any of them had been involved. If so, we would let them share their experiences. I would also briefly relate our Klondike Days to the Yukon gold rush at just before the turn of the century, telling them of some of the fortunes that were made and lost. This seemed to interest them.

They were further interested when told that we would be having a gold panning demonstration right here in the classroom using the tub of water that some of them had been curious about. We would also have a poem which told a story about finding gold.

But first we would look at some different kinds of English and some vocabulary to help us understand the poem.

Different levels (registers) of English. At this point, using the graphic overhead illustration presented in the lesson in the appendices, we discussed the different levels of English and their appropriate use. It was pointed out that the poem we would be having made extensive use of non-standard, informal dialect. To clarify the concept further, we drew a parallel to informal and formal types of dress and the ranges in between. I think it is important that students be made aware of when it is appropriate, or not appropriate to speak in one register or another. A fuller understanding of these distinctions will only come to the students with experience. But early on they should be introduced to differences so that they can be aware of them.

Vocabulary study. We began our vocabulary study with a short "mini-lesson", given on the chalk board, such as we saw recommended by Crawford (1990), in the literature review. It arose out of an anticipated need to clarify the term "Digger" appearing in the title of the poem for the lesson. Illustrating with a few parallels, as outlined in the lesson, the students readily understood the process whereby English verbs can be transformed into nouns.

Before reading to the class this long narrative poem, "The Gold Digger's Yukon Trail", I thought it advisable to review some of its extensive vocabulary, especially its more informal, colloquial aspects. This is in keeping with the recommendations of Tarvin (1990), who also deals with introducing a poem. He writes, "...what we found best is first to introduce students to some possible difficult words" (p. 35). Accordingly, we had a brisk review of the vocabulary as outlined in the the lesson given in the appendices. We used the overhead, and so the students could concentrate on hearing the words, I reminded them that they need not try to copy since they would be provided with a handout later.

Equipment and gold samples. The gold panning equipment which had been inspected by some of the students as they came in was now held up for display and

discussion. The students were asked if they could identify the articles. Usually they could identify and give the use of the spade and handpick. The folding stool was frequently called a "chair." With good nature and humor, the large steel gold pan was sometimes labelled as a "Chinese cooking wok." These displays of humor were always appreciated by teachers and students alike. It was an indication of a relaxed atmosphere, so essential to a good learning climate. The main credit for this goes, not to myself, but rather to the students' regular classroom teachers, and of course to the students too. The articles were passed around named and discussed, as were the several small gold samples, which always proved to be a big attraction. Invariably the students wanted to know the value of the gold, where and how I had found it. This always led to interesting exchanges and discussion.

Demonstration. Having captured their interest, I increased it further by asking them if they were now ready for the gold panning demonstration. Choruses of affirmation, accompanied by nods, followed. Thereupon I called for a volunteer to help me drag the tub of water to a more central position in the room. This was soon accomplished. Sitting on my folding stool, near the tub, I asked the students to move in closely. They did. I dumped the gravel into the pan, flattened it, and made a little depression at the center with my hand. Into this depression, from a small glass vial, I emptied six tiny gold nuggets and covered them over with gravel. This usually brought groans of, "Oh, they're lost now," or some such similar remarks. I assured them that the gold could be "found" again, and proceeded to show them how, asking them to watch closely and see who would be first to see the gold again.

With the students pressing in, I explained and demonstrated the principles and techniques of gold panning, which are really quite simple. This afforded me the opportunity to weave in some new vocabulary and to review some of that which we had just taken. I pointed out that gold was very heavy, much heavier than either water or gravel. Gold had a specific gravity of 19. That meant for equal volumes it was 19 times heavier than water. The sand and gravel in the pan had a specific gravity varying from 5 to

7. So I asked what would happen to the gold as I filled the pan with water and shook it vigorously, as I was doing. Several students would venture that the gold would sink to the bottom. Exactly. But now, how would one recover the gold?

This was a puzzle. Usually some students would suggest, as they gestured with their hands, that the gravel could be pushed aside so that the gold could be found at the bottom. I would observe that this might work but that it would be too slow. But it was true that the gravel had to be moved out of the way. So I would show them how this was done. First I would hold the pan under water, shake it vigorously, raise it slightly, and tip it sharply forward so the water would run out and carry some of the contents of the pan with it. As the water flowed out, the pan would also be shaken gently. This process would be repeated over the next few minutes with the students sometimes poking their fingers into the wet contents of the pan and saying excitedly, "There's some gold!" We would pause to examine this discovery more closely only to find that it was merely a shiny stone. I always had the students make this assessment. But in short order we would be down to a small amount of sand (a couple of table spoons) in the bottom of the pan. The excitement grew. There is something universally appealing about gold.

Now holding the pan level, with a small amount of water in it, about a half centimeter, sufficient to cover the bottom and the contents, and with the students watching closely, I would begin to swirl the pan gently in a circular motion, thus sending a small wave running around the lower perimeter of the pan. And suddenly, tightly in the crease formed by the bottom of the pan and its sloping sides, there appeared the six tiny nuggets of gold, all in a row, much to the delight of the onlookers. The flow of the water had moved the residual sand forward, leaving the nuggets behind. With keen enthusiasm the students would point out the gold, "There it is! There it is!" And they would count it to make sure that it was all there. I would inform them that we could either pick up the nuggets with our fingers or we could gently wash away the rest of the sand. The students

usually opted to do the former. And there was no shortage of volunteers when I held the pan forward for them to retrieve the gold.

To use a gold miner's term, we had "struck it rich," not monetarily, but definitely linguistically. The exchanges during this demonstration, I believe, offered the students numerous opportunities to both listen to, and to participate in authentic discourse between the students and the demonstrator and between students and students. We have already noted Tremblay (1990), as he reminds us of the"...importance of placing students in authentic communication situations" (p. 8). Now having discovered our "pot of gold," we set these former items aside to continue with the next phase of the lesson.

The first reading of the poem. At this point we should review some of the principles of "authentic" speech that we have examined in chapter two. It will be recalled from the literature review that Griffiths (1990), Blau (1990), Carruthers(1987), Porter and Roberts (1979), all addressed the issue of speech rate. The general consensus seemed to be that teachers should speak at normal rates; they should neither speak artificially slow or too fast. As Carruthers stated, "Always use real language in the classroom. Many teachers tend to overpronounce and to speak far too slowly....Real language means normal speed" (p. 196). Porter and Roberts similarly cautioned us that speech that was too slow could be detrimental because the students will "...not have been familiarized with the relative rapidity and variability in pace of authentic discourse" (p. 177). They went on to suggest that we should "...expose them to authentic language" (p. 179). These thoughts were kept in mind during all my dealings with the various classes, both in the instructional and demonstrational parts of the lessons and also during the readings of the poetry. Further, with regards to the reading of the poetry, I was always cogni ent of McConochie's (1985) additional admonition when she affirmed that, "Since poetry is meant to be heard, part of our responsibility in teaching a poem lies in giving students a chance to hear it read well" (p. 129).

Having established some background, we could begin reading the poem. I would have the students seat themselves comfortably so that they could readily see the screen. The Klondike music would be turned on at an appropriate volume and the lights turned off. The poem would be read in a strong, lively manner, with a good swinging rhythm and proper emphasis. The forty-six slides would be projected and coordinated to illustrate the poem as it progressed. Invariably, when the end of the poem was reached, there would be a strong round of spontaneous applause indicating quite convincingly that the poem had been understood and the presentation had been enjoyed. This certainly seemed to give positive affirmation to the first part of my first subproblem which made inquiry as to "...the overall enjoyment of selected ESL students in experiencing exposure to in class study of poetry when it is coupled with multim. support...."

Follow-up work. After finis . the poem some planned follow-up work took place. The students each would be gi .and out copy of the vocabulary they had taken previously as well as a copy of the poem. In these copies the last word of each rhyming couplet would be missing. The students would be organized into small groups of two to four students per group. By working together, by reading and discussing, the object was to try to recreate the rhymes to finish the lines. The students were encouraged to use pencils so that they could more readily make changes to reflect the product of their discourse as they debated what should be written into the blanks. To get the students started, I would work through the first few sets of rhyming couplets with them. Throughout this exercise, if they came up with alternate rhymes that made sense, that would be acceptable. As the group work was in progress, I and the cooperating teacher would move among the students giving encouragement, positive feedback and some guidance by the way of hints, as the need arose. We encouraged them to read out loud, to talk out loud, to argue about and compare proposed solutions. The students took very eagerly to the solving of these problems.

Hinofotis (1987) strongly endorses this type of cloze activity for use with foreign students who are learning English. It will challenge them, provide interest and greatly assist their language development in listening, speaking, reading, and in writing. He informs us:

> The term "cloze" comes from the notion of clozure in Gesalt Psychology and refers to the human psychological tendency to fill in gaps in patterns....either a native speaker or a reasonably proficient non-native speaker should be able to anticipate what words belong in the blanks, given the contextual clues of the passage....the cloze format can also be an effective teaching device....[It] can be an effective means for developing the ability to anticipate because it requires the student to guess. (pp. 413-415)

Hinofotis also recommends that the students listen to the passage first before attempting to fill in the blanks. He suggests that this would make the exercise less threatening to them.

In about 15 minutes most of the students usually had finished the cloze exercise. If some were not quite finished they were encouraged to do so as we took up the assignment next in class. During this "taking up" I would project, with the overhead, transparencies identical to the students' copies. This time the students would be invited to read along with the teacher . Those who were more confident did so. Those more shy would view and listen, also useful exercises. As I came to each blank I would pause and let the students fill in. Any suggested alternate rhymes would be considered and accepted if they made sense in the context.

With the cloze exercise completed we would turn to choral reading and try a few stanzas of the poem with the whole class reading as a group from their individual corrected copies. This time in contrast to the cloze exercise the focus would be on the rhythm and flow of stanzas as a whole, instead of focusing on the rhyme. Once the movement of the text was established, the students as a group readily entered into this oral exercise and could even carry it alone without my leading.

We would now go back into groups for a brief session of "Discussion and/or writing exercises" as described in the notes for this lesson given later in the appendices.

Selecting only a few of the numerous problems posed, the different groups would each be invited to respond to a different problem or problems. They would discuss and write notes and report back to the group as a whole in a few minutes. Admittedly this left the writing component of the lesson somewhat weak because of a lack of time. However I did leave a copy of the proposed exercises with each teacher to be used, or not used, as they saw fit. Had these been my own classes there would have been extensive follow up writing exercises. But I could not ask these teachers for more of their class time because they had been so generous already. I should also add that this apparent reduced emphasis on writing was reflected quite accurately in the surveys as we have seen It should also be added that in the future if anyone should care to do a similar study, provision should be made for more time to emphasize writing skills.

B. Perspectives on Lesson Two

As was done for lesson one, so likewise for lesson two, I shall try by elaboration to build a meaningful context to which the collected data may be more meaningfully related.

Presenting Lesson Two

Based on the poem, "Bouquet."

Getting ready. In most instances, after a brief intermission, we continued with lesson two on the same day. During the intermission I would retire and change into something a little less casual in order to be more in keeping with the mood of the next poem which was more serious.

Before the class returned from their break I would have the equipment readied for the next lesson. The cassette player and tape, and the slide projector and slides would be positioned and ready to go. The music selected for this lesson was Mozart's "Piano Concerto No. 21," which it was felt would be appropriate for the mood of the poem, "Bouquet." A collection of brightly colored slides of flowers would be used for visual support. The husband and wife cartoon about plastic flowers was positioned on the overhead. Handouts and lesson notes were at hand.

The purposes of the lesson. Again as the lesson started we briefly discussed the purposes of the lesson in general and specific terms. The general purpose this time was to enjoy a short lyrical poem also supported with multimedia. We would try to enhance their language skills of viewing, listening, reading, and writing. And more specifically we would try to help them further develop their standard and formal English vocabulary. We would also try to help students to more fully understand and appreciate the use of symbolism and mood in poetry. Again this was all explained in more simple terms and with many illustrations.

Cartoon. After the class was assembled, the purpose of the lesson was briefly explained. This purpose was of course elaborated upon and developed throughout the lesson. Also by way of introduction , we viewed and briefly, just in passing, discussed the cartoon of the gentleman giving a lady a bouquet of plastic flowers. I posed the question as to which they as individuals would rather receive, plastic flowers or real, live flowers, and why. After raising the question I asked the students to think about it and hold their comments for later discussion.

Symbolism. The students would be informed that we would be experiencing a poem about flowers and the poem would be illustrated by slides and supported by music. But before the poem we would discuss *symbolism* and *mood* as they relate to poetry. The vocabulary would be discussed after the first reading

We clarified symbolism by means of definition and examples. Symbolism was defined as a sign, a thing, or idea, that stood for something else. A few of the numerous examples we used were: lion - courage; lamb - gentleness; dove - peace; etc. The students were also asked to think about what flowers symbolized in the poem that we would read.

Mood. Mood, for our purposes, was defined as the emotional feeling that a poem brings us. It was important to the understanding of a poem. We discussed the various emotional moods that a person might be in. And then I asked the students to think about the mood of the poem as it was being read and to compare its mood to that of the previous poem.

Reading the poem. With the students comfortably seated, I would cut the lights and start playing Mozart's "Piano Concerto No. 21." This is a good mood piece for the poem. At the same time pictures of flowers were projected onto the screen, also helping to shape the tone for the experience. There were seventeen slides in this group, all close-ups. The first eleven were a variety of flowers. The last six were of a bouquet of roses showing the various stages of demise over time, from fresh and vigorous blooms to withered flowerless stalks. The first eleven pictures were each held on the screen for about fifteen seconds. Changes were synchronized with the phrasing of the music. The projection of the last six was governed by the wording of the poem. The reading of the poem began at the beginning of this latter group of slides.

As the reading began the music was modulated somewhat so as not to interfere with the students' ability to hear the reading. The reading was done in a clear, steady voice, appropriate to the tone of the poem. It was important that the voice be loud enough to be clearly audible to all in the room. This was especially so since the music continued to play.

As this short poem concluded with the last picture and the fading of the music, a deep silence filled the room. In none of the eleven classes (including the class for field testing) that I visited was there any applause after the presentation of "Bouquet," and for this I was grateful. It indicated to me that even without having had any vocabulary study

on the poem prior to the reading, they had understood enough of it to pick up on the serious mood of the piece.

Vocabulary. I deliberately chose to do the vocabulary study *after* the reading of the poem, lest any pre-study interfere with the mood that the poem strives to attain. I think it worked, even though there was a considerable amount of more difficult, formal vocabulary in the selection. Some might argue that the poem was partly understood via the pictures and the music, rather than through the lexical elements presented. I would agree. That is precisely one of the points of using a multimedia approach. And this is not unlike "authentic discourse." Much of what we understand in everyday speech comes to us not just strictly through lexical items, but also through the context in which it occurs, including tone of voice, facial expression, gestures, and the overall atmosphere of the setting.

Concluding the reading, the students were each given a handout of the poem which included for easy reference a numbered list of the twenty vocabulary items below the poem. The poem and the vocabulary will be found in the appendices. The vocabulary was considered and discussed in the context of the poem. Having done so, I read the poem to the class once more, this time without the music or pictures. The students followed silently from their individual copies. We then moved on to the discussion and writing portion of the lesson.

Discussion and writing. The class was again organized into small groups for discussion and writing. Their attention was directed to six questions projected by the overhead. These questions would be for their consideration, discussion and writing. They were instructed to listen to each other and share ideas. Each student would write brief notes to answer the questions. The notes could be used later for writing paragraphs. In about 20 minutes we would meet again in the large group to share and compare ideas. As the students did their group work the instructors moved from group to group giving encouragement and feedback as needed. The following are the questions that were posed for consideration:

1. What do flowers symbolize (stand for, represent) in this poem?

2. Why do we appreciate (enjoy, like) real flowers more than plastic flowers?

3. Think of and list several beautiful things that become "... the fool of time."

4. What is the theme (main idea, message) of this poem?

5. Does the use of flowers, as symbols, support this theme? How?

6. What is the mood of this poem?

Previously in this study I suggested a guiding question that would be used during the data gathering process. It will be recalled that the question asked, "What is transpiring here, and what does it mean?" Right along I have been working with this question in mind, but now for a moment I would like to address it a little more directly. As the class later reconvened as a whole to discuss the questions, I was always impressed by the insights that these people displayed. As I suggested earlier, they had a good understanding of the poem. Their responses helped to confirm my belief that poetry is a very valid, profitable genre to be explored by ESL students. What was transpiring here indicated that they are quite able to understand and appreciate and respond intelligently to even abstract poetry employing mood and symbolism. Most of these students from foreign lands have a keen interest in poetry. Poetry, with its appeal to universal, emotional experience, answers to their inner, emotional need. As teachers we should capitalize and build upon this interest and need.

In answer to the first question the students readily understood that the bouquet of roses was symbolic of people, of their lives, and of their memories. Replying to an ancillary question, "How are we like flowers?", they would point out that like flowers people do not last very long.

Further to this ancillary question, a very interesting response was given by one particular class. With respect to English skills, this was the weakest of all the classes that I dealt with in this study, but it was certainly one of the most interesting. They were all

senior citizens, ranging upwards in age to the early eighties. And with age they had acquired a certain beauty and wisdom that was very special.

We were dealing with a poem that I thought I had understood very well. But during the course of the class discussion one able student afforded me a whole new, interesting perspective on the implications of the selection under consideration. This elderly, dignified, Chinese gentleman was obviously a philosopher. With his limited English he brought out an insight from the poem about the parallel between people and flowers that amazed and gratified me. With a bright and intense face he ventured, "We are all like flowers because [in that] we are all of different colors and we are all beautiful." And he received looks and nods of affirmation from all present in the room, from the whole, lovely "bouquet" of varied colors!

Let me continue to speak on a more personal note, even though I understand that this would be taboo in strictly "objective, scientific" discourse. But here I appeal to art, not to science. As Eisner (1981) says, "Artistically oriented research acknowledges what already exists and instead of presenting a facade of objectivity, exploits the potential of selectivity and emphasis to say what needs saying as the investigator sees it" (p. 8).

This student has imparted to me (and hopefully to others too) a deeper appreciation of both humans and flowers which I hope both he and I can retain. The application of such values are crucial to all social, educational endeavors; it is fundamental to all good human relations, both internationally and individually. Insights like this would have been lost to a strictly scientific, experimental approach to research. It could not have been factored into some strictly objective data analysis scheme and interpreted according to some statistical procedure. Ary, et al. (1990) informs us regarding the scientific approach that it "...must be value-free -- that is, the inquirer must follow pro dures specifically designed to remove all subjective elements, like values, from the inquiry suation, so that what remains are just the 'objective facts'" (p. 446). This is not to disparage science but only to recognize its limitations in a value-laden context.

The second question about our appreciation of real flowers or plastic flowers often sparked lively interest. Here we would refer back to the cartoon. During the discussion cultural differences and the process of enculturation often became apparent. As a whole, the students opted for the live flowers, but some of them would point out that in their country of origin, plastic flowers would be quite acceptable. However, since coming to Canada, they indicated they too would prefer live flowers because they were "more real."

As to things referred to in the third question which became "the fool of time", became marred or destroyed by time, the students had no trouble compiling a list. They would mention things as people, houses, cars, clothing, books, songs, friendships, etc. In other words time took its toll on everything. I recall one particularly interesting exchange with a young woman when I Socratically tried to suggest to her that diamonds should be exempted from the list, after all, "diamonds are forever." She reflected a moment and then rightly disagreed with me saying that diamonds could crack, get lost, or be stolen, and then they too would be gone. Of course I agreed.

The main theme (question four) was well understood. It was variously expressed as indicating that life was short; we weren't here for very long; the things we value soon fade away. In one class I got a very interesting comment from a gentleman who had been displaced from Iraq. M. had a philosophic, poetic turn of mind. In response to the question about theme he reflected, "We are all visitors here for only a short while."

When I queried the classes as to what meaning this theme had for human beings in the sphere of human relations, they would become very thoughtful. Initially, it would be suggested that we should try to make the best of our lives for the short time that we have. Further questioning and discussion often brought out a greater depth of thought. Concern would be expressed for others, for family members, for relatives, for friends and neighbors, for human beings generally. Since like flowers, none of us are here for very long, we should try to appreciate other people and treat them respectfully while they are

with us. "We are all like flowers because [in that] we are all of different colors and we are all beautiful."

Lofty values, sentiments? Yes, but worth considering, even though as individuals we may not always achieve such ideals. Nevertheless, this is, I am sure most would agree, the basis for a healthy self-esteem and for good human relations generally. And teaching ESL certainly is an exercise in human relations. It was gratifying to see ESL students grappling with such concepts. I would also add by way of further *meaning*, especially for the proponents of a strictly "practical" curriculum, devoid of any literature, that such important ideas about human relations are not likely to arise from such "practical" sources as telephone books, job ads, travel schedules, restaurant menus, etc. Rather, we need literature, especially poetry. I report these ideas here, which were expressed by the students, because I think they are an important part of the data for this study. Although these ideas can not be displayed numerically, they do reflect upon the question raised earlier, "What is transpiring here, and what does it mean?" It obviously seems to indicate that poetry can cause people to think and reflect and in a positive way too.

The fifth question of this series under consideration asks if the use of flowers as symbols supports the theme of the poem, and if so, how? In general, the students readily understood and were able to tell that the flowers did support the theme of the poem. The flowers did this by example. It was often put variously as, "Flowers don't live long. They show us that we don't live long."

The sixth question about the mood of the poem presented some difficulty. I think that they had some appreciation of the mood in that they felt it, but due to limited vocabulary, they were generally not able to express it well. Need for further study in this area of feelings and mood seems to be indicated. I am not suggesting there was no response to the question, but the responses were quite limited as to individuals and as to individual classes. But collectively they suggested such ideas as "sad," "thoughtful," "reflective," melancholy." One young woman with a graduate degree from Europe

surprised me by suggesting that the mood of the poem could be described as "nostalgic,"
since it made her think of her homeland far away. The students also perceived a contrast
between the moods of the two poems studied. They remembered laughing during the first
poem but they pointed out that they didn't laugh during the second poem.

Figure 1: Illustration for Lesson One

While it's still warm , dig some gold,
Then come to me when it gets cold.

C. ESL Lesson One

Based on the poem, "The Gold Digger's Yukon Trail."

Purposes of the Lesson:

General: To help students enjoy a long narrative poem with the aid of multimedia support in order to enhance their language skills of *viewing, listening, speaking, reading,* and *writing.*

Specific: To help students understand and use both colloquial, nonstandard and standard English vocabulary.
    To help students understand how nonstandard English relates to standard English.

Preparation and Provision for Experiential Background

Before class begins: Provide an overhead projector, cassette player and a tape of some Klondike music, slide projector and slides to illustrate the poem. Post some Klondike Days posters on the walls. Have on hand copies of the poem for handouts that will be used for cloze exercises. Also have transparencies of the same. Bring to class some basic gold panning equipment.(a variety of gold pans, hand pick, small spade, etc.), some gold samples, gravel, and a tub of water. Set up the gold panning equipment.Start the music as the class enters, the turn it off once they are assembled.

As class begins: Direct students' attention to the Klondike Days wall posters and to the gold panning equipment. Briefly discuss our local Klondike Days. Ask if they have been involved, and if so, let them share some of their experiences. Tell the students we will be having a gold panning demonstration and then we will be considering a poem about finding gold. But first we will look at some different kinds of English and some vocabulary to help us understand the poem.

Different levels (registers) of English: The poem under consideration makes extensive use of non-standard, informal dialect. Since students are often exposed to this type of English, it would be to their advantage to understand it. And no doubt, as they move more and more in an English context , they will be adopting many of these informal expressions into their own speech patterns.
    On a continuum, (the students need not be burdened with the word "continuum"), English may vary from *very informal, non-standard English,* on the one hand, to *very formal English* on the other. Somewhere in the middle of this continuous line, we have everyday, *informal, standard English,* which is used in most of our communication, such as in school and in business. The more formal English is such as is used in formal situations as in formal speeches, among dignitaries, in court and with doctors and clergy. The very informal English is such as is used by uneducated people, and also sometimes by educated people when they are among family and friends.
    ESL students should become aware when it is appropriate, or not appropriate, to speak in one register or another. This understanding will come only with experience and observation, and sometimes not without considerable discomfiture, on the part of the students learning English.

These types of English could be illustrated graphically as follows:

* Very informal	Informal, standard	Very formal *
Family & friends	School & business	Speeches, courts & dignitaries

Vocabulary study:

(a) **The use of "er" in English:** When "er" is added to a root verb, the "er" gives the meaning of "one who does" and with the verb, it produces a noun. Examples:

teach ----------- teacher
read ----------- reader
run ----------- runner
play ----------- player
dig ----------- digger

(b) **Vocabulary for the poem:**

1. gold digger - one who looks for gold or riches.
2. vacation - a rest from work; holiday.
3. holiday - time free from work; vacation.
4. cruise - travel.
5. swirl - move in circles.
6. reel - move back and forth; sway.
7. churn - stir material.
8. gravel - small stones and sand.
9. slake - satisfy; have enough.
10. steppin' - stepping.
11. talkin' - talking.
12. evenin' - evening.
13. an' - and.
14. thar's - there is.
15. tu - to.
16. sourdough - experienced gold miner.
17. grub stake - a supply of food.
18. grub - dig; work hard.

19. sweat it out - work very hard.
20. nuggets - pieces of gold.
21. puttin' you on - fooling you; joking.
22. warn't - was not.
23. 'roun' - around.
24. staked - put posts in the ground to mark a legal claim.
25. poke - leather bag for carrying gold.
26. ball - party.
27. rainy day - hard times; bad luck.
28. I sees a sight - I saw something interesting.
29. crooned - sang sweetly.
30. hitched - got married.
31. best man - friend and helper for the groom: attendant.
32. old goat - ugly old man.
33. dupe - stupid person.
34. blow - spend quickly and foolishly.
35. hit the dirt that made it pay - found gold.

Note: Project this page on the overhead and quickly go through the words with the class. Also give as handout, as indicated on the next page.

The vocabulary for the poem will be introduced in several ways, and in combinations of several ways. Some terms like: gold pan, pick, shovel, nugget, gold digger, will be introduced during informal discussions, during and following the gold panning demonstration. Other vocabulary will be introduced with an overhead projector prior to the reading of the poem. It should be presented in a lively manner and not drawn out too long. The vocabulary will also be reintroduced and reinforced through the readings of the poem and by the follow up discussions and exercises.

Examining the equipment and gold samples: This should be a hands on experience. Pass around and have the students look at and handle the equipment as well as some specimens of gold (both raw gold and in the form of jewelry). Encourage the students to ask questions and to talk to each other. Some of the basic equipment would include: a backpack, a variety of gold pans, pick shovel, folding stool, and specimen containers.

Demonstration: Demonstrate and explain the basic techniques of gold panning using the gravel in a pan and a tub of water. Make sure you have "seeded" the gravel with some small bits of gold. Invite the students to gather around closely. Let them get their hands into the gravel and water. Encourage them to try. Make sure they see the gold in the bottom of the pan as the gravel is washed out.

First reading of the poem

Have the students seat themselves comfortably so that they can see the screen. Now turn on the Klondike music at an appropriate volume. Cut the lights. Read the poem, "The Gold Digger's Yukon Trail," and project the illustrating picture slides. Make sure the poem is read in a lively fashion, with proper rhythm and emphasis.

Follow-up work

(a) Work exercise: Pass out copies of the vocabulary page given above, as well as copies of the poem to each student. In these copies the last word of each couplet will be missing. Have the students work in small groups of two to four per group. By working together and discussing, have them try to recreate the rhymes to finish the lines. Encourage them to use pencils so that they can make changes more readily. If they can come up with alternate rhymes that make sense, that should be acceptable.

(b) Taking up work exercise: After about 15 minutes have elapsed take up the poem again. If there is not sufficient time, (depending on the length of the period), the completion exercise could be finished for homework and taken up the next day. In any case, when taking up again, the teacher will project transparencies identical to the students' copies. This time invite the students to read along with the teacher. Those who are more confident will do so. Those more shy will view and listen, also useful exercises. Consider and discuss any alternative rhyme completions that may be offered.

(c) Choral reading: With the lights back on, and the students reading from their own copies, try doing a few stanzas in choral reading.with the whole class reading as a group. For variety divide the class into two or more groups and have the groups do alternate stanzas. This time, as in contrast to exercise (b) above, the focus would be on the rhythm and flow of the stanzas as a whole, instead of focusing on the rhyme.

(d) Discussion and/or writing exercises: Here are some exercises to consider for further follow-up work. For these activities the class may work as a whole group, or in small groups, or individually. Not all of these exercises could possibly be covered in one, or even two classes, so selection will be necessary. These activities may bring to mind and suggest further useful follow-up activities:

1. Tell (describe) how the tourist felt when he saw the first big nugget upon his arrival in Dawson City.

2. How do you suppose the gold digger felt when he found no gold at first?

3. How did he feel when he "hit the dirt that made it pay"?

4. How did he feel about the young woman when he first saw her?

5. How did he feel when he found her note?

6. Who was the best gold digger?

7. Personify the donkey; let him speak about what he thinks of the gold digger.

8. Create and be prepared to role play a dialogue between the gold digger and a bartender after the miner found the great amount of gold.

9. Create a dialogue between two other gold diggers who are also in town and hear about the big strike.

10. Expand on some aspect of the dialogue between the miner and the young lady.

11. Create a dialogue between the miner and a friend or bartender after the young lady left him.

12. Draw a picture or pictures of some scene or scenes in the story; add captions.

13. Make an illustrated a glossary of terms from the story. Draw pictures or cut them from magazines or newspapers.

14. Scan newspapers or magazines to find other "gold digger" stories.

15. Is there a "gold digger" story in your culture? If so, plan to tell about it.

16. For which character in the story do we feel most sorry? Explain why.

17. Discuss the character of the gold miner. What are some of his strengths and weaknesses? What seems to motivate him?

18. Discuss the character of the young lady. What are some of her strengths and weaknesses? What seems to motivate her?

19. Who is the villain in the story? Hint: There is more than one, and one of them is not the donkey.

20. If you lost your gold like that, what would you do?

The Gold Digger's Yukon Trail

It's summer vacation; I'm on my way
Away up north for a big holiday.
I cruise along in my Oldsmobile,
As the clouds of dust swirl and reel.

I churn the gravel around the bends,
Till at Dawson City my journey ends.
I slowly pull into a local bar,
All eyes stare at my long green car.

What matters most right at first,
Is steppin' in tu slake my thirst.
I wash away the dust and grime,
Talkin' away till evenin' time.

"Thar's still gold in them thar hills," they say,
"If you're strong an' eager an' willin' tu pay
Blood, sweat an' tears and stay
At work in the hills day after day."

To prove his boast and his cry,
The old sourdough with the fiery eye
Plunked down a nugget as big as his thumb,
While tossing back another dark rum.

My eyes popped and began to stare,
At that big nugget so shiny there,
My heart leapt with fierce desire,
Struck dumb by gold fever fire.

I sold my car and bought me a pan,
A pick and a shovel and a donkey named Dan.
With a grub stake and tent, I loaded him down,
And led him away, away out o' town.

No beginner's luck came my way,
As I grubbed those hills day after day
Till I was a tired, lonely man
With a worn-out pick, an' a worn-out Dan.

But I wouldn't quit; I'd make it pay;
I'd sweat it out ...... day by day
And so the years came and went,
I made a little, but it was spent.

But then one summer, late one day,
I hit the dirt that made it pay.
The nuggets began tu slosh in the pan,
As I sang a tune tu my friend Dan:

"Oh, I'm not puttin' you on,
I'm the best gold digger
In the whole Yukon!"

Gold digger, gold digger, gold digger;
The pile, it grew bigger and bigger.
I was grubbin' an' sweatin' away,
Down in the dirt that made it pay.

Yu gotta eat when you're hard at work,
So back tu town for beans and pork.
But most important right at first,
Was steppin' in tu slake my thirst.

The news warn't slow in gettin' 'roun',
As I spread some gold aroun' the town.
Now I was in no big hurry,
I'd staked her well and didn't worry.

I finally loaded my friend Dan,
And sure's I was a gold diggin' man,
I'd refill that poke right away,
A gubbin' those hills night and day.

It warn't as though I'd spent it all,
I still had plenty for many a ball.
But I'd pile it up for a rainy day,
Diggin' the dirt tu make it pay.

Gold digger, gold digger, gold digger;
The pile, it grew bigger and bigger
As the nuggets sloshed 'round
While I'm heavin', sweatin' an' movin' the ground.

A month or two later, back for supplies,
I sees a sight that pops my eyes.
She was long and slim with yeller hair,
As bright as my nuggets, and as fair.

My eyes bulged and began tu stare,
At her blue eyes a shinin' there,
My heart leapt with fierce desire,
Struck wild by gold fever fire!

The way she crooned, it was plain tu see,
Her little heart was set on me,
"You need a woman to keep your gold,
And to keep you warm when it gets cold."

My resistance soon melted away,
So we were hitched the very next day,
An' at the weddin' my best man,
Was my good ol' friend, my donkey Dan.

Now she sang,"Oh, I'm not putting you on,
        You're the best gold digger
        In the whole Yukon!

You better go back now and try
To get a little more for by and by.
While it's still warm, dig some gold,
Then come to me when it gets cold.

I'll keep your gold in this big can,
You trust me; you're my own true man."
Now I was in no big hurry;
I'd staked her well and didn't worry.

Back at the mine my luck ran out.
But I'd have a warm winter, not a doubt.
I'd braid that yeller,yeller hair,
And smile at those eyes a shinin' there.

So packin' it up I moved toward town,
Dreamin' of silk, feathers an' down,
Leadin' my friend, my donkey Dan,
Beatin' a tune on my miner's pan:

"Oh, I'm not puttin' you on,
I'm the best gold digger
In the whole Yukon!"

* * * *

Oh, the pain ... when I found her note,
"I'm leaving the town and you old goat.
You're really a dupe and a fool of a man,
Working so hard for my Chevrolet van.

Your gold I'll blow along the way,
So get to the hills and make it pay.
You ride your friend, your donkey Dan,
I'll cruise along in a Chevrolet van.

I'll churn the gravel around the bends,
Till far from here my journey ends.
Your heart can leap with fierce desire,
Struck dumb by gold fever fire!"

And now, I'm a sad lonely man,
A grubbin' those hills,
Singin' tu my friend Dan:

"Oh, I'm not puttin' you on;
She's the best gold digger
In the whole Yukon."

The Gold Digger's Yukon Trail

It's summer vacation; I'm on my way,
Away up north for a big _____.
I cruise along in my Oldsmobile,
As the clouds of dust swirl and _____.

I churn the gravel around the bends,
Till at Dawson City my journey _____.
I slowly pull into a local bar,
All eyes stare at my long green _____.

What matters most right at first,
Is steppin' in tu slake my _____.
I wash away the dust and grime,
Talkin' away till evenin' _____.

"Thar's still gold in them thar hills," they say,
"If you're strong an' eager an' willin' tu _____
Blood, sweat an' tears and stay
At work in the hills day after _____."

To prove his boast and his cry,
The old sourdough with the fiery _____
Plunked down a nugget as big as his thumb,
While tossing back another dark _____.

My eyes popped and began to stare,
At that big nugget so shiny _____,
My heart leapt with fierce desire,
Struck dumb by gold fever _____.

I sold my car and bought me a pan,
A pick and a shovel and a donkey named _____.
With a grub stake and tent, I loaded him down,
And led him away, away out o' _____.

No beginner's luck came my way,
As I grubbed those hills day after _____
Till I was a tired, lonely man
With a worn-out pick, an' a worn-out _____.

But I wouldn't quit; I'd make it pay;
I'd sweat it out ...... day by _____.
And so the years came and went,
I made a little, but it was _____.

But then one summer, late one day,
I hit the dirt that made it _____.
The nuggets began tu slosh in the pan,
As I sang a tune tu my friend _____:

       "Oh, I'm not puttin' you on,
       I'm the best gold _____
       In the whole _____!"

Gold digger, gold digger, gold digger;
The pile, it grew bigger and _____.
I was grubbin' an' sweatin' away,
Down in the dirt that made it _____.

Yu gotta eat when you're hard at work,
So back tu town for beans and _____.
But most important right at first,
Was steppin' in tu slake my _____.

The news warn't slow in gettin' 'roun',
As I spread some gold aroun' the _____.
Now I was in no big hurry,
I'd staked her well and didn't _____.

I finally loaded my friend Dan,
And sure's I was a gold diggin' _____,
I'd refill that poke right away,
A gubbin' those hills night and _____.

It warn't as though I'd spent it all,
I still had plenty for many a _____.
But I'd pile it up for a rainy day,
Diggin' the dirt tu make it _____.

Gold digger, gold digger, gold digger;
The pile, it grew bigger and _____
As the nuggets sloshed 'round
While I'm heavin', sweatin' an' movin' the _____

A month or two later, back for supplies,
I sees a sight that pops my _____.
She was long and slim with yeller hair,
As bright as my nuggets, and as _____.

My eyes bulged and began tu stare,
At her blue eyes a shinin' _____,
My heart leapt with fierce desire,
Struck wild by gold fever _____!

The way she crooned, it was plain tu see,
Her little heart was set on _____,
"You need a woman to keep your gold,
And to keep you warm when it gets _____."

My resistance soon melted away,
So we were hitched the very next _____,
An' at the weddin' my best man,
Was my good ol' friend, my donkey _____.

Now she sang,"Oh, I'm not putting you on,
      You're the best gold _____
      In the whole _____!

You better go back now and try
To get a little more for by and._____.
While it's still warm, dig some gold,
Then come to me when it gets _____.

I'll keep your gold in this big can,
You trust me; you're my own true _____."
Now I was in no big hurry;
I'd staked her well and didn't _____.

Back at the mine my luck ran out.
But I'd have a warm winter, not a _____.
I'd braid that yeller,yeller hair,
And smile at those eyes a shinin' _____.

So packin' it up I moved toward town,
Dreamin' of silk, feathers an' _____,
Leadin' my friend, my donkey Dan,
Beatin' a tune on my miner's _____:

"Oh, I'm not puttin' you on,
I'm the best gold _____
In the whole _____!"

* * * *

Oh, the pain ... when I found her note,
"I'm leaving the town and you old _____.
You're really a dupe and a fool of a man,
Working so hard for my Chevrolet _____.

Your gold I'll blow along the way,
So get to the hills and make it _____.
You ride your friend, your donkey Dan,
I'll cruise along in a Chevrolet _____.

I'll churn the gravel around the bends,
Till far from here my journey _____.
Your heart can leap with fierce desire,
Struck dumb by gold fever _____!"

And now, I'm a sad lonely man,
A grubbin' those hills,
Singin' tu my friend _____:

"Oh, I'm not puttin' you _____;
*She's* the best gold _____
In the whole _____."

Some Useful Background Readings

For the Poem

"The Gold Digger's Yukon Trail":

1. Basque, Garnet (1974). Gold Panner's Manual. Langley, B. C.: Stagecoach
   Publishing Co.

2. Bryant, Tom (1988). The Modern Goldseeker's Manual. Edmonton: Bedrock
   Supply.

3. Hall, Ralph (1978). Goldseekers. Victoria: Sono Nis Press.

4. Holloway, Samuel D. (1985). Yukon Gold. Whitehorse: Outcrop Ltd.

5. La Casse, Leonard & Roebuck, James (1978). Minerals of Alberta. Edmonton:
   Hallamshire Publishers.

6. Lagal, Roy (1982). Gold Panning Is Easy. Langley, B. C.: Mr. Paperback Pub.

7. Ludditt, Fred W. (1978). Gold in the Cariboo. Courtenay, B. C.: Bickle Ltd.

Figure 2: Illustration for Lesson Two
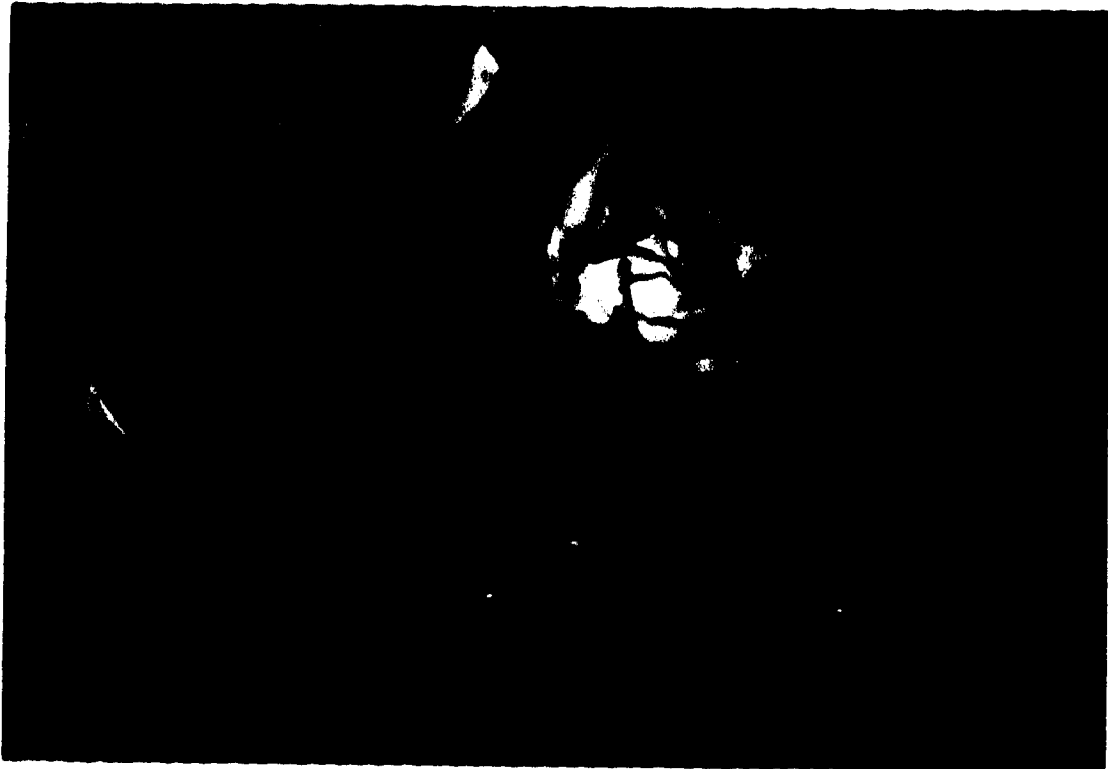
Bouquet rich in colored perfume....

D. ESL Lesson Two

Based on the poem, "Bouquet."

Purposes of the Lesson:

General: To help students enjoy a short lyrical poem with the aid of multimedia support in order to enhance their language skills of *viewing, listening, speaking, reading,* and *writing*.

Specific: To help students further develop their standard and formal English vocabulary as outlined in the vocabulary study below.

To help students more fully understand and appreciate the use of symbolism and mood in poetry.

Preparation before class:

Provide an overhead projector, a slide projector, and a cassette player. Have on hand a cartoon transparency of a husband giving his wife a bouquet of plastic flowers. Also have a good quality tape of Mozart's "Piano Concerto No. 21." In addition a general collection of flower slides will be needed, as well as a few well selected slides to illustrate the poem "Bouquet." Prepare handouts of the poem to be given to the students.

Introduction:

After the students are assembled show them the cartoon transparency of the gentleman giving his lady a bouquet of plastic flowers. Raise the issue as to which we appreciate more, real flowers or plastic flowers, and why. Tell the students to think about it and to hold their comments for later discussion.

Inform the students that we will be experiencing a poem about flowers and the poem will be illustrated by slides and supported by music.But before the poem we will be discusing the ideas of *symbolism* and *mood* as they relate to poetry. Immediately after hearing the poem , we will be looking at some vocabulary to help us understand the poem better.

Symbolism (the use of Symbols):

Clarify the concept of symbols to the class by means of definition and examples. *Symbols* may be defined as signs, things or ideas that stand for something else, for another idea. Some examples are: lion - courage; lamb - gentleness; white (white flag) - peace; red - danger; + (plus) - add; - (minus) - subtract; x (times) - multiply. Symbols are used much in poetry. Have the students think about what flowers symbolize in the poem about to be read.

Mood:

Mood in poetry refers to the tone or emotional feeling that a poem brings to us. Understanding this emotional attitude is very important to the understanding of the poem. Ask the students to think about the mood for the poem that will be read.

Reading of the Poem:

With the students assembled and comfortably seated, cut the lights and start playing Mozart's "Piano Concerto No. 21." This selection should help to establish the mood for the poem. At the same time start projecting the "general collection of flower slides" referred to earlier. This should also help to shape the tone for the experience. After about a dozen slides, and with the music continuing, begin to project the "few well selected slides to illustrate the poem, 'Bouquet'." At this point the teacher will begin reading the poem in a clear, steady voice, appropriate to the tone of the poem. It is important that the voice be loud enough to be clearly audible to all in the room. This is especially so, since the music will be continuing at this time. A copy of the poem is given on the next page for quick reference.

Vocabulary:

After the poem has been read and the slides and music have been turned off, give each student a handout of the poem and then consider the following vocabulary. That done, the teacher will read through the poem again, this time without music or pictures. The students will follow silently from their copies. This should help to fix the vocabulary in the minds of the students. Then proceed to the "directions for students ," as outlined below.

1. bouquet - bunch of flowers.
2. perfume - a sweet smell.
3. scent - odor, smell.
4. luxuriant - rich, colorful.
5. benignly - friendly.
6. beguiles - deceives, betrays, fools.
7. petals - colored leaflets.
8. striving - trying hard.
9. undone - defeated.
10. fool of time - destroyed by time.

11. lauded - praised.
12. rhyme - poetry.
13. drooping stalks - stems bent over.
14. forlorn - sad.
15. bereft - suffer loss.
16. cast - throw.
17. lingering - still staying.
18. memories - mental pictures of the past.
19. bunched - grouped together.
20. bygone - past.

Discussion and writing (directions for students):

As we meet first in small groups, discuss these questions. Listen to each other and share ideas. Each student should write brief notes to answer the questions. The notes can be used later for writing paragraphs. In about 15 to 20 minutes, we will meet again in the large group to share and compare ideas.

1. What do flowers symbolize (stand for, represent) in this poem?

2. Why do we appreciate (enjoy, like) real flowers more than plastic flowers?

3. Think of and list several beautiful things that become "... the fool of time."

4. What is the theme (main idea, message) of this poem?

5. Does the use of flowers, as symbols, support this theme? How?

6. What is the mood of this poem?

Bouquet

Bouquet rich in colored perfume,
Spreading scent about the room
Luxuriant growth benignly smiles,
But time its beauty soon beguiles.

Petals dropping one by one,
Striving hope is soon undone,
Beauty is but the fool of time,
Lauded by our foolish rhyme.

Drooping stalks; forlorn, bereft,
Cast them out, there's nothing left
But a lingering scent once begun,
By petals dropping one by one.

Memories bunched in rich bouquets,
Are lingering yet on bygone days,
Watered now by tears that run,
Like petals dropping one by one.

Vocabulary:

1. bouquet - bunch of flowers.
2. perfume - a sweet smell.
3. scent - odor, smell.
4. luxuriant - rich, colorful.
5. benignly - friendly.
6. beguiles - deceives, betrays, fools.
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16. cast - throw.
17. lingering - still staying.
18. memories - mental pictures of the past.
19. bunched - grouped together.
20. bygone - past.

E. Instrument For ESL Students

Note: Please do not put your name on this form. Your teacher will collect the form after you are finished. Thank you for your help.

Now please complete the form as you have been instructed.

	very little 1	a little 2	moderately 3	much 4	very much 5
1. Did you enjoy this work with poetry?	___	___	___	___	___
2. Did you enjoy the pictures?	___	___	___	___	___
3. Did the pictures make the poetry more enjoyable?	___	___	___	___	___
4. Did the pictures help you to understand the poetry?	___	___	___	___	___
5. Did the music add interest to the experience for you?	___	___	___	___	___
6. Could such experience help develop your listening ability?	___	___	___	___	___
7. Could it help your speaking ability?	___	___	___	___	___
8. Could it help your reading ability?	___	___	___	___	___
9. Could it give you something to write about?	___	___	___	___	___
10. Was this experience helpful for learning English?	___	___	___	___	___

11. You are invited to write some comments about this experience, if you wish.

_____

_____

_____

F. Instrument For ESL Teachers

Note: In order to preserve anonymity, it is requested that teachers not sign this form. Please return it to the researcher in the stamped self-addressed envelope provided. Thank you for your participation and cooperation.

Upon having observed the demonstrations of multimedia supported use of poetry with ESL students, you are asked to use your best professional judgment to complete the following rating scale. Use check marks to indicate your responses.

Do you perceive that this approach could have merit for ESL students' language development, with respect to:

	very little 1	a little 2	moderately 3	much 4	very much 5
1. their listening ability?...............	___	___	___	___	___
2. their speaking ability?...............	___	___	___	___	___
3. their reading ability?...............	___	___	___	___	___
4. their writing ability?...............	___	___	___	___	___
5. Overall, on the five-point scale, how would you rate the usefulness of multimedia supported study of poetry for the language development of ESL students?.......	___	___	___	___	___

6. You are invited to write some comments about this study and/or the demonstrations.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Figure 3: Cartoon For ESL Lesson Two

Copyright

A letter of copyright permission could not be obtained for the cartoon that was intended to be placed on this page. Therefore the cartoon has been removed in order to conform to copyright restrictions. The cartoon depicted a gentleman handing a lady a bouquet of plastic flowers as he assured her the flowers were symbolic of his love in that they would never wither. The cartoon appears in Head and MacLea (1976), page 209. See the bibliography for the full citation. The original source of the cartoon was "1972, The Register and Tribune Syndicate."

H. Sample letter to administrator:

928 Rice Road
Edmonton, T6R 1A1
March ___, 1992

(Institution)
(Address)

Dear _____:

I write this letter to request your approval and assistance in gaining access to *two* Continuing Education classes for the purpose of furthering my research for my Master's thesis at the University of Alberta.

My proposal has already passed the Ethics Review Committee at the university. It has also been approved by the Ethics Review Committee of the university's Department of Extension where I have recently gained access to four classes. One was for field testing purposes and three were for data gathering. I submit to you copies of these aforesaid approvals. Therein you will find a brief summary of my research proposal.

The classes used at the Department of Extension were classified as Intermediate, according to their designations (250 - 299 as a TOEFL score). This lower limit was established for this study to ensure students could cope with the required rating scale. It would be my hope to secure classes of at least this ability or higher.

The essence of my data gathering consists of presenting two poetry lessons, supported by multimedia, to each class involved. Following the lessons the students are requested to respond to the presentations by filling out a brief survey form while the researcher is out of the room and the students are supervised by their teacher. Teachers involved are requested to fill out a somewhat different survey. Copies of both forms are enclosed. The total time required is about two-and-one-half hours. This may be done in one block, or it may be split into two periods on successive days if necessary.

However, in keeping with ethics requirements, a brief visit of about ten minutes is required prior to the presentation of the lessons. The purpose is to explain procedures and to secure student cooperation. All participation is voluntary and any student who wishes, may opt out at any point along the way. Summaries of the survey results will be made available to participating teachers who may pass them on to their students.

It should also be pointed out that these lessons have very real English language learning content. Emphasis is placed upon the five language skills of *viewing, listening, speaking, reading,* and *writing. Vocabulary* is also stressed. At conclusion, each teacher is provided, follow-up exercises for further discussion or writing. These would be purely voluntary, depending on the wishes of the teacher. I state this to reassure that the time spent by classes in this study is not "wasted", but is instead a useful learning experience.

Thank you for considering these matters. Your assistance would be much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Harry Hess

I. NOTES ON TEACHING PACKAGE

As a supplement to this thesis there has been produced a teaching package for the convenience of anyone who might wish to use the lessons that were prepared for this study. Among other things this package includes such items as loose copies of the poetry used. Summaries of the lessons are given along with copies of transparencies. Copies of handouts are also included.

.iplicat. set of slides which illustrate the poems are provided. The music is included on a cassette tape. Also on this tape is a reading of each poem along with the background music. I must apologize for the dubious quality of the tape. Neither my skill nor my equipment were quite equal to the task of mixing the sound. Therefore I have repeated the music on the latter portions of each side of the tape. So if anyone wishes, they may use the music and do their own readings. The "honky-tonk Klondike" music was taken from an old scratchy record, so it was never great at best. But the students seemed to enjoy it.

If anyone has questions or comments about these materials they may contact me.

Harry Hess

928 Rice Road

Edmoton, Alberta

T6R 1A1

Ph. 430 - 6122