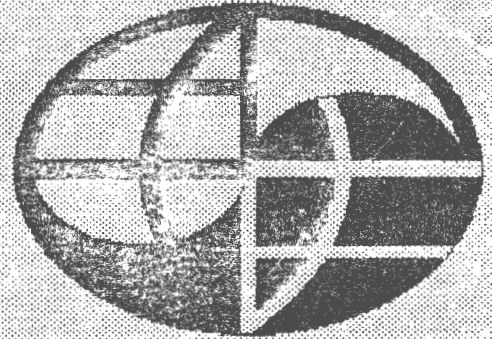


AETK BULLETIN



No. 12

The Association of English Teachers in Korea

March 1989

Oh-No-Not-Again Questions

by Thomas Davis

Thomas Davis is a member of AETK who teaches at Kangweon University in Chuncheon.

In any classroom or learning environment, the directions which that environment takes in seeking knowledge or competency are determined by the questions it seeks to address. Indeed, cognitive theory asserts that the need to resolve cognitive disequilibrium is the prime motivator of all human learning (Brown, 1980). In such a construct, it is "the question" which reflects this disequilibrium and in being raised begs a resolution in terms of a satisfactory answer. Answers given, moreover, when questions don't exist have little significance and reflect an often preachy environment which may be boring to those who feel little need for such irrelevant knowledge.

Regardless of one's considerations of cognitive theory, I think it is agreed upon by most that the quality of the question/answer interaction in the classroom is central to the quality of a teaching/learning environment. Indeed, a wide variety of aspects of question use in the classroom have been investigated in

numerous studies in an attempt to profile effective teaching (Winne, 1979), and effective questioning strategies have been shown to influence the quality of classroom learning (Orlich et al., 1985).

Questions, of course, can be asked by either teacher or student, and as asked by the teacher often perform an entirely different function from those asked by students. Most often, the purpose of questions asked by the teacher is to guide the class toward goals which the teacher hopes the class will achieve (only secondarily are they or should they be meant to evaluate progress). In other words, the teacher's questions determine the directions that the class will take in seeking knowledge or competence, and as such, should stimulate curiosity, analysis, reflection, recall, interaction, and in general, an interest in whatever subject or competency the teacher seeks to address.

The purpose of student questions, on the other hand, depends to a large extent on the nature of the classroom. In the freest, most student-oriented of classrooms, student questions can, like teacher questions, determine the directions the class is going to take. In other words, the students, in determining their own curiosities—or disequilibrium—also in effect determine the course outline.

Most teachers, for various reasons ranging from external pressures to personal discomfort, find such complete student control unsatisfactory, and indeed it has been my experience that students themselves expect more guidance from teachers, actually feeling uncomfortable with such omniscience. Instead, the purpose of the students' questions, while deferring to the teacher's for control of the course outline or syllabus, should be to orient the class towards the interests of

the students within the framework of that course outline. As such, student questions should simply expose the gaps between what the students want to know, within the context of what the course wants them to know, and what they don't.

Without student questions, these gaps are not discovered, are never filled, and are left as drains on classroom interest and participation. Students begin to feel that if what they had thought relevant or interesting is rejected as trite, inconsequential or even stupid, then perhaps the knowledge the teacher wants to teach is likewise not worth the trouble.

Student participation is encouraged by the degree to which students feel encouraged to ask questions...

Student participation, an agreed-upon basic ingredient of any successful learning environment, is encouraged then by the degree, at least to some extent, to which students feel encouraged to ask questions (Richards, 1987), and discouragement of these questions leads inevitably to a poorer classroom environment.

Oh-no-not-again questions

Experienced teachers are faced with a variety of potential pitfalls that are inherent in teaching the same subject to similar students semester after semester, year after year. Burnout is a familiar term to most and is a phenomenon that occurs when energy reserves are depleted by too many forays in and out of these pits. An unsuccessful negotiation here and an ex-

(See *Oh-No-Not-Again*, page 5)

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The Association of English Teachers in Korea (AETK), a TESOL affiliate, was formed in November 1981 to promote scholarship, strengthen instruction, foster research, disseminate information and facilitate cross-cultural understanding among professional persons concerned with foreign-language teaching and learning in Korea. Membership is open to all who support the Association's goals. Meetings are held monthly except during the summer, and the Association occasionally sponsors other events of interest to language teachers.

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Dwight Strawn, Yonsei University English Department

AETK Bulletin is published as a service to AETK members and may be obtained by joining the Association.

The *Bulletin* welcomes articles in English concerning all aspects of foreign language teaching and learning, especially those relevant to Korea. All material should be neatly typed and should follow the APA style used in the *TESOL Quarterly*. (The Editor reserves the right to make editorial changes to enhance clarity or style; authors will be consulted only when substantial editing is needed.)

Send material to be considered for publication to Eric Strickland, Yonsei University Foreign Language Institute, 134 Shinchon-dong, Suhdaemoon-ku, Seoul 120-749. Deadlines for each issue are as follows:

January Issue:	Nov. 15
March Issue:	Jan. 15
May Issue:	Mar. 15
July Issue:	May 15
September Issue:	July 15
November Issue:	Sept. 15



AETK CALENDAR

A Schedule of Forthcoming Events Sponsored by the Association of English Teachers in Korea

March	Wednesday, March 15, 7:30 PM. March AETK Meeting at the Yonsei University Foreign Language Institute. Kevin Hale, Special Assistant at Samsung Aerospace, will give a presentation entitled "Mind Benders: A Perfect Communication Activity."
April	Saturday, April 15, 2:30 PM. April AETK Meeting at the Yonsei University Foreign Language Institute. Program to be announced.
May	1989 AETK Spring Conference and Annual Business Meeting. Details to be announced. (See related announcement on page 6.)
June	Plans to be announced.

For further information about AETK programs, contact Marie Fellbaum, c/o Yonsei University Foreign Language Institute, 134 Shinchon-dong, Suhdaemoon-ku, Seoul 120-749.

March Focus

Mind Benders: A Perfect Communication Activity

"Mind Benders," the subject of a presentation to be given by Kevin Hale at the March AETK meeting, are a unique communicative activity which requires every student to participate. If one student is quiet the group cannot complete the task. This exercise also forces students to organize and assume leadership roles in the target language. Once the class begins the students do all the work. Finally, these "puzzles" are both interesting and educational. Mr. Hale will explain how they work and how to write them.

Kevin Hale received his BA from Idaho State University and his MBA from the University of Colorado. He has taught English at Sogang University, worked for the ROK Ministry of Trade and Industry, and is currently employed at the Samsung Training Center. His responsibilities include coordinating the special Samsung winter English program for university students.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

AETK Membership Directory

There was only one response to the announcement in the January *AETK Bulletin* of the AETK Council's proposal for publishing a Membership Directory, so at this point the plan is on hold and no steps have been taken to carry it forward. If you are interested in reviving the idea, please make your interest known by contacting any member of the AETK Council.

Search on for New Newsletter Editor

As announced at the January AETK meeting, the AETK Newsletter Editor would like to turn over the responsibility for editing and producing *AETK Bulletin* to someone else. If you are interested yourself, or if there is someone you can suggest who is willing to take this position, please contact Publications Committee Chair Eric Strickland or AETK President Paul Cavanaugh as soon as possible.

Innovation in English Language Teaching in Japan

by Anthony Flenley

Reprinted from TESOL's Teacher Education Newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall 1988), this article originally appeared in Teacher Development, Newsletter of the IATEFL Teacher Development Group, No. 8, 1988. Although based on research done in Japan, the article also speaks to the issue of innovation in English language teaching in Korea. Anthony Flenley teaches at Poole High School, Osaka, Japan.

In Japan, there are many ideas in the environment for improving ELT, but little change is noted, suggesting that few are applied. Difficulties, then, may lie in innovating. This was my starting point for the dissertation for the MA in TEFL at Reading University. Research has focused on Senior High Schools (SHS) (15-18 year old), using a questionnaire to teachers (164 respondents), interviews and case studies. Here are some of my findings and conclusions—so far!

I did find in fact that there were cases of new ideas (language programmes, methodology) being applied successfully, but, overall, innovation is limited by a number of constraints. As one respondent put it: "Although studying new teaching methods is necessary, the situation will not improve very much unless ideas about language education with regard to educational policy are changed, unless the number of students in a class is reduced and unless teachers are given more chances for training (for example, being sent abroad for a year to English-speaking countries)."

The tradition of the teacher as transmitter of knowledge, a preference for subject knowledge over, say, materials development, large classes (40+), the desire for order and standardisation, and the textbook (government approved) all lead to the grammar-translation approach being widely used. The need to cover (for exams) what most teachers feel is an overloaded syllabus leaves little room for experimentation. This is frustrating for a large number of respondents who said they would like to try out new ideas and help their students develop communicative ability.

Teachers who do try something new often face negative reactions or even hostility from students who, by SHS, are well used to traditional methods.

The most pervasive constraint is the university entrance exams (90% + of students go on to SHS and of these about

35% attend universities or colleges). Students are judged by prospective employers on the prestige of the university they attend, no matter how well they do there. Hence the one chance of 'success' in life depends on then entrance exams, in which English is a compulsory part.

Consequently, there is pressure on teachers to make sure students do well. It is felt through several channels: parents, students, principals, and colleagues concerned about the school's reputation, and the content of the exam itself, which focuses on translation, grammar, vocabulary and reading.

Teachers have relatively low contact hours (70% of respondents have 16 hours or less). Nevertheless, they have such an amount of non-teaching work (administration, school events, student guidance) that most feel unable to work on ELT.

There are a number of other factors which are regarded as constraints, such as mixed ability classes. The force of constraints varies with the type of school: exam pressures are greater at academic schools and less at vocational schools—which then produces problems of motivation.

One of the most surprising findings is that, despite Japan being a 'group-oriented society', teachers are highly independent, but it is an independence which leaves them closed to outside influences or sharing ideas. Of the innovations reported by respondents most were implemented by individual teachers.

The most successful and far-reaching innovations (one involving an overhaul of the entire English programme) were implemented through collaboration between teachers, support from the principal, and management by the head of department. These few successes point to a factor that is missing in other English departments studied: management—in the sense of providing conditions in which innovation can take place. There was little evidence of department initiatives.

However, due to teachers' animosity towards authority (there is a history of conflict between the government and teachers' unions), 'management' is a sensitive issue and, generally, teachers feel involving or organising others is interfering.

In this 'closed climate' (I should emphasise it is not always so), it is up to the individual teacher who wished for

change to promote discussion. But often constraints of time, or, in the more conservative departments, the hierarchy (wherein only senior teachers have influence) makes this difficult.

Teachers who become interested in new ideas (e.g., by attending courses) may appreciate their merit, but may not feel they are feasible or worthwhile in their own school due to constraints or lack of support from other teachers. Knowing of a possible improvement, but not being able to carry it out can lead to frustration and a loss of confidence.

Favored innovations (only 37% said they were or had been involved in innovations) benefited students (e.g., enjoyment, motivation, learning) rather than teachers (e.g., reducing workload). Most were to do with methodology (e.g., English through English, role play); smaller by half were those concerning materials (often supplementary). In the face of constraints most innovations were modest. Success or failure turned on how well the constraints had been negotiated: if innovations are to succeed they cannot be ignored. The most successful set out to cater for both exam preparation and helping students become effective users of English.

Teachers change only when they have good reasons to do so...

The government is considering reforms—and let's hope teachers become involved. Presently it seems that maintaining the status quo has fewer costs and more benefits than changing. Innovations risk costs such as a poor entrance exam pass rate, falling out with students and colleagues. There are few benefits in going against the system and spending precious time and energy on something which will not be appreciated.

Teachers change only when they have good reasons to do so. For innovation and especially teacher development perhaps it is necessary to move beyond 'changing values' to the consideration of the realities of particular teaching situations and the relevance of particular innovations therein. Innovation decisions may not be based on objective assessments of pedagogic merit, but on more fundamental concerns.

They Replacing Generic He

by Walter P. Allen

Reprinted from TESOL's Applied Linguistics Interest Section Newsletter, Vol. 10, No. 1 (December 1988). Walter P. Allen is Associate Professor Emeritus, Department of English, University of Houston.

My teachers taught me to consider *they* as a pronoun error when it replaced generic *he*. But that was many years ago, before most English teachers realized that a case could be made for not using *he* when the referent was, or could be, a single female. Then came the use of *he* or *she* and the written forms *he/she* and *s/he*. None of these replacement expressions came naturally to many (most?) native speakers. As teachers, what do we do when *they* is used instead of the sexist generic *he*?

Let me admit from the beginning to being on the side of those who wish to find a replacement for generic *he*. This is also the position of the NCTE Guidelines for Non-Sexist Language, with which contributors to all NCTE journals are asked to comply. In fact, writers in many areas are bound by similar constraints. In an article on nonsexist language, Wendy Martyna gives a list of other representative groups and publishers who have such guidelines. She includes the American Psychological Association; Scott, Foresman and Company; Macmil-

lan Publishing Company; and the New York Assembly (*Signs* 5 [Spring 1980], 491 n. 45).

My native English-speaking students in a junior-senior level Introduction to the Study of Language course could not have been classified as models for other writers to imitate. However, they are important sources of current English for the foreign students on campus. Reading their research reports and test essays has led me to identify a parallel historical trend in pronoun use which is pertinent to the use of generic *he*. This is the change in the use of *you* from plural to singular and the consequent elimination of *thee/thou*.

My students consciously practice *he* or *she*, *she/he*, *s/he*, and other clumsy-sounding forms. But quite frequently the students write *they*, it seems to me, unconsciously. I formerly marked this use of *they* as a pronoun agreement error. But I have now come to believe that my students' use of *they* in referring to an indefinite gender third person singular is an escape from using generic *he*. My later practice has been to make a marginal comment calling attention to what the student has done.

Mary K. DeShazer's "Reply" (CCC 34:4 [December 1983], 485-491) led me to Wendy Martyna's article "Beyond the He/Man Approach: The Case for Non-sexist Language" in *Signs* (op.cit. 5:482-493). Martyna mentions that Bodine

(*Language and Society* 4 [August 1975], 129-146) claims that *they* has a long history of replacing generic *he*, despite almost two centuries of attempted suppression by teachers and language purists. As might be expected, William F. Buckley, Jr. is among those who oppose *they* for generic *he* (*National Review*, 26, May 1976, 583).

Change in pronoun use, from plural to singular reference, in response to social changes, is not new to the English pronoun paradigm. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *you* is cited earliest as second person plural objective. Later on, *you* was used as nominative, replacing *ye*. By the mid-14th century citations for *you* with singular referent appear. At first these singular references are a sign of respect for superiors, but later on citations are found in which *you* refers to equals, and ultimately *you* is used generally as second person singular.

This broadening of the use of *you* parallels the development of democracy among the English-speaking peoples. The push to include women in humankind is now (and has been for the past two hundred years) having a similar effect on the use of *they*. Language changes to suit the needs of society. Therefore, the use of *they* as the third person singular non-generic referent is a signal of advance in democracy and so should be encouraged.

Do you have something to say about:

- teaching composition and writing?
- teaching reading?
- teaching pronunciation?
- what to do in a conversation class?
- language testing?
- research on language learning and language teaching?
- using computers in language teaching?
- resources for language teaching available in Korea?
- programs or projects that AETK should undertake?
- professional, social or ethical issues related to language teaching?
- any other aspect of language teaching of interest to AETK members?

If you can answer "yes" to any of the above questions, then put your ideas on paper and send them to *AETK Bulletin* so they can be shared with other members of AETK. See page 2 for information about where to send material and the publication deadlines for each issue.

Oh-No-Not-Again

(Continued from page 1)

posed irritation there and suddenly the class seems to have lost the vibrancy of former classes. Apathy sets in, pitfalls aren't as carefully avoided, and the class continues to deteriorate. And if not checked, a vicious cycle begins that can ultimately lead to burnout.

This paper, however, does not intend to discuss aspects of burnout so much as to focus on only one of those many early irritants that at worst can seriously impair a learning environment and, in conjunction with other factors, perhaps even lead to burnout.

The irritant referred to: the "oh-no-not-again" question.

Any experienced teacher will surely recognize the type of question being referred to here. It is the type of question which causes ticks at the corner of the mouth long before the final syllable is uttered. It is the type of question anticipated with butterflies in the stomach even before that first semester's class has been entered. And it is that kind of impossible question that has been heard so many times that if heard again will occasion violent convulsions and hysterical screaming.

Teachers of each discipline and audience must surely share their own peculiar oh-no-not-again questions, but as a teacher of English-as-a-second-language, my main concern is with those that ESL teachers share, and as a five year resident of Korea, particularly so with those that ESL teachers in Korea share. Below, then, are several categories of these commonly shared and irritatingly common questions.

For language teachers in general, oh-no-not-again questions often take the form of suggestions on how the class should be taught. This category of questions includes those such as "Why don't we study more grammar?", "Why don't we have more free talking?", "Why don't you correct my mistakes more often?", and other such questions which might in the teacher's eyes be seen as attempts to usurp control from the person the teacher perceives to be best qualified to make such decisions: him/herself. "Who's the professional around here, anyway?" is a question I'm sure more than one teacher has muttered to him/herself.

Another type of oh-no-not-again question that language teachers share is the one whose answer is deeper or broader

than the teacher is either willing or able to provide succinctly or even satisfyingly. "What's the best way to learn English?" is the one that most often has me groping the most blindly. The more I study language acquisition and the longer I teach English, the deeper, more complex, and less satisfying the answer seems to become. The question has elicited from me almost as many answers as times that it has been asked.

Language teachers also experience questions which violate their native language's cultural rules for tact or politeness. Those of us teaching in Korea, moreover, share (and indeed share often in therapeutic conversations with each other) a specific subset of such questions.

These questions include those which to western sensibilities can simply seem too bluntly personal. The single person, for example, will inevitably get questions on why he or she is not married; the overweight person about why he or she is so; or the childless married couple about why they have no children.

Other such questions reflect Korean sensitivities about their own nation or self for which a positive response without equivocation (sometimes a great deal of equivocation) causes tremors in the galvanic skin response. They are questions which to western perceptions would be considered "loaded". How the teacher likes certain Korean foods or what he/she might think of a particular low-level student's language ability might be examples of this type of oh-no-not-again question.

Another category of the oh-no-not-again question that often offends teachers' sense of tactfulness includes those questions which seem to pit the teachers' native culture against the student's. In Korea, why the U.S., for example, has become protectionistic when Korea has been such a good friend, why the U.S. caused the division of Korea, and more recently why NBC insulted Korea are questions in this category that I have heard with some amount of frequency and painful discomfort.

And though the list could go on and the categories more carefully and thoroughly analyzed, the point has, I think been made that the question, a fundamental unit of any learning environment, can and often does take forms that are disconcerting, irritating or even maddening. Sometimes, moreover, the only category parameters that might include them as such would simply be that they had been

asked many times—hence the name "oh-no-not-again".

But, of course, the teacher having heard a question for the 200th time can't blame a student who is sincerely asking it for the first. Neither should a teacher be too quick to let ill feelings surface when hearing, even for the first time, questions from any of the aforementioned categories. And when a question from any of these categories is also being heard for the 200th time, teachers need to be especially careful to check their feelings that might otherwise be stirring out of control.

So what can teachers do to help check themselves against unduly critical or damaging responses to oh-no-not-again questions? Basically, they can simply develop an attitudinal framework for answering them. Below are five points which, I hope, might help teachers develop and maintain such a framework.

1. *See the question as the student sees it.* Questions too frequently heard by the teacher are nevertheless fresh for the student. Likewise, questions which may violate the teacher's cultural rules for tact or politeness may not violate the student's. Questions, moreover, which seem hopelessly broad or complicated will probably not have seemed so to students who would otherwise not have asked them. And finally, questions which function as suggestions for course activities or even course outlines, should at least be tolerated and listened to as being, at worst, no more than feedback from students who probably are motivated simply by an overriding desire to get the most out of the course.

2. *Thoughtful responses are the only responses worth giving.* One of the advantages of hearing questions over and over is the opportunity consequently provided for perfecting and honing a response. We can't always give perfect or even satisfying answers, but consequential reflections are sometimes most fruitful when they occur in that state of cerebral dissonance one often experiences after saying what is felt in retrospect to have been pretty foolish. Think and reflect on responses to questions which are difficult to answer. Chances are, particularly with oh-no-not-again questions, that you, the teacher, will have numerous subsequent opportunities to provide new, improved answers.

3. *Don't be hypersensitive to perceptions of students' challenges to self, class, class*

(See *Oh-No-Not-Again*, page 8)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Call for Papers

AETK Spring Conference

The 1989 AETK Spring Conference will be held the last weekend of May. Send presentation proposals by March 15 to Marie Fellbaum, c/o Yonsei University Foreign Language Institute, 134 Shinchon-dong, Suhdaemoon-ku, Seoul 120-749. All proposals must include a title, a 150-word abstract, and the name and current mailing address of the presenter.

Topics may include: research in second language acquisition, teacher education and training, classroom techniques and methods in all skill areas, or any other area related to foreign language teaching in Korea.

Second International Language Testing Conference

Sponsored by JALT (Japan Association of Language Teachers), Thursday and Friday, March 30-31, 1989, Foreign Language Center, The University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Japan. For further information, contact H. Asano, Foreign Language Center, The University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba-shi, Ibaraki ken 305, Japan.

Barcelona Summer Institute '89

The Third Annual Mediterranean Institute will be held in Barcelona, Spain from July 3rd to July 28th. Jointly sponsored by Columbia University Teachers College in New York, the University of London Institute of Education, the University of Barcelona, and ESADE, the Institute will offer courses for English language teachers including an optional program leading to a Master's Degree in TESOL.

Courses will be offered in the following areas: Communicative Language Teaching Methods, Computer Assisted Language Learning, Individualization in Language Learning, Curriculum Design and Materials Development, Second Language Acquisition, and Specialist Research and Techniques.

For details, write to Summer Institute '89, ESADE, Av. Pedralbes 60-62, 08034 Barcelona, Spain.

Call for Papers

1989 JALT Conference on Language Teaching/Learning

The Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT) will sponsor its Fifteenth Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning under the theme "Bridging the Gap: Theory and Practice" at Notre Dame Seishin University, Okayama, Japan from November 3rd through 5th, 1989.

The Conference will feature over 250 presentations dealing with all aspects of language teaching, learning and acquisition. Over 2,000 people are expected to participate.

Proposals for papers, demonstrations, workshops and colloquia, particularly those touching on this year's theme, are warmly encouraged. Although financial assistance cannot be provided to presenters, a reduced three-day conference fee is applicable to the chief presenter for each accepted proposal.

For further information, contact JALT, Lions Mansion Kawaramachi #111, Kawaramachi Matsubara-Agaru, Shimogyo-ku, Kyoto 600, Japan. TEL: 81-75-361-5248. FAX: 81-75-361-5249.

The 55th Linguistic Institute

Cosponsored by the Linguistic Society of America and the Modern Language Association, the 55th Linguistic Institute will be held at the University of Arizona in Tucson, Arizona, USA, from June 26 to August 4, 1989. The Institute theme, Bridges: Cross-Linguistic, Cross-Cultural, and Cross-Disciplinary Approaches to Language, emphasizes the breadth of linguistic investigation and the strengthening of the ties between linguistics and other disciplines.

Courses are offered for graduate credit, with fees expected to range from US\$740 for 3 units to US\$980 for 6 units. For further information, contact the Institute Director, Susan Steele, Department of Linguistics, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721, USA or STEELE@ARIZRVAX on BITNET.

TESOL Summer Institute

The 1989 TESOL Summer Institute will be held from June 26 to August 4 at San Francisco State University in San Francisco, California, USA. The Institute will offer two three-week sessions of graduate and professional courses (June 26-July 14 and July 17-August 4) and a six-week session of introductory courses (June 26-August 4). Participants may earn up to nine semester units through San Francisco State University.

There will also be weekly lectures by noted scholars in TESOL and a variety of social activities designed to enhance participants' enjoyment of the San Francisco Bay Area.

For further information contact Dr. James Kohn, Director, 1989 TESOL Summer Institute, School of Humanities, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA 94132, USA.

RESOURCES

English-Language Radio: The BBC

The BBC World Service from London can be heard clearly in Korea, thanks to a relay station in Hong Kong, and provides a variety of radio programs in English which should be of interest to English language teachers. They include not only current news and commentary about events around the world but also music, entertainment and educational programs.

"The Learning World," for example, is a regular 15-minute program looking at all aspects of education around the world from the point of view of the student, parent, employer, teacher and trainer. This program is broadcast on Mondays at 23:15 GMT and is repeated on Tuesdays at 04:30 and Wednesdays at 15:15 GMT.

Broadcast frequencies change from time to time and are different at different times during the day. Try the following on your radio dial: 17875 kHz, 17815 kHz, 15280 kHz, and 5995 kHz.

TESOL INFORMATION



TESOL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name (*Print*) _____
 Mailing Address _____
 City _____
 Province/State _____
 Country _____ Postal Code _____

Please make check in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank payable to TESOL or provide the appropriate credit card information and mail to: TESOL, Suite 205, 1118 22nd Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, USA.

Check enclosed Visa Master Card
 Card number: _____ Exp. date: _____
 Cardholder's signature _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Membership includes subscription to TESOL QUARTERLY and TESOL NEWSLETTER. Check appropriate box:

- INDIVIDUAL..... US\$42.00
- STUDENT (*for those engaged in at least half-time study*)*..... US\$22.00
- JOINT (*two-member household*)..... US\$60.00
- INSTITUTIONAL/LIBRARY..... US\$75.00

**Student members are required to provide faculty signature, address, and telephone number to verify minimum half-time status:*

Faculty Signature/Title _____
 Institution/Address _____ Telephone _____

ALL MEMBERS OUTSIDE THE U.S. must add one of the following postage fees to their membership dues:

- (1) FOREIGN SURFACE MAIL—All countries outside the U.S. US\$ 6.00 _____
- (2) NEWSLETTER BY AIR, QUARTERLY BY SURFACE..... US\$15.00 _____
- (3) BOTH QUARTERLY AND NEWSLETTER BY AIR
- Canada and Mexico..... US\$ 8.50 _____
- Caribbean, South America, Europe, and the Mediterranean US\$20.00 _____
- Africa, Asia, and the Pacific..... US\$26.00 _____

INTEREST SECTIONS

MARK with (1) the Interest Section in which you wish to be active and vote.
MARK with (2) not more than two additional Interest Sections in which you have a secondary interest.

- ___ Teaching English Internationally
- ___ English as a Foreign Language for Foreign Students in English-Speaking Countries
- ___ English to Speakers of Other Languages in Elementary Education
- ___ English as a Second Language in Secondary Schools
- ___ English as a Second Language in Higher Education
- ___ English as a Second Language in Bilingual Education
- ___ English as a Second Language in Adult Education
- ___ Standard English as a Second Dialect
- ___ Applied Linguistics
- ___ Research
- ___ Refugee Concerns
- ___ Teacher Education
- ___ Computer-Assisted Language Learning
- ___ Program Administration
- ___ Materials Writers
- ___ Teaching English to Deaf Students

I wish to receive more information about TESOL:
___ publications, ___ conventions, ___ awards and grants, ___ summer institutes, ___ affiliates, ___ interest sections, ___ Employment Information Service

Oh-No-Not-Again

(Continued from page 5)

control, native country or whatever else seems threatened or vulnerable. Disagreements, debates and even arguments are part of the normal dialectics of any learning environment. In language learning environments, moreover, they not only can stimulate language interaction, but are indeed functions of language which legitimately can and perhaps should be targeted in a language course's syllabus. If responses are thoughtful, then interaction instead of being discouraged can actually be encouraged by disagreement. Flying off at the handle not only suggests a teacher's impatience with his/her students, but also leads to the stifling of an interactive learning environment. Its ultimate consequence, moreover, is not greater teacher control: it is boredom and burnout.

4. Remember that questions are the springboards to greater awareness and as a corollary, their discouragement a pitfall to ignorance. When questions, for example, seem inappropriate, rude or even threatening, they nevertheless can still be used as opportunities for increasing an awareness of, say, a perspective on such questions different from that of the student or the student's native culture. Stating reasons for what to the teacher may explain the questions' inappropriateness, rudeness or threatening nature can lead, if thoughtful, to enlightening and stimulating discussions of cultural dif-

ferences. On the other hand, confronting the questions with displays of frustration or irritation leads only to a momentary awareness of the teacher's reaction and a long-term lack of not only an awareness of the reasons for that particular reaction but of awarenesses otherwise provided by responses and interactions to questions consequently discouraged and never asked.

5. Stupid questions don't always deserve stupid answers. Even the dumbest of questions can be responded to with thoughtful replies that intelligently manipulate the situation to increase the level of awareness of a particular student or class. "Do you know kimchi?" is to most of us who have taught English in Korea for any length of time stupid. "Of course," we think and hold our tongues (or sometimes don't) lest we blurt out some perhaps unjustifiably nasty sarcasm. Instead of being a stimulus to sarcasm such a question could, on the other hand, lead to a discussion of which aspects of Korean culture are most well-known to Westerners and conversely which aspects of Western culture are most well-known to Koreans.

Most other such questions, moreover, which seem less than intelligent to the teacher, especially when they are the oh-no-not-again type and have therefore provided the time for reflection and a perfection of a response, could also, I think, be manipulated by the teacher for more intelligent levels of discussion.

Even stupid questions do not deserve stupid answers.

Conclusion

In summary, this paper has touched on the importance of questions and of encouraging questions in any learning environment. Conversely, it has dealt with the consequences of discouraging questions and has presented a category of question, the "oh-no-not-again" question, which is often particularly discouraging because of its inherently irritating nature. Finally, the paper has discussed ways of coping with oh-no-not-again questions and has as its general theme appealed to teachers not to discourage questions of any type but to instead make the most of even the worst of them.

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