

ELT-58

View and Teach, Series 1: 12 Films for Teachers of English as a Second Language

Milestones in ELT

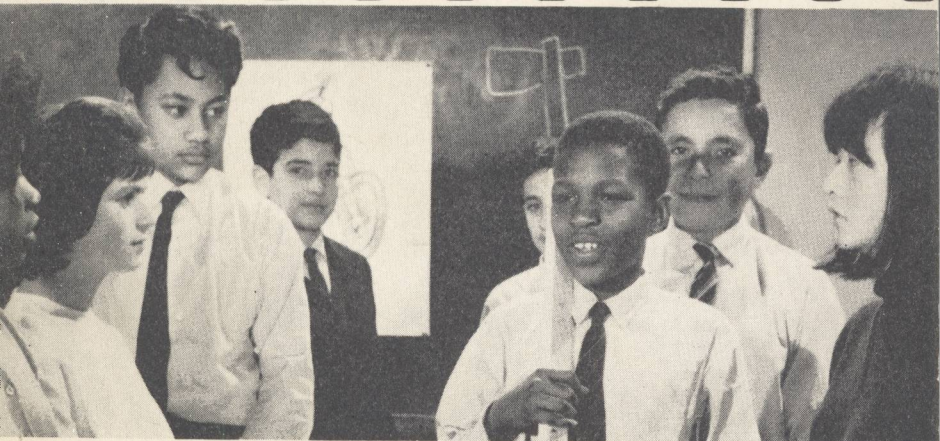
Milestones in ELT

The British Council was established in 1934 and one of our main aims has always been to promote a wider knowledge of the English language. Over the years we have issued many important publications that have set the agenda for ELT professionals, often in partnership with other organisations and institutions.

As part of our 75th anniversary celebrations, we re-launched a selection of these publications online, and more have now been added in connection with our 80th anniversary. Many of the messages and ideas are just as relevant today as they were when first published. We believe they are also useful historical sources through which colleagues can see how our profession has developed over the years.

View and Teach, Series 1: 12 Films for Teachers of English as a Second Language

This 1964 booklet gives a summary of the main points in each film in the *View and Teach* series (produced by the BBC in association with the British Council) with suggestions for discussion by teachers after they have seen the films. *View and Teach* was a series of films intended to help teachers of English as a second language use the direct method in schools. The films presented classroom scenarios, with the roles of 'teachers in training' acted out by students from the University of London. The action drew partly on the experience of teaching non-native speaker learners in UK schools, and children from three London schools played a part in filming. The Introduction deals with the 'general argument of the films', advice to teachers, and anticipated questions from teachers, for example, concerning examinations and the appropriateness of materials for different age groups.



View and teach series **1**
12 films for teachers
of English
as a second language



BBC/BRITISH COUNCIL

View and Teach

SERIES 1

12 films for teachers of English
as a second language

*

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View and Teach is a series of films intended to help teachers of English as a second language in schools. The films were produced by the BBC in association with the British Council. They were directed by Bernard Lewis and the General Editor for the scripts was David Hicks.

The present booklet gives a summary of the main points in each film together with suggestions for discussion by teachers after they have seen the films.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Archway School, London, N.19: Mr. F. Fogg, Headmaster, and Miss M. M. Jordan, Deputy Head.

Shelburne School, London, N.7: Miss E. M. Hoyles, Headmistress.

North Paddington School, London, W.9: Mr. T. Davies, Headmaster, and Mr. A. J. H. McIntyre, Head of the Lower School.

*

We should also like to thank those who play the parts of 'teachers in training'. At the time the films were made they were students of the University of London Institute of Education:

Miss Antonia Cowan; Miss Elizabeth Mackenzie; Miss Yvette Maylam; Mr. Stuart Hughes; Mr. Jonathan Trench.

Mr. R. J. Quinault, of the English by Radio and Television Department of the BBC, plays the part of 'Tutor' to the trainee teachers. Mr. F. L. Billows, of the British Council, and Mr. J. D. O'Connor, of University College, London, appear as themselves.

*

We are indebted to Messrs. Longmans, Green and Company for permission to use one of the 'General Service English Wall Pictures' by Eckersley and Gatenby to illustrate a method of teaching in Film 8.

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Introduction

Why spoken English?

These films are meant to help teachers of English as a second language. In this first series of twelve, we decided to concentrate on the spoken language, for two reasons. First, this is the most important part of language-learning. Second, more teachers need help in this than in teaching the written language.

Clearly the spoken language is the most important part, if the pupils are to use English as a real second-language. But even if the main aim is that students should be able to read in English, the best beginning is through the spoken language.

Why are the films thought necessary?

Most teachers nowadays agree with what has just been said above. But they often do not know how to carry it out.

Many teachers have not had an opportunity to analyse the language, or decide exactly what ought to be taught at each stage. Many want to use a 'direct' method but are not sure how to do it. Many are obliged to use textbooks which do not encourage this sort of approach. Many are worried by the thought of written examinations facing their pupils at the end of the course.

Written examinations

Let us very briefly talk about that last point. Pupils who have to take a written examination in a language will almost always do better in it if they have *first* been taught how to use the language as second nature, and *later* have been taught how to analyse it.

This is especially true of the modern kinds of examinations, which pay more attention to the candidate's ability to use the

language than to his ability to analyse certain limited aspects of it.

What is the level of these films?

We decided that we should try to make the films helpful for teachers in training; but at the same time helpful as a 'refresher' for established teachers. It often happens that a teacher who has been doing fifth-form work on literature finds himself suddenly expected to teach beginners in another part of the school: he too will find the advice in these films of basic importance.

We also had to decide whether to deal with children learning English for the first time at six or seven; or whether to deal with the problems of children learning English for the first time in the early secondary school—say at about 12 years old. We chose the latter.

The methods we suggest for twelve-year-olds can be adapted for primary schools fairly easily. Our methods are not concerned with analysing the language, but with practising it—and primary teachers will agree that practice is what younger children need.

In many parts of the world children do start learning English in the first year of secondary school, and nevertheless are expected to reach a stage at which they can use the language for everyday purposes, as well as for higher learning.

Children in the films

We had to find a group of children in London who could represent a class being taught English. They had to illustrate lessons at many different stages of learning; some which might come in the first year, and some in the third. So we had to choose children who knew a fair amount of English already; indeed, some of them had lived in London long enough to speak very fluently.

Nevertheless all the children originally came to England

from overseas, and many of them have learnt English since they came to live in London.

When you look at the films, make the following allowance: 'This practice, which is being illustrated, would have to be repeated still more frequently, and revised on many later occasions, in order to be properly learnt by the children in my school'.

The function of the classroom scenes

This follows from the last paragraph. When you see the classroom scenes in the films, remember that they are only extremely short extracts from longer lessons. They indicate a 'style' of teaching. The films will discuss some of the subject-matter that can be taught by these methods.

But a great deal still remains for the teacher to work out for himself, perhaps by very careful attention to what is in his textbook.

See whether the classroom scenes in the films can give you ideas for similar lessons teaching other subject-matter.

And always think of what must happen before and after the particular fragment of a lesson which is shown in the film.

The general argument of the films

These twelve films were written, and in part performed, by three different experts. The first five were my immediate responsibility, and these are meant to show you as 'direct' a method as possible of teaching the language. We shall come to details later, but for the moment let us merely state that this method requires:

(a) that somebody—whether the textbook writer or somebody else—has to make a careful study of the hundreds of language items that are to be taught, and arrange them in a sensible order;

(b) that these items have to be taught by a process in which the teacher gives a clear spoken model and the learners imitate,

gradually learning to do without the model and speak for themselves;

(c) that the language used in these early stages of learning should be directly connected with visible reality, either in the classroom or close at hand;

(d) that a great deal of practice can be given by using chorus-work.

Lionel Billows provided the material for Films 6 to 9. He too insists on the importance of a direct method. But he shows how to go on from mechanical drills; when the basic language is well-learnt:

(e) the children's imaginations must be led out of the classroom, so that they will use the new language to talk about the whole wide world;

(f) they must connect the language with their own real activities so that it is used for true *communication* within their own community;

(g) acting is very important for teacher and learners, from the simple demonstration of what a word means, to the elaborate dramatisation of a story by the whole class.

As we are concerned with the spoken language, nothing can be more to the point than the way we speak it. Desmond O'Connor, in Films 10 and 11, concentrates on the Rhythm and Intonation of English. Among his other points, these are important:

(h) the teacher must himself be aware of the vital part which rhythm and intonation play in making English intelligible;

(i) he must use a vigorous and effective technique of getting his pupils to use these features, from the earliest lessons.

GENERAL ADVICE TO TEACHERS

Teach the living language

Don't teach a lot of grammar, as a substitute for teaching the children to communicate in the new language. This point is made, at least by implication, in the films.

And don't teach vocabulary and structure which the children will not wish to use. Teach them language which they can go straight out and use among themselves—in the playground, on the way home, and in the ordinary situations of their lives.

Many teachers see the point of this, but fail to carry it out. That is because they have not really thought about the sort of language children want to use. No child is likely to say to another very often 'The horse is a four-legged animal'; but he is very likely to want to say, for example, 'Give me that—it's mine,' or 'John's gone home, hasn't he?'

Don't wait too long before teaching them to say things they really want to say.

Later, especially if you can give them a lively interest in the contents of books, they will learn the more formal kind of language.

And later on?

Though the need for spoken drills may diminish, or change in its nature, as the pupils learn more and more, it will never disappear.

Learn the technique of (a) presenting new and complex patterns of speech, and (b) revising patterns which for some reason your pupils are still getting wrong, by means of quick, effective classroom drills.

Though the pupils grow into young men and women, and start to take any number of high-grade examinations, never forget the importance of drama and reality; never forget that English is a means of communication. And *never* relax your efforts to liven up their speech.

DAVID HICKS

FILM 1

Teaching a New Pattern

SUMMARY

The expressions 'pattern' and 'sentence pattern' are used fairly often in these films. As you may guess, they refer to the way the words are normally put together in an English sentence. We will explain this further when we comment on that part of the film which deals with it. (See (g) below).

(a) Miss Maylam demonstrates. This is part of a revision lesson, after a year of fairly intensive teaching. The pupils show that they can use several tenses correctly, to speak of a sequence of actions. The actions are really carried out in front of the class, by one of the pupils, in a pre-arranged sequence. First comes 'I am going to (do something)'. Next, 'Now I am (doing something)'. Next, when the action is completed, 'I have just (done something)'. Finally, a little later, 'I (did something) a moment ago'. This is just one of many exercises that might be carried out to test and confirm the pupils' knowledge of the way English tenses are used.

Note that it is done in chorus, and is to some extent mechanical, except for the pupil who leads the chorus. Miss Maylam explains that the pupils do most of the talking and the teacher (at this stage of revision) need say very little.

(b) Mr. Hughes's reading lesson. We see Mr. Hughes giving a 'reading round the class' lesson using a text which contains unfamiliar language. This method of teaching the language is completely discredited. It is doubtful whether it has much value even at a later stage, unless extremely well prepared. Certainly it must not be used in the early stages.

Naturally this will apply even more strongly to younger learners. And to be fair we must point out that after a sufficient period of good thorough *oral* training children must be taught and encouraged to read silently—indeed this is one of the most important lessons we have to teach them.

The matter of how we should teach children to read must be left to another series of films. Meanwhile let us say again: we *must not* give lessons that try to teach the language itself through making children read new material containing words and patterns they have not met before.

You may notice that our actor pupils seem very jolly during this lesson. This is because they are *in fact* quite sophisticated young people with a good sense of the ridiculous. A real lesson conducted on these lines would usually be rather dismal.

(c) The Tutor, Mr. Quinault, suggests that learners should first meet words and expressions in connection with real life, before they can use them in the abstract, in books.

(d) Notice particularly that there is no suggestion pupils should not be taught to read; indeed this may be most important. But 'silent reading comes a little way behind'. That means that *in these early stages* the pupil learns to use particular words, idioms or sentence patterns before he learns to read them, even if that only means half an hour before!

(e) Mr. Hughes asks the Tutor to explain how to organise a lesson on these lines—i.e. teaching the pupils first to *speak* and *understand* accurately.

(f) The Tutor says 'You are probably working with a textbook'. The point here is that it is much better if the teacher can get the pupils well on in the spoken language, and able to use a fair number of simple words and sentence patterns, before they start using the textbook.

The length of time will vary. Ideally, children of about seven ought to have a year of the spoken language before they start using a textbook in the ordinary sense of the word. Learners at the beginning of a secondary school might greatly reduce this

time-lapse—so long as the teacher has made a good job of starting them off orally.

(g) In the film, however, it is assumed that the teacher is obliged to use a textbook. The Tutor says that the teacher must be sure of what new kinds of sentence pattern come in the next lesson of the book. He explains that a sentence pattern is a typical arrangement of words in a sentence. For example:

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Verb 'have'</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Adverbial</i>
He	has	a pen	in his pocket.
She	has	a book	in her basket.
Kay	has	a shilling	in her hand.

In theory this same pattern could be extended. For example:

My friend had no money in the bank.

Those people haven't any reason for their opposition.

But it would be absurd, when the sentence pattern is taught first, to use such difficult, abstract contents. Use simple subjects, well-known nouns as objects, and places that the learner can see.

To make clearer what a sentence pattern is, let us look at one or two other examples. Here is one with an imperative verb, a pronoun, a determiner and a noun:

<i>Imperative</i>	<i>Pronoun</i>	<i>Determiner</i>	<i>Noun</i>
Give	me	a	shilling.
Show	him	that	newspaper.
Tell	us	your	story.
Hand	her	another	biscuit.

Obviously hundreds of other sentences could be made using exactly the same pattern.

Here is a different one, with a determiner, a noun, a verb and an adverb;

<i>Determiner</i>	<i>Noun</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Adverb</i>
That	man	came	yesterday.
The	teacher	came	in.
Seven	children	are standing	there.

We shall have to come back to this matter of sentence patterns in connection with Film 4.

(h) The Tutor, having explained what the sentence pattern is that will be taught in his typical lesson, states that the lesson must begin with revision. Revision, that is, by the pupils themselves, of sentence patterns which they already know, which will help them to understand the new pattern.

(i) Next, using vocabulary which the children already know, the teacher will present the new pattern. This he will do by repeating it many times, with reference to a 'situation' which the children can all see. For example, there will be a boy in front of the class with a fountain-pen sticking out of his pocket (or a ball-point pen!) and the teacher will say clearly and repeatedly, indicating this fact, 'He has a pen in his pocket'; he will do the same with three or four similar situations to make clear exactly how 'have' is used here. But will NOT explain this grammatically, or translate it.

(j) Miss Maylam demonstrates a lesson of this kind. The point is made that she starts by letting the children listen to 'I have a brush in my hand', but from there she moves on to 'he has a brush in his hand'. And it is this second type of sentence which the pupils first learn to imitate. The reason is quite simple—in these early stages there may be a little confusion between 'I' and 'you'; but if the teacher can point at a third person there is no such difficulty.

(k) The lesson proceeds, the pupils repeating sentences after the teacher, always using the same pattern but changing the 'content-words'. For example, 'He has a comb in his pocket.' 'Lydia has an orange in her hand'.

(l) The next step is that the teacher stops giving the model, but merely gives a 'cue-word'—for example, if May-ying is standing before the class holding several things, the teacher may say 'Bag', and the class will chorus 'May-ying has a bag in her hand.' The teacher then says 'Basket' and the class will

chorus 'May-ying has a basket in her hand.' Or the teacher may vary other parts of the sentences by calling out cue-words like 'she', or 'on her desk'.

(*m*) The Tutor summarises:

Teach English directly—no translation.

Make sure before the lesson what new sentence patterns, or other new items, are to be taught.

Decide what revision would be most helpful.

Think of simple examples using the new pattern.

Decide what visual aids you need—what 'things'.

Then, when the lesson begins:

1. **Revise those patterns which will help the children understand the new one.**
2. **Let them hear you repeat the new pattern, in a real situation.**
3. **Let them say the pattern, with a few examples, repeating it after you.**

And after that the children can say the sentence without the teacher.

SOME FURTHER POINTS NEEDING COMMENT

1. Emphasis on reality. The Tutor says, 'Everything the teachers say at this early stage should refer to something which the children can see or hear.' Let us make this still more plain.

If the teacher says 'There is a piece of coal on the floor', there must really be some coal there. Unless he wants the class to respond, 'No there isn't!'—which is quite a legitimate lesson to teach them. If a pupil uses the word 'you', he must use it about the person he is talking to. If the teacher uses the word 'he' about one pupil, he should be looking not at that one but at somebody else.

And so on. The point must be emphasized but need not be laboured. Later on, the films will say—When you run out of interesting reality in the classroom, first bring things in from outside, and next resort to pictures. Don't make demands on

the learner's imagination too soon—that is the job of the mother-tongue.

2. Over-learning. The suggestion is that the teacher should go on with suitably varied drills on one small fragment of the language until 'over-learning' begins. This means that probably the brightest pupils know the pattern pretty well—need no more practice for the time being, and may show signs of boredom—showing off, and so on. Meanwhile the slower pupils have had time to catch up. As far as possible, see that everybody is confident in using the new pattern, with a few items of the vocabulary they already know, before going on to the next pattern.

BUT, as we shall see, there is a limit to the length of time any drill ought to be continued.

3. Revision. This is all-important. If a pattern, or a few new items of vocabulary, are quite well taught today, and revised tomorrow and two days after that, they may be remembered in a week or a fortnight. But if they are taught today and then dropped to let something else be taught, and again something else, and so on—nothing will be properly remembered.

Moral: just as when you buy a new car or bicycle it has to be maintained or else it will break down, so when you teach a new element of language it has to be revised or else it will trickle out of the learner's mind. BUILD SYSTEMATIC REVISION INTO YOUR SCHEDULE.

And of course, revision of a previously-learnt item is often a necessary prelude to the teaching of a new one.

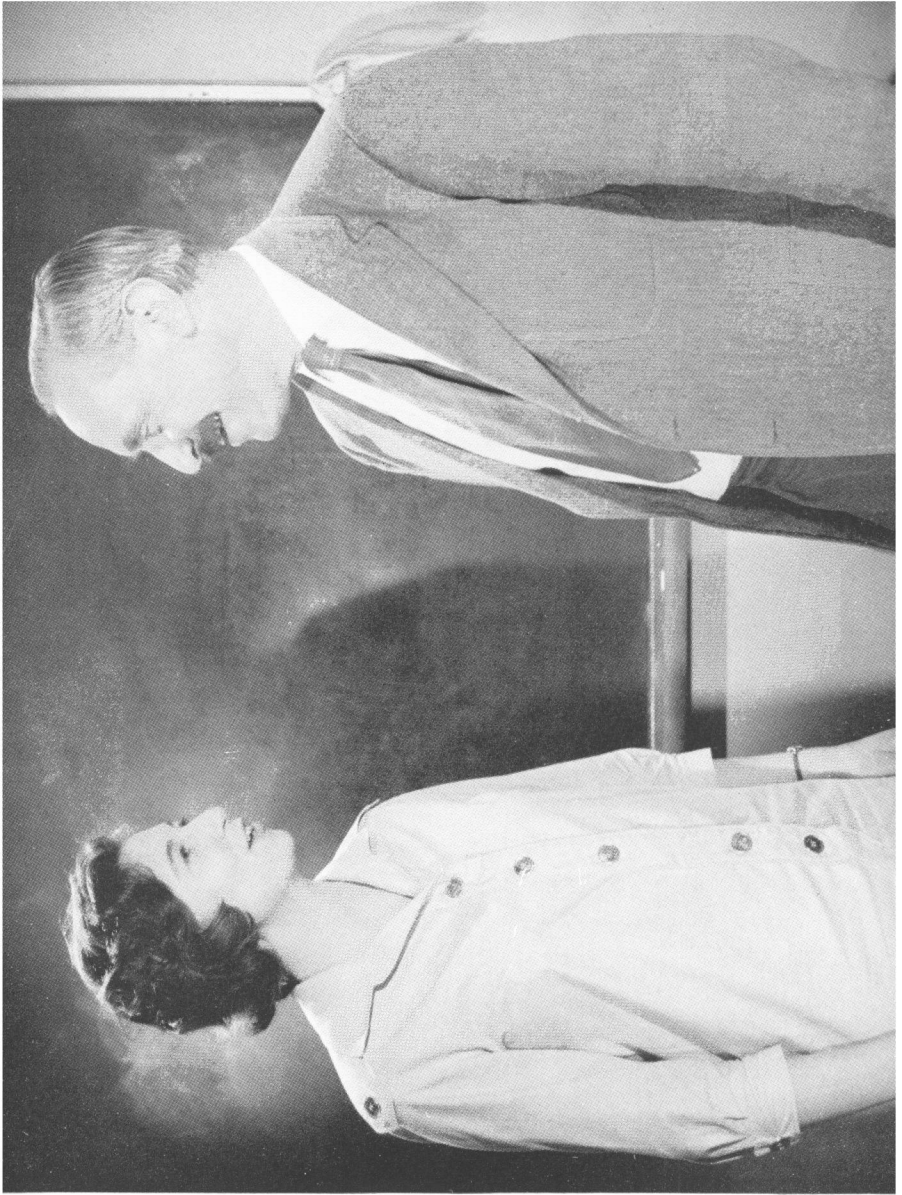
SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

(It is assumed that teacher-trainers will wish to follow up the showing of each film with some work by the trainee-teachers. This may take three forms: (1) discussion led by the trainer; (2) discussion in 'syndicates' reporting back to the trainer; (3) individual exercises.)

1. Discuss the value of 'reading round the class'.

David Hicks
makes a point with
René Quinault,
Desmond O'Connor,
and the five
student teachers:
Elizabeth Mackenzie,
Stuart Hughes,
Antonia Cowan,
Yvette Maylam,
and
Jonathan Trench





Elizabeth Mackenzie
discusses a
point with
Lionel Billows

2. What part has translation in the teaching of a new language to children?

3. What preparations—both mental and physical—does the film recommend you to make before teaching a new lesson?

4. Describe the first three steps in teaching a new sentence pattern.

5. Do you think the same methods could be used, more or less, to teach other things besides sentence pattern? For example, a group of words about the body, or about times of day, or about people's jobs. Think of some examples and how you would teach them—by the methods outlined in the film.

6. Look in the early pages of a textbook you know which is used for beginners. See what sentence patterns are taught. Are they separated for distinct teaching? If not, what can you do?

FILM 2

Oral Practice

SUMMARY

Having seen in Film 1 how to introduce a new language-item, we see in this film how to give practice on it.

(a) First we see Mr. Hughes trying an oral method in which he asks questions of the type 'what is this?' and lets the pupils raise their hands. The results are very poor partly because the pupils have not been prepared for what they are to do, and partly because the 'hands up' method wastes time.

(b) Next the Tutor explains why his lesson was a failure, and recommends him to use chorus-drills in these early stages.

(c) The Tutor demonstrates how to keep the chorus speaking in time.

(d) Miss Maylam demonstrates how to give practice on a new sentence pattern:

(Name) has a (thing) on (his/her) desk

This pattern has been established on the lines of Film 1. Now it is being practised. The children speak in chorus. They repeat the sentence pattern but change some of the words in it, responding to a *cue-word* given by the teacher. None of this could be done unless the pupils had been thoroughly taught to imitate the sentence pattern on the lines of Film 1.

Teacher

Basket

Bowl

Chorus

Anna has a basket on her desk

Anna has a bowl on her desk.

And so on.

Anna must *really* have all these things on her desk.

The lesson continues by showing that other words can be substituted for 'Anna', for 'on' and for 'her desk'.

(e) Mr. Hughes tries to teach the negative, by asking questions which the pupils *do not know how to answer*.

The folly of the precept 'Answer in complete sentences' is demonstrated.

(f) Miss Maylam demonstrates that the negative forms are presented in the same way as the affirmative were.

(g) The Tutor points out that the children know what to say, and also that chorus work gives them all a chance of speaking many times.

(h) The point is made very firmly that we should not use questions in order to train pupils to make affirmative or negative statements—because if we ask a question we should expect an answer; and an answer is *different in form* from a plain statement. This is demonstrated by May-ying and Kenneth.

(i) Conclusions:

Teach the positive form of a sentence first.

Then teach negative statements.

Then teach the pupils to ask questions and give appropriate short answers.

For example:

1. He wants that pencil, you want a drink, *etc.*

2. He doesn't want that pencil, you don't want a drink, *etc.*

3. Do you want this pencil?—Yes I do.

Does Basil want a drink?—No, he doesn't

Don't teach too much that is new in any lesson. Let the pupils HEAR—IMITATE—PRACTISE.

SOME FURTHER POINTS NEEDING COMMENT

1. Again, the scene in which the children are being badly taught is the one where our young actors seem the most jolly. Don't be deceived: in real life this sort of teaching would not have that sort of success

2. The reasons given for chorus-drilling in the early stages can be summed up as follows; and they are extremely important:

- (a) It is the only way of making sure that all the children get enough practice.
- (b) It gives support to the timorous.
- (c) It enables the teacher to present a new piece of the language in a 'controlled' way, and to know exactly what parts of the language the pupils are learning and have learnt.

3. To give successful chorus-drills, the teacher must have worked out beforehand what they are to be about (and this we come to in Film 4.)

4. A good technique for beating time is necessary to keep the class choruses from becoming 'ragged'.

5. The point is made towards the end of the film that when we ask a question the answer is often different in form from a plain statement. You may like to see another example of this:

- (a) A statement: 'My father is going with me to the market.'
- (b) A question and answer: 'Is your father going with you to the market?'—'Yes, he is.'
- (c) A question and answer: 'Is your father going with you to the market?'—'I don't know.'
- (d) A question and answer: 'Is your father going with you to the market?'—'I don't suppose so.'
- (e) A question and answer: 'Who is going with you to the market?'—'My father is.'
- (f) A question and answer: 'Where is your father going with you?'—'To the market.'

If you look at all these little utterances, you will find that in no case is the answer a full statement—in no case could it stand alone. What does 'Yes, he is' mean? Nothing—unless a question has just been asked. And this applies to all the answers. The only sentence which contains the full meaning is (a), where no question was asked and no answer given; just a plain statement was made.

Thus if the teacher insists on asking questions all the time, only *answers* will be learnt by the pupils—and those are not complete sentences! Hence the pupils will not be in a position to *start* a conversation; nor will they be in a position to write composition later on.

6. Towards the end of the film the suggestion is made that drills on statements should begin with the third person, and go on to the first and second. The reason was explained in Comment (j) on Film 1. It is simply because in the very early stages of learning it is easier to point at a man and say 'he' and a woman and say 'she', than it is to establish the difference between 'I' and 'you', 'my' and 'your'. Try it and see!

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

1. After you have let the class hear a new sentence pattern, and got them to imitate you in saying it, what are the next steps?

2. Suggest some things which are easy to hand for a teacher and which might be used to provide the subject-matter of drills on the early, simple sentence patterns. Not only desk and book!

3. Suggest some actions which might be taught early on, because they are actions which everybody can do and see. When you have chosen the verbs, look at them, and see if they have any peculiarities. Are they strong or weak verbs, for example?

4. Take any ten sentences from a textbook you know well, and work out how you would use gestures in order to teach the children to speak the sentences in strict unison, on the lines suggested by the Tutor.

5. Without using a word of the learners' own language, how would you get them to understand the verb 'want' as in 'I want a match', 'Do you want a drink?' or 'She doesn't want that book.'

FILM 3

Question and Answer

SUMMARY

In the first two films it was recommended that the teacher of beginners should first teach them to make statements, both positive and negative. This should be done by means of examples which the pupils would imitate, and by means of small 'situations' to which they would apply the newly-learnt sentences.

(a) The Tutor says that generally, when we are teaching a new 'sentence-pattern' (see page 3) we should teach first the positive form, e.g.

John likes reading;

next the negative form:

Mary doesn't like reading;

and finally questions and short answers:

Does John like reading? — Yes, he does.

Does Mary like reading? — No, she doesn't.

This matter of teaching questions is to be the main subject of the film.

(b) We begin by seeing Mr. Hughes carrying on drills in which the class are to make negative statements. We hear his 'cue-words' hammer, motor car, sewing machine, buffalo; and each time the class choruses 'That isn't a hammer, it's a screwdriver', and so on.

(c) The Tutor points out that this sort of drill should not continue for more than about twenty minutes; and we may add that with younger children the time must be even shorter.

(d) Mr. Hughes asks how best to fill a forty-five minute lesson; the Tutor suggests that perhaps it is better to take two such lessons as the unit. Then the contents would be rather like this:

1. Some form of pronunciation practice.
2. Revise some earlier lessons that lead on to the new work.
3. Teach the new 'item' of language, using the techniques of (i) classroom situation, (ii) clear models spoken by the teacher, (iii) imitation of these models by the class, (iv) practice of the models by the class in response to cue-words.

(End of first lesson).

4. Go over 3 again, in a slightly different way.
5. Try to use the newly learnt sentence pattern in general conversation, along with other kinds of sentences they already know.
6. Learners write down some examples of sentences using the newly-learnt pattern, and familiar vocabulary.

Notes on 5 and 6: General conversation is clearly not easy until the question form of any particular pattern is learnt—though not all conversations consist of question and answer. In any case at this early stage the conversation should be about visible reality, probably in the classroom or in pictures, or about familiar events such as going to bed, having a haircut, and the like.

Learners may write down sentences using the patterns they have learnt, and words they already know. DON'T encourage them to write down individual words, in the form of a 'vocabulary list' or anything like that.

(e) Returning to the matter of teaching questions, the Tutor says that it is the *learners* who must be taught to ask the questions. At least at this early stage, a lesson in which the teacher asks questions and children give short answers is not very useful—as we saw on page 9.

As before, the teacher has to establish the pattern by speaking

clear models—both of the questions and of the short answers. For example:

‘What is John doing?’—‘Standing up’.

‘Is John standing up?’—‘Yes, he is’.

‘Is John sitting down?’—‘No, he isn’t’.

(f) We see Miss Maylam revising sentences of the form ‘I am standing up’; then ‘He is standing up’. Then, using gestures, she gets the class to say the third-person sentences. From merely making affirmative statements, she gets the class to make negative ones; and we see her at a later stage doing a drill as follows:

Teacher to William: Stand up (An imperative).

Teacher to class: Sitting down (A cue-word).

Class in chorus: He isn’t sitting down. He is standing up.

That is, the teacher tells the boy to do something; she says something quite different to the class; and the class has to say ‘He isn’ting; he is . . .ing’.

Note: This is just one of hundreds of such ‘conversation drills’ using the whole class.

(g) Anna and Petros perform certain simple actions and Dorcas and Ahmed talk about them. The purpose of this scene is simply to show what sort of questions and answers are to be taught.

Note: It is essential that pupils should learn to say the *short forms* of verbs; for example, *isn’t*. On the other hand it is not essential that this should be done right from the beginning. Different teachers have different views. We suggest: (i) Teach the full form at the very beginning, but on no account give undue emphasis—for example, say ‘He is coming’, but don’t say ‘is’ very loudly. (ii) As the language becomes a little more familiar, and you can speak a little faster, let the shortened forms gradually come into your own speech, e.g. ‘He’s coming’. (iii) Teach the pupils to write down the full forms first, later

the ones with the apostrophes. (iv) Remember that some constructions *must* have short forms; for example, 'You like sugar, *don't* you?'

(h) The Tutor shows how to arrange a class for the first stages of 'question and answer' practice. The idea is that all the pupils on one side should ask the questions and all the pupils on the other side should give the answers. To do this properly they should turn round and face each other across the room. They are no longer talking to the teacher but to each other—this is the first step towards conversation.

The diagram shows that, for this 'whole-class' drilling, all the pupils on one side of the room must face all those on the other side. It is not enough for pupils to face each other across their desks. (A different sort of drill can be used later in which one or a few on one side of a desk talk to those on the other side of the desk.)

(i) Notice that when she begins her practice-drill Miss Maylam says "Today we are going to practise 'What is he doing?'—'Sitting down'." There is no need for her to *make* this announcement, and she would *not* do so if this were the first introduction of this pattern.

(j) The practice is based on the sentences: 'He/She is standing up/sitting down/bending down/kneeling down'.

For this drill we stick to these simple intransitive verbs with adverbial particles following. An exactly similar drill could be arranged with, e.g. intransitive verbs followed by adverbial phrases, such as 'He is standing in the corner'; transitive verbs followed by objects, such as 'She is holding her pencil up'; and so on. There is no real objection to changing the order of presenting these sentence patterns—so long as to some extent they lead on to each other; you know exactly what the children are practising; and there is enough practice and revision of each pattern. (For a further definition of the expression 'sentence pattern', refer to the beginning of Film 4).

(k) The Tutor points out that the teacher keeps the voices

together by 'beating time'. This point will be expanded in Film 10.

He suggests that drills of the kind we have seen ought to last about twenty minutes, but with younger children ten minutes may be enough, for they soon get tired of a continuous activity.

(l) The Tutor suggests that Miss Maylam should demonstrate how even a complicated sentence pattern may be taught by similar drills. Once more, the conversation does not consist of question and answer but of an imperative, a refusal and a statement;

'George, go to the door'—'No, I don't want to.'

'He doesn't want to go to the door'.

In this example, as several times before, we are shown the practice part; we must assume that Miss Maylam has 'established' the patterns by saying them herself and getting the class to repeat after her.

(m) At the very end of the drill, the class says 'She doesn't want to give us some money'. Some teachers will object to this, that it should be 'any money'. But the class has not yet learnt the distinction between 'some' affirmative, and 'any' negative and interrogative; they are using 'some' for all purposes in the meantime. Do you think this is valid?

(n) The Tutor remarks that there is no end to the possibilities of this method of practising. For example, it would be possible to get a class divided into three sections to practise as follows.

A. Ask those boys where they have left their bicycles.

B. Where have you left your bicycles?

C. We have left them out in the playground.

B. They say they have left them out in the playground.

A. Thanks.

B. Ask the boys where they have put their bags.

C. Where have you put your bags?

A. We have put them under our desks.

C. They say they have put them under their desks.

B. Thanks.

It is most necessary to remember that these are only examples; that there are a large number of sentence patterns in English needing practice, and that they can be tackled in an infinite number of combinations with ordinary nouns and verbs at your choice.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the suggestion made several times in the films that we should not ask the class questions early on but first teach them by example to make statements, then to make negative statements, then to ask each other questions and give answers. What happens if the teacher spends all the 'oral lessons' in asking the class questions?

2. Discuss in relation to any school time-table that you know, the suggestion that a 'unit' of work might consist of: (a) pronunciation practice, (b) revision of earlier work, (c) teaching a new sentence pattern or other important item, (d) going over this same work in a slightly different way but still orally, (e) conversation practice within the knowledge of the pupils, (f) writing down examples of the new work.

3. 'Is John standing up?'—'Yes, he is' This is known as a *short answer*. It contains a pronoun followed by one of the 'special verbs'. Think of other examples, using different 'special verbs' in the affirmative and in the negative. Here are some of them: **am, is, are, was, were, have, has, had, do, does, did, can, will, should, might, must, need(n't)**.

4. Discuss and practise the gestures you think best to show a class (a) that they are to listen while you present a new example, (b) that they are to repeat after you, (c) that half are to start a conversation and the other half to respond.

FILM 4

Sentence Patterns

SUMMARY

(a) The Tutor explains once more what we mean by a 'sentence pattern' in these films. It is a typical arrangement of words in a sentence. Examples are given:

Noun	'is'	noun
A horse	is	an animal
'There is a'	noun	phrase
There is a There is a	pencil glass	in my hand on that table

(b) He explains that a 'substitution table' is based on a sentence pattern. It shows the teacher the possibility of using various nouns, verbs, etc., in the particular sentence pattern.

(c) Mr. Hughes attempts to use a substitution table based on the second pattern given just above. He has it displayed on the blackboard:

There is a	penny car horse radio house man	in on at	my pocket the road that shelf my field the corner the door
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In the lesson which follows, it appears that a number of non-sense sentences can be made using this table. A table like this can be useful but only to the teacher. If you *do* put a substitution table on the blackboard, make sure that every possible combination of words makes sense.

Note: Purists would say it is not a true substitution table unless every possible combination does make sense. Here are one or two examples of such tables:

He		a	penny		desk
That boy	has	his	rubber	in his	pocket
John		my	whistle		hand

A good	girl	helps	other people
nice	young	will help	to do their
kind	woman	doesn't mind	work, etc.
helpful		helping	

Have you	read	that	newspaper	
	finished	my	play	yet?
	taken	your	book	
	thrown away	John's	comic	

But for everyday teaching, it is not necessary to be quite so careful as this. So long as the table stays in *your* hands not the pupils', a more loosely constructed one may sometimes be more helpful.

In any case, in the early stages of teaching, try to make substitution tables in which all the sentences are true or can be made true—for example, if you are using the one above, 'He has a penny in his desk', don't let any of the sentences be said

unless there really is somebody there who has a penny in his desk, a rubber in his hand, etc.

Later on, when the pupils know more of the language and are able to use it more freely, this rule about 'reality' can be relaxed.

(d) Using a substitution table which he keeps for his own use and does not show to the class, Mr. Hughes demonstrates the beginning of a lesson in which the pupils say in chorus 'There is a basket on that table', and so on. Mr. Hughes first lets them repeat whole sentences after him; later he gives a cue-word and they say the sentence themselves. But he 'dries up' through not having prepared enough material.

(e) Conversation which leads out of this drill should not at first be in the form of question and answer. It should at first aim to use the new structure in a situation where it would be necessary in its complete, affirmative form. For example:

Group 1: I want a handkerchief.

Group 2: There is a handkerchief in that drawer.

Note: All this may seem rather rigidly opposed to 'conversation'. It is not really so; it simply aims to avoid the pupils' running before they can walk.

(f) Miss Maylam shows part of a lesson in which this sort of exchange is carried on. When she says 'hammer', half the class say, 'I want a hammer', and the other half respond, 'There is a hammer on that table'. It is important that the thing should be clearly visible to the class.

(g) In giving this lesson, Miss Maylam was basing the items on a substitution table she had made for her own use: 'There is a hammer/glass/sheet/rubber/shilling/etc. in/on that shelf/table/cupboard/purse/basket/etc.'

(h) The next step after teaching the affirmative sentence is to teach the negative. Mr. Hughes begins to say that he would explain about the negative to his class; but the Tutor interrupts

to say, don't give the pupils an explanation, just give them practice.

(i) Mr. Hughes uses the method of repetition to teach negative sentences such as 'There isn't a lamp on the table,' He beats time for the pupils to help them keep together in their chorus.

(j) A sort of conversation is demonstrated which does not consist of question and answer but of a statement followed by a contradiction! 'There is a basket on that table'—'No, there isn't!' 'There isn't a handkerchief in your sleeve'—'Yes, there is!' Once the drill is established, the pupils can carry on by themselves two of them acting as leaders who point at the things and the places to be mentioned by the class.

(k) The Tutor explains that the question form of this pattern is made by inversion of 'there' and 'is' to make 'is there?' We see a substitution table for this form:

Is there a	basket pencil sharp knife table cloth bottle	on under in	that table? that shelf? the sink? the basket? the pocket?
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Note: The next step should be to teach the short answers to such questions. For example, 'Yes, there is.' 'No, there isn't.' Only if this is done can these questions be used along with the appropriate short answers to make genuine conversations. This essential point is not made in the film, which goes straight on to speak of further complexities of the 'There is a' pattern.

(l) Other forms of this same pattern, which may be taught later: 'Isn't there a basket on that table?' 'There's a basket on that table, isn't there?' 'There isn't a basket on that table, is there?' 'There was a basket on that table.' 'There will be a car at the station.' 'There are some girls at the door.' 'Are there any flowers in the garden?' 'There weren't any books on my desk.' And so on.

(*m*) Mr. Hughes shows a little part of a lesson in which he gives a cue-word, e.g. 'chalk', then Section A asks, 'Is there any chalk on the table?' and Section B answers (truthfully), 'There is some ink, but there isn't any chalk.' Such a drill of course needs a situation to be set up before the class, perhaps more clearly than we see it in the film.

(*n*) The Tutor advises teachers to look ahead in their textbooks and note any sentence pattern which will be new to their class: it should then be practised orally before it is met in the book. The same may apply to other new elements of language, such as important vocabulary.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

1. You are invited to invent substitution tables which would help you, as a teacher, to give practice on the following patterns:

(*a*) Subject + verb + indirect object + direct object.

e.g. 'I gave him the money.'

(*b*) 'Who' + 'will', 'can' or 'must' + verb + object + adverb.

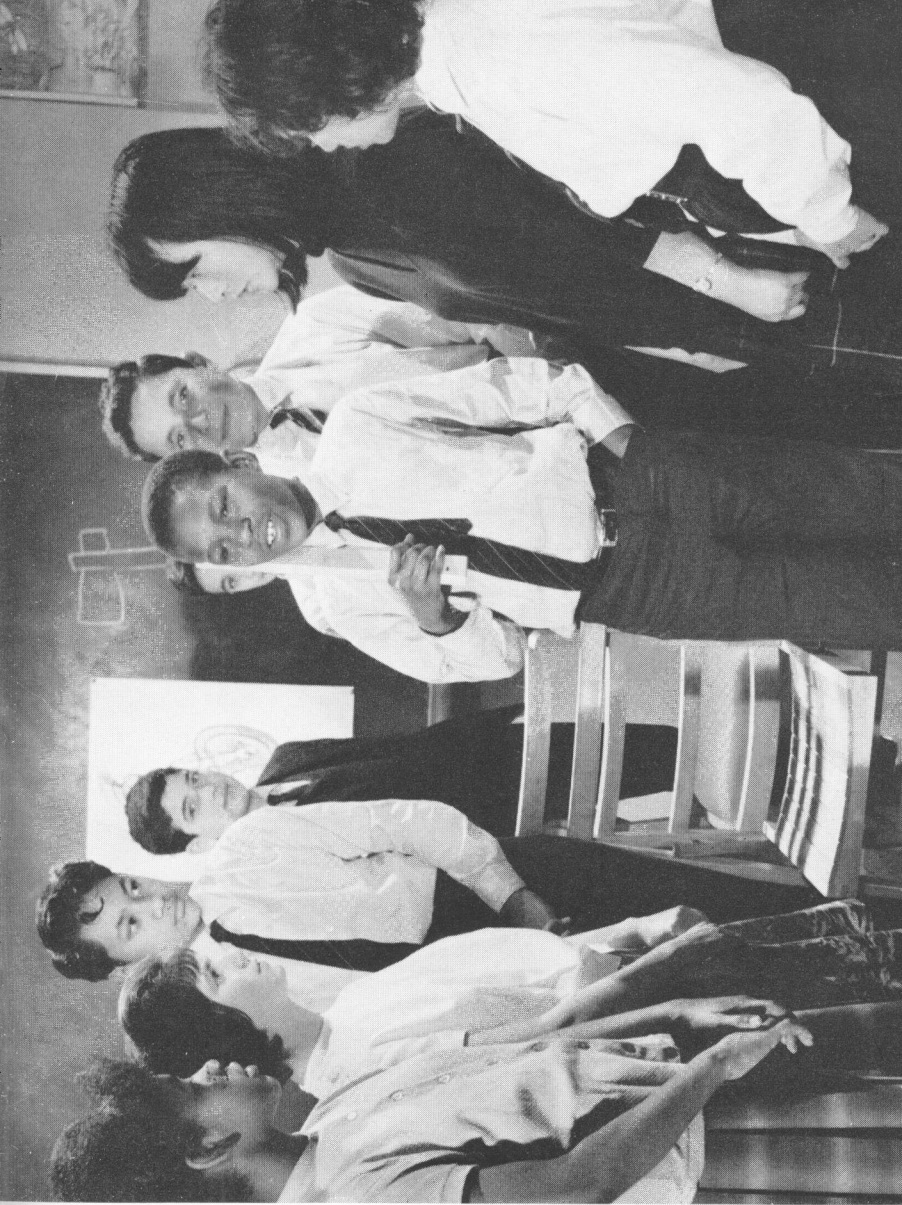
e.g. 'Who can drive that cow away?'

(*c*) 'Where have' + pronoun + 'put', 'left' or 'taken' + object.

e.g. 'Where have they left their coats?'

2. There has been some references to teaching questions of the form 'Is there a match in the box?', with the answers, 'Yes, there is', or 'No, there isn't'. What would you do about the other sort of question, that is, 'What is there in that box?' 'How many people are there in the room?' and so on—questions to which the answer is not just yes or no.

3. Notice that in the film a sort of conversational exchange is taught in which somebody makes a statement and somebody else contradicts it: 'There is a basket on that table.'—'No, there isn't!' Find similar exchanges, using other verbs and other sentence patterns, such as 'He has gone', and several others.



Pupils acting
a scene from
the story of
'How Horatius
Kept the Bridge'



Desmond O'Connor
demonstrates to
Jonathan Trench
the stress of
an English word

FILM 5

Practice with Picture Sets

SUMMARY

(a) Mr. Hughes is anxious to get away from classroom objects. The Tutor points out that, when we begin to teach the language, it is best if the learner can connect the new sentence patterns with actual visible things—so that he doesn't have to worry about the meanings of words but can concentrate on learning how to string them together.

(b) Mr. Hughes suggests that later on we can use books to widen the learners' vocabulary; but it is pointed out that vocabulary learnt in this way tends to be rather 'passive'. It doesn't matter if pupils learn out-of-the-way words like 'kangaroo' in a passive manner. But there are other words, such as 'next', 'sometimes' or 'seventeenth', which are of such wide use that they must be learnt actively.

Note: The words of the second type mentioned are mostly what grammarians call 'structural words'; but a good many 'content words' are also of sufficient frequency and importance to need the same sort of active learning.

(c) To teach the meanings of many verbs and some adverbs, the teacher ought to be prepared to enact them. The pupils too may be encouraged to enact the meanings of sentences so that they are really learnt. In the film we see demonstrations of enacting 'He hesitated to take the bag', 'hopping', and 'He peered over his glasses.'

(d) Mr. Hughes attempts to use a picture. He gives a lesson of the type which is often called 'picture conversation', asking for hands to be raised in answer to his questions about the

picture. Miss Maylam and the Tutor are rather kinder about this lesson than they might be. They might point out the great waste of time entailed by 'putting hands up', and the fact that once more the teacher is asking all the questions and the pupils are merely giving short answers.

(e) The Tutor suggests that pictures can be used for the same sort of choral drills that have earlier been demonstrated in real classroom situations. He presents a set of six pictures, each representing a kind of person doing something. For example, a fisherman is catching fish, while standing in the water; a student is reading, while curled up in his chair.

(f) We see a lesson using the pictures. Miss Maylam has obviously done some drill on this work before. She only has to say one example, 'That fisherman is catching a fish,' then she gestures to the class and they go on to make exactly similar sentences about the other pictures.

(g) When Mr. Hughes takes over, the same set of pictures are used for drilling quite complicated sentences: 'She stood at the stove while she fried the steak.' Once more we have omitted the initial 'presentation' stage of the drill.

(h) The Tutor says that the same method can be used when the pupils are quite advanced. We see the same pictures being used for a practice on the future 'he is going to' form.

Note: Such pictures would certainly not be suitable for the teaching of the 'going to' form when the pupils first meet it. As always, it should be presented in connection with visible reality. But the pictures provide useful practice.

For this drill the class is divided into two sections, one asking the questions and the other replying. It is NOT the teacher who asks the questions. In the next scene, individual pupils ask questions.

(i) Mr. Hughes points out that the class will get tired of using the same set of pictures to practise all sorts of different sentence patterns and tenses. This is quite true; and the Tutor replies that the teacher should have many sets of pictures—

which may be cut from magazines or made by the pupils.

(j) A very simple set of six pictures forms the starting point for quite a complex drill. The teacher points at a brush and says 'stiff'. The class, previously rehearsed in this, knows that it must supply the opposite word to 'stiff'; and says in chorus, 'I don't want a stiff brush, I want a soft one.' And so on with the other things.

Note: Again we must stress that this use of pictures is the practising and perfecting of forms and sentence patterns which have already been learnt by other means.

(k) Summing up, the Tutor says that for purposes of drill we need these simple pictures in series; later on we can use the more general picture, such as that of a ship, for a more free type of conversation.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

1. Discuss and demonstrate how acting might be used to make learners understand the following expressions, met for the first time:

shrug your shoulders; blink; move stiffly;
scold; nod eagerly; agree doubtfully;
a puzzled frown; listen; look bored;
stamp your foot.

2. Miss Maylam thought the picture of a ship in harbour, with sailors and a car standing on the quay, was not suitable for drills. Discuss this. How would you use such a picture?

3. Think of six simple pictures showing places to which one might go; six showing means of transport; six showing people holding things; six showing various workers using various tools; six showing people playing games. Each set should be suitable for drilling various kinds of sentence in the classroom, on the lines demonstrated in the film.

4. Make at least one of the sets mentioned in the previous questions. You can make them yourselves, as individuals or as a group exercise; or you can cut them from illustrated papers—

but make sure they are big and clear enough to be seen from the back of the classroom.

5. Discuss how you would use actions and demonstration to teach a few simple sentences in the Passive Voice, e.g. 'The window has been shut; my plate has been taken away; your shirt has been washed'—sentences of about that degree of difficulty, though the contents might be different and you might use a different tense. After discussion, if you have a class of learners at the right level, try out your method on the class and report back to your group of colleagues.

FILM 6

Conversation with the Blackboard

SUMMARY

With this film we begin a new line of approach; that of a Direct Method teacher who is concerned above all to humanise the lessons. Mr. Lionel Billows, whose ideas are illustrated in the next four films, emphasizes this aspect.

In Films 1-5 we were trying to make the learners quite sure of the most elementary patterns and usages of the language, through practice in which they did most of the talking. In Films 6-9 we are seeking to bring the language into direct contact with the children's own interests and activities. We think that these two lines of approach help each other.

(a) The Tutor states: 'Teachers work in plain, dull rooms, in dull functional buildings. But if they use their imagination, they can take their pupils out into the wide world—into any place and situation they like to devise.'

(b) In teaching any particular bit of the language, we must first make sure we have used every opportunity of practice afforded by the classroom itself. This is briefly illustrated in a lesson by Miss Mackenzie. As the Tutor points out, we can get more immediate attention and comprehension by means of real things in the classroom.

(c) Miss Cowan puts forward the difficulty that one cannot rely on a textbook to present new grammatical structures in appropriate texts. To this the Tutor replies that in this case the new material should be taught in the classroom situation first,

before the textbook passage is attempted.

(d) We see an example of this: the Present Perfect Tense is about to appear in our textbook, so we first lead up to it in the classroom. Mr. Billows begins by reminding the learners of the verb 'have' which is needed as part of the perfect tense. He does this by using a blackboard drawing of a man and discussing whether he *has* hands, etc.

(e) Miss Mackenzie raises the question whether the teacher may introduce unknown expressions in such a lesson. The answer is twofold: (1) one or two new expressions may be introduced if the context makes them easy to understand. (2) in any case this is only a revision lesson so the expressions in question were probably known anyway.

Note: It is important to point out, nevertheless, that many textbooks fail badly in the matter of grading the work. Difficult and isolated sentence patterns appear near the beginning, while the simpler patterns which would naturally lead up to them are often left until later, or omitted entirely. Teachers should be very careful to examine this aspect of textbooks before selecting a book which may be imposed on the pupils for years after. And what we have said about patterns applies also to vocabulary, of course.

(f) Miss Mackenzie asks whether the teacher needs to be able to draw well on the blackboard. The answer given in the film is that no work of art is needed, and that anybody can do it with a bit of practice. Many teachers, however, pride themselves on good blackboard work, and it is fair to add that the pupils' task of learning to speak can be made much easier if the teacher has the good sense to learn to draw very clearly on the board.

It may be relevant to remind the student that if he really can't draw, flannel-graphs or other forms of ready-made pictures to be stuck on the board may provide the answer to his problems. But there is much to be said for building up the picture before the learners' eyes, rather than showing them a complete ready-made picture—even if the latter is more 'pro-

fessional' in execution. Interest and attention will be far greater.

(g) The gradual building up of the drawing on the blackboard gives the teacher a natural opportunity to continue speaking about the situation she is illustrating—adding legs and feet to Tom Brown.

(h) It is suggested that similar drawings can be used to give lessons by 'group work'.

(i) Having reminded the pupils of the way 'have' is used to mean possession, Mr. Billows demonstrates the presentation of the Perfect Tense, in which 'have' plays a part. When he has repeated the tense in enough situations, he can expect the pupils to reply to questions.

(j) Miss Mackenzie carries on the blackboard conversation. She uses several patterns, but as the Tutor points out, does not go beyond what the children have already learnt to say.

(k) By quickly rubbing out and re-drawing, she gives a sufficient illusion that a man is walking towards the house which is drawn on the board.

(l) Finally, the imaginary situation which has been created in the learners' minds by this blackboard drawing can be extended so that they are discussing what they imagine is happening inside the house.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

Discuss how blackboard drawings could be used as a basis of conversation to practise the following:

1. The simple past tense.
2. The 'going to' form of the future.
3. Sentences like 'If he jumps in he will get wet'.
4. Questions about what someone wants to do.
5. Expressions stating the exact whereabouts of things, e.g. 'on the top of', 'about two yards to the left of'.
6. Sequences of actions, e.g. 'He gets up at seven o'clock; he has breakfast at half past seven'.

Note: The discussion of each one of these suggestions should be as full as possible, including thorough treatment of the revision needed, the vocabulary which can be used, the types of drawings that would be helpful, and the ways of presentation by the teacher—as well as the actual kind of practice done by the learners.

FILM 7

Acting a Story

SUMMARY

(a) Pupils can have the pleasure of listening to stories, even those which contain language which they haven't yet learnt, if we dramatise the story.

(b) Miss Mackenzie confesses that she makes her pupils prepare for a story by 'looking the words up' (that is, in a dictionary) before the story is told. This is not advisable. Dictionary work is an advanced exercise and it will kill the interest in the story if used at an early stage.

(c) Miss Mackenzie is invited to watch Lionel Billows preparing a class for a dramatised story. Please pay careful attention to the sentence patterns and vocabulary used. You will notice, for example, that when Mr. Billows asks, 'Will you be a lion, Dorcas?' she replies, 'Yes, I will.' The implication is that the class has already been taught how to give these short answers to questions: 'Can you roar?' 'Yes, I can.' As the story goes on, there will be several explanatory statements by the teacher, which are themselves at the same time made clear by the situation; but the children's part is restricted to answering questions, using patterns which are familiar to them.

(d) The story progresses, and more and more animals are chosen to go into the lion's cave. Note that the language used in the replies given by the class becomes relatively advanced. This cannot happen unless either (1) the language is known already or (2) they have been thoroughly prepared for this particular exercise, either by formal description or, much better, by repetition.

(e) We break off in the middle, when little Kostakis asks to be an elephant. Miss Mackenzie seems puzzled that so many repetitions of the same questions and answers were necessary, but she is assured that this amount of repetition and more may be needed.

Note: It should be pointed out that in this lesson the pupils were practising actively the forms of *answers*—for the most part short answers. And they were hearing the forms of *questions* passively. Later on it would be necessary to give members of the class opportunities to ask the questions.

(f) Miss Cowan and the Tutor discuss the pleasure which children find in repetition—especially if they begin to feel confident that ‘they can do it’.

(g) The question of the degree of preparation necessary is raised. We can perhaps clarify this. Sophisticated lessons such as the one we are seeing here may be prepared in great detail or left somewhat to the spur of the moment, according to the teacher’s self-confidence. As the Tutor says, ‘Just prepare sentences of the kind you want to use and modify them as you go along.’ But don’t forget that earlier, when you are giving the drill lessons which are the necessary pre-requisite of all this ease and freedom in the conversation lessons, you must prepare your plan in great detail and stick to it as exactly as possible. See Films 1–5.

(h) Miss Cowan declares that she will try a dramatisation of *How Horatius Kept the Bridge*, a poem which she learnt at school, but which the children themselves have not yet read. She intends to use it to practise the past perfect tense. Chairs are lined up to represent a bridge over the River Tiber; the city of Rome is being attacked by Lars Porsena and his men on the far side of the river. Horatius and two friends are on the bridge defending it.

(i) After the dramatic part, the teacher gives some practice on the past perfect tense. ‘What had Horatius’ friends done before the bridge fell?’—‘They had run back to the Roman side of the

bridge.' And so on.

Note: Many teachers will consider that it is a mistake to try to teach several things at once, if they are quite different. In this lesson, Miss Cowan was not only trying to make the pupils interested in this story of Horatius, perhaps so that afterwards they would find the poem easier to learn, or perhaps just for the sake of getting them to act and talk. She was also trying to use the material for an exercise of a rather complex tense, which was 'dragged in' after the drama was over. You may think that this spoilt the main purpose of the drama—bringing life into the lesson—while at the same time it was not a sufficiently effective way of teaching the past perfect.

(j) The Tutor discusses the lesson with Miss Cowan. They agree that there ought to have been more preparation—e.g. some blackboard drawing and practice of vocabulary—before the dramatisation was attempted. Perhaps too, more space ought to be used, so that the pupils are not crowded together, and those not taking part can see what is going on.

(k) The Tutor concludes by repeating that full preparation is needed for this sort of dramatisation; on the other hand impromptu acting can also sometimes play a useful part in a lesson.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

1. Take a fairly simple fable, either one which is well-known in your country, or perhaps one of Aesop's fables, and work out a plan for dramatisation by a class of children. Decide exactly how many of them can take part; if there are only a few characters in the actual fable, perhaps some can be invented to let more children join in. How much space will be needed? Which part of the classroom will you use? What properties are necessary? Will any of the expressions have to be simplified? What possibilities are there of repetitive work, as in the story of the Sick Lion?

2. Discuss the difficulties and dangers of 'dictionary work', as mentioned by the Tutor near the beginning of the film. Why

should the learners not prepare for a story by looking words up in a dictionary beforehand?

3. Can you work out a method whereby all the speaking in the Sick Lion drama would be done by the pupils themselves, not answering questions from the teacher?

4. We did not see Miss Cowan actually reading the poem *How Horatius Kept the Bridge* to the class. Should she have done? When? What else ought to have happened, besides the dramatisation of a small part of the poem?

5. Can you think of any way of presenting and practising the Past Perfect tense for the first time, other than the method suggested in the film?

FILM 8

Acting from Pictures

SUMMARY

(a) We have seen some simple dramatisation of incidents—the Sick Lion story, and Horatius keeping the bridge. Indeed, the whole of language teaching should be dramatic; for example the teacher should be prepared to act a little, to illustrate the uses of words taught. This requires that the self-conscious teacher should put his own personality into the background, and think of the lesson.

(b) On the other hand, children are not usually very self-conscious, and the teacher can rely on them to dramatise, for example, a picture.

(c) Mr. Billows reminds us of the drawing on the blackboard in Film 6; he now uses the same drawing to begin a little dramatisation. First, by means of questions, he gets the class to repeat what happened using the past tense, e.g. 'He walked towards the house'. This brings us to the point where the action can no longer be shown on the blackboard; the children have to imagine what happens next, and this is done by asking members of the class to act the parts.

(d) Patrick plays the part of Mr. Smith and Frofro plays Mrs. Smith. Starting with ideas provided by Mr. Billows, they begin to improvise.

(e) Miss Mackenzie mentions the fear that children might get out of hand in this sort of lesson; and suggests three causes: 'I wasn't absolutely certain what I wanted the class to do; I didn't know the class; and I didn't plan the lesson properly.' A class which knows the purpose will behave well.

(f) Several groups may be asked simultaneously to prepare dramatisations.

(g) At this stage, as at earlier stages, the teacher has to give the children plenty of examples of correct sentences to imitate and use in their dramatisations. At first, he may even have to provide them with all the 'lines' they are to speak—but as they gain confidence they will be able to improvise.

(h) We leave the blackboard picture, and look at a picture of a railway station. (*Note:* the picture used is one of the excellent 'General Service English Wall Pictures', by C. E. Eckersley and E. V. Gatenby, published by Longmans, Green and Co.) Besides the formal exercises which can be certainly based on such a picture, we can talk about it as if the people were alive.

(i) Miss Mackenzie begins by asking a few questions about the picture, leading on to asking what the class think the people in the picture are saying. Having started them off like this, she selects pupils to play the parts, and lets them enact the scene. Every now and then Miss Mackenzie intervenes and asks the class 'What will Mrs. Burton say next?' The class decides, and Barbara (playing Mrs. Burton) continues to act accordingly.

(j) The Tutor reminds Miss Mackenzie that before trying an elaborate piece of dramatisation like this, she must make sure the language has been learnt before: this is a way of practising the use of language, not of learning new expression. It may even be necessary to write the parts beforehand (with the co-operation of the class) to be learnt by the actors.

(k) The Tutor concludes by emphasizing the need for involvement of the children; they must feel themselves part of this imaginary world which is being created in their little drama and it even helps if the children take part in the actual drawing of scenes on the board.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the extent to which the teacher ought to be prepared to unbend and enact words and sentences to show their

meaning to the class. Give examples of expressions which might need such dramatisation, and show how it could be done so as to make the meaning quite clear.

2. Using a picture of a bus and a number of people trying to get on it, drawn on the blackboard, invent a small group of people, such as a family, who are in the crowd, and decide what they are saying. Then enact the scene.

3. Take any fairly large picture, which might be used for classroom conversation exercises, and which has some people in it; decide who they are and what their names are to be, what they are doing there, and so on; then plan how you could get a class of twelve-year-olds to make up a conversation for these characters.

4. Remember how much repetition there was in the enactment of the Lion in the Cave; and how children learning a language tend to like this repetition because it gives them a sense of security. Find a picture in which a number of different people or animals are waiting to do more or less the same thing, and invent a repetitive story on the basis of the picture, similar to the Lion in the Cave.

5. Analyse exactly what sentence patterns, verb-tenses, and other language material has been used in your suggested dramas. Have you put in anything which is too difficult? Is there anything you can make simpler without changing the essence of the drama?

FILM 9

Bringing in the Outside World

SUMMARY

(a) We must not begin teaching language which has no connection with reality. The classroom does not contain enough of reality to talk about for very long, so we have to bring things in from outside. The 'kit' which was mentioned in earlier films is needed, and we don't only give exercises based on the nouns—we put the various things to actual use and talk about them in use.

(b) Especially in learning new language patterns, the learners ought to see and handle real things. It is even possible to send pupils outside the classroom to bring things in.

(c) Miss Cowan suggests that this method might be used to teach the use of countable and uncountable nouns.

Countable

a book—books
how many books?
get some stones
how many stones?
ten stones

Uncountable

water
how much water?
get some sand
how much sand?
a handful of sand

(d) We see Mr. Billows sending pupils out of the classroom to fetch various quantities of sand and stones from heaps outside. We see only the beginning of the process: the Tutor says, the exercise can, if you like, be continued until every child has had a chance to bring something in. The sentence patterns are

repeated. The words 'much' and 'many' are associated with the proper situation almost unconsciously, but nonetheless effectively.

(e) Miss Cowan thinks it will take too long to let everybody in a large class repeat the process; she suggests that the time might be halved by letting them work in pairs. She shows part of a lesson but you will notice that it does not really carry out the principles of oral teaching because she is relying on sentences written on the blackboard to prompt the children instead of having made them so familiar with the questions they are to ask that they do so without prompting. Moreover, she said she would arrange for the children 'to work in pairs' but in fact they simply ask each other questions round the room—Lydia asks Ivan, Ivan asks Annette, Annette asks Kostakis, etc. We should reach the point where the pupils can work on their own, without prompting from the teacher—and, for example, all the girls ask all the boys 'What have you got?' and all the boys answer, 'I've got some stones.' There is no reason why these small conversations should not go on all at the same time, so long as voices are kept reasonably low. The usual order is—start with practice in chorus, and then let individuals speak. As the Tutor points out, we are now at the stage of training the children to speak as individuals using their own initiative; but if they can't do this without prompting from the blackboard, we had better go back to choral drills until they can.

(f) Miss Mackenzie suggests that children have to have sentences explained to them before they can be expected to repeat them. But, as the Tutor says, the children 'learn to use a tool by using it'—we give them models of the required pattern of speech and then repeatedly put them in the position of needing to use this pattern. Thus they learn to do it by repetition. For example they don't consciously think of the rule for using 'much' or 'many' each time, but learn to use them in the right place by habit.

(g) If sentences were repeated over and over again exactly,

the pupils would get bored. But at every repetition the individual pupil has to choose the right pattern perhaps from two and the right word perhaps from half a dozen—so he is always alert for his turn to come.

(h) Besides bringing things in from outside the classroom to illustrate and practise a pattern, the same technique can sometimes be used in studying a reading passage. The teacher can bring some of the things mentioned in a text or, better still, he can ask the class to bring them, or make them. It is *not* a time saver to tell the class meanings of words beforehand in the mother tongue. 'Meaningful repetition' is the best way to make the meaning understood—that is, the children must repeat sentences containing the new expression, in talking about a situation which is perfectly clear to them. For example, if they know the word 'bike' but not the word 'wheel', they can be shown a bicycle with only one wheel and repeat sentences like: 'That is a wheel. That is the front wheel of the bike. The bike has only one wheel. That bike hasn't a back wheel.'

(i) Miss Cowan makes the point that so far the children have mainly been repeating sentences in a mechanical way: this ought to lead on to genuine conversation. The Tutor's reply is that if the children have learnt to say to each other, e.g. 'What have you got?'—'I've got some sand', this is a very good start—they are better off than children who are afraid to speak at all. But he goes on to make clear that children must be encouraged to use the language outside the classroom.

This means that the subject-matter of lessons should be easily applicable to their everyday life.

Further, they must be given practice in really talking to each other in the classroom in the hope that they will continue to do so in the new language outside the classroom.

Furthermore, we must encourage them; no child must feel that he can't do it.

(j) Miss Cowan and Miss Mackenzie again raise the matter of large classes—how difficult it is to give children real practice in

large classes. Miss Cowan herself provides the answer: the children should divide into groups engaged on some practical activity, which they discuss among themselves in English. These groups might contain from four to say nine or ten children—preferably not as many as that.

(k) This group of films ends with a renewed plea that language should be taught as a social reality, for real people to communicate about real subjects—with plenty of improvisation and drama.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

1. Suggest things which pupils might be asked to fetch from outside the classroom in order to practise sentences of the form 'How long (thick, wide, thick round) is this . . .?' 'It is two feet (three inches, one yard, etc.) (long, thick, wide, round).'

2. Suggest another effective 'realistic' method of teaching the pupils to use 'much' and 'many' correctly, other than the one suggested in the film.

3. What is the difference between the conversational drills with which language learning starts, and real conversation? What methods can you suggest for encouraging real conversation? How should the drills lead up to this?

4. Do you agree with the view that translating into the mother tongue does not really help the pupil to learn a new expression in English? What other ways are suggested of teaching the meaning of a new word or expression? Give a number of examples, please!

5. What factors, in your experience, encourage pupils to use English (as a foreign or second language) outside the classroom? What factors discourage them?

6. Miss Cowan: 'You can't have general conversation in a big class.' Do you agree—entirely?

FILM 10

Rhythms of English Speech

Mr. J. D. O'Connor takes over from Mr. Quinault the role of Tutor and in the next two films he deals with questions of English speech. He is not concerned with the details of pronunciation but with stress and rhythm and intonation.

SUMMARY

(a) In contrast to some other languages, English is spoken with a system of very strongly pronounced syllables and very weakly pronounced syllables. This gives it a characteristic rhythm. An example:

LISTEN to the SOUND of the TRAINS!

(b) Mr. Trench gives a lesson, beating out the syllables as his class are drilled on a sentence pattern. Each syllable has an equal stress and the voice falls heavily on the very last syllable each time, which sounds quite un-English. An example:

You — are — tou — ching — the — cu — BIRD

He declares that 'we must give them something to say before we can worry about the way they say it'. But Mr. O'Connor explains that this is a completely wrong principle: the learner must learn the rhythm *at the same time* as he learns the pattern.

(c) Mr. Trench agrees that he beat time to keep the class speaking together; Mr. O'Connor explains that the same beating of time could help the class to speak with the proper English rhythm. He demonstrates:

I'm TOUChing a TABLE. I'm HOLding a BASKet

(d) At first Mr. Trench's efforts are not forceful enough. As he learns to put more energy into his punch on the strong syllables, the speech of the class begins to sound more like English.

(e) Mr. O'Connor says that the rhythm should not be explained to the learner but shown him, by some slight over-emphasis. Later, when they come across new words perhaps in reading, there must be a way of showing what the stress should be. For example, in dictionaries. Three ways are suggested:

HOLIdays	poTAtoes
holidays	potatoes
'holidays	po'tatoes

The last, with a stress mark above the line before the stressed syllable, is the most universally accepted among scholars.

(f) In Mr. Trench's next lesson he is teaching two new prepositions, 'at' and 'of'. Accordingly these are stressed in his presentation. And so they get stressed by the class in imitation — an effect which is completely contrary to the normal sound of English.

What is that AT the side OF the board?

The moral (pointed by Mr. O'Connor) is that the teacher must not say the sentence in a way he does not want the class to imitate. If there are new elements to be taught, say everything rather more slowly, but keep the natural stress:

What's THAT . . . in the CORner . . . of the ROOM?

Mr. Trench tries to carry out this instruction, getting the class to imitate his stress by means of gestures

(g) Mr. Trench suggests that the rhythm of an English sentence is often affected by the length of syllables and Mr. O'Connor agrees, taking his example from some classroom practice.

That is Frofro at the back of the room.

Not only are the small 'structural' words, 'at', 'the', 'of', 'the', unaccented—they are also spoken more quickly, as a rule, than the 'content' words 'back' and 'room'.

at the BACK . . . of the ROOM

(h) Mr. O'Connor analyses the sentence 'It was a cold December morning' on the same principles. He finds that the syllables 'cold', 'cem' and 'morn' are stressed. The first three structural words 'It was a' are not stressed and they are spoken very quickly. 'Cold' is marked as a long syllable—it takes a long time to say. The syllable 'De', coming before a stress, is quite short. 'Cem' and 'morn', the stressed syllables, are fairly long, but the unstressed syllables 'ber' and 'ing', which follow the stressed ones, are also fairly long.

We mark stressed syllables by means of underlining. We mark long syllables like this: cōld, and short syllables like this: wās. Then the rhythm of the line can be indicated like this:

ĭt wās ā CŌLD dĕCĒMber MŌRNing.

(i) Mr. O'Connor ends by summing up.

Each language has a rhythm of its own, which must be taught if the learner is to be understood. In English:

1. Some words have stressed and unstressed syllables, e.g. deVELopment.
2. In a sentence some syllables are stressed and others unstressed, e.g. at the BACK of the ROOM.
3. Besides stress, some syllables take longer to say than others do.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

i. Divide the following words into syllables according to pronunciation:

- instead; contention; pronunciation;
valuable; anxiety; although

2. In each of those words, mark the stressed syllable by putting a small tick just before it, like this: po'tatoes. (One of the words will need two ticks as it has two stressed syllables).
3. Mark all the stressed syllables in the following sentences:
He ran as fast as he could to the back of the car.
What is the name of the third man in the second row?
How far does this road go before it comes to an end?
Please don't take that pudding out of the oven before seven.
4. Do a similar exercise with any paragraph from a textbook that you use.
5. Compare English with any other language that you know well, from the point of view of its spoken *rhythm*—the way the syllables are stressed and the way some take longer to say than others.
6. It is strongly urged that if gramophone records or tape recordings of English stress and intonation are available, such as 'Stress, Rhythm and Intonation' by J. D. O'Connor, these should be used as a supplement to the two films, (10 and 11).

FILM 11

Tunes of English Speech

SUMMARY

(a) We are reminded that in the last film the young teacher (Mr. Trench) was shown how to combine the teaching of English rhythm with the teaching of sentence patterns. We see a few moments of Mr. Trench's lesson. The pupils are now speaking with a fairly correct rhythm. But the Tutor suggests that their 'intonation' also needs attention.

Intonation is the way the voice goes up and down in speaking—the 'tune' of the voice.

(b) Mr. Trench gets Kenneth to say 'That's not a basket'—and when he says it with the wrong intonation, going down on the last word, he is merely asked to 'put more life into it'. This does not help him. Instead, as the Tutor points out, it merely embarrasses him. The best time to start this sort of teaching is when the class is speaking in chorus.

The teacher will soon develop an 'ear' to detect which pupils are making mistakes.

(c) But more important than the question of embarrassment, is that the teacher should know exactly what he wants the pupils to do. That is, to use the right intonation. Every language has its characteristic intonation and that of English is not the same as that of any other language. So a clear and correct model is needed from the beginning.

(d) Mr. Trench tries to teach a class the intonation needed for a denial of a statement. 'Look at that basket.'—'That's not a basket!' In this reply the voice begins high, goes right down on the syllable 'bas', and rises sharply again for the syllable

'ket'. He tries to make the class do this with 'That's not a bowl!' but fails—they simply use the ordinary falling intonation. Despite his struggles, the class can't get it right.

(e) Mr. O'Connor encourages Mr. Trench. Most important, Mr. Trench himself was able to hear that the intonation was wrong—without that there could certainly be no proper teaching. And he did right to give them examples of the right intonation. Usually children—especially young ones—can copy intonations pretty exactly; he was just unlucky this time.

(f) The first step is to analyse what the voice actually does. As we have seen, in that particular sort of reply, or 'retort', the voice goes from the lowest possible pitch to quite a high tone at the end. The Tutor points out that this can be noticed and imitated much more easily if you choose a word like 'basket', with more than one syllable, than a word like 'bowl', where the voice has to make its sharp rise in tone *while the syllable is being pronounced*. In such an example, the intonation is quite hard to detect and imitate.

(g) Mr. Trench tries again, using words like 'basket' and 'table'. This time he is more successful. If he hadn't been—if the pupils had continued to make mistakes—the Tutor suggests he should have converted the lesson into a singing lesson: in other words exaggerating the intonation changes until they sounded like actual tunes in music.

(h) Mr. Trench gets the class to extend the sentence of the former drill, to say positively what the thing is. For example, 'That's not a handbag. It's a basket.' The latter sentence has a falling intonation on the last word. At first the class does not get it right; Mr. Trench makes a fairly vigorous gesture from high to low to show them how their voices should go and they get it right.

Note: The success of this technique depends on local musical conventions. In other words, the children have to know that a high-pitched note is thought of as 'high', and a bass note as

'low', before such gestures can have any meaning for them. On the other hand, there are extremely few really tone-deaf children.

(i) In order to be prepared for difficulties of intonation, Mr. Trench decides that he needs a system of marks, or 'notation', to remind him which way the tunes of sentences go. A fairly simple system is suggested, in which a line is used to represent the 'pitch' (that is, height or lowness) of the voice.

That's not a basket. It's a jug

Note: You will see that in this system all the minor inflexions of the voice are left out; the only movements of pitch that are indicated are the really important ones which make a definite difference to the meaning of the sentence.

(j) Having been started on thinking about intonation, Mr. Trench wonders how to teach intonation when two tunes are about equally acceptable. For example, one can ask 'What's that?' with the voice falling on the last word, or rising on it. Mr. O'Connor first gets him to decide in which case the voice rises and in which it falls and then to describe the difference of feeling shown by the two ways of asking the question. In questions which begin with a word like 'what', the more usual intonation is a falling one; and this indicates a business-like question. If the rising tone is used at the end of such a question, it indicates a more friendly interest; it is very frequently used by teachers of small children.

What's your name?

This sounds much more friendly than

What's your name?

(k) So much for the questions beginning with a question-word like 'what'. The other sort of question, such as 'Is there a bottle on the table?' This sort of question certainly tends to go up at the end, from a very low pitch to quite a high one.

Is there a bottle on the tab le?

(l) Mr. O'Connor ends by stressing the importance of intonation—saying that the teacher's speech is the one which the pupils will imitate. These matters are important if people are to understand each other.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

1. Mark the stressed syllables in the following spoken English. Use the system recommended in the film to show the simplest possible intonation. For example:

Are you 'going? Yes I 'am.

Are you go ing? Yes I am

We have arrived in London.

Are you hungry? Yes, I'm very hungry.

Let's go and eat somewhere. Do you know a restaurant?

No, but we can look for something.

Have you got any money?

Yes, plenty.

2. Read those sentences aloud very carefully in accordance with your markings.

3. Say these words in accordance with the markings. Get it perfect!

This one. This one? Not that one.

Who's coming? I am. Are you?

Are you really?

Don't put it there. Where shall I put it?

I don't know. Try the cupboard.

FILM 12

Planning Oral Work

This is the last film of the present series. It takes the form of a general discussion between Mr. Quinault, acting as the Tutor, and Miss Maylam, Miss Cowan and Miss Mackenzie, Mr. Hughes and Mr. Trench, acting as the teachers under training.

The film has two purposes: (1) to review what has been seen and heard in the other eleven films and (2) to add a few suggestions about how the oral work can be organised in existing time-tables.

SUMMARY

(a) The group of teachers review some of the ideas that have been discussed during the earlier films.

1. Pupils should learn to speak before they learn to read and write.
2. They do this more confidently if they speak in chorus first.
3. They must especially practise sentence patterns.
4. As they gain confidence we must encourage them to talk to each other.
5. At the beginning, they must connect what they say with reality.
6. But we must also appeal to, and develop, their imagination.
7. From the start they should pronounce clearly, so as to be understood.

(b) Miss Mackenzie wishes to add that teachers should appeal to the children's sense of humour—and this is generally agreed.

(c) Mr. Hughes demonstrates how he teaches a sentence pattern by first repeating it, in circumstances which the pupils must understand, and then letting them repeat the pattern, and practise it, in talking about something which is really true.

(d) Mr. Trench demonstrates that *at the same time* the teacher must concern himself with matters of pronunciation, stress and intonation.

(e) Miss Cowan raises the question of testing; but on the whole the Tutor prefers to concentrate on positive teaching: if practice goes on by really easy stages, the learners cannot go wrong.

All practice must be successful.

Failure helps nobody.

We learn by our successes.

(f) Miss Cowan points out that a teacher often has to stick to a syllabus which is not helpful in making steady progress through the various stages of the language. The Tutor recommends a compromise: If you look at your syllabus or textbook carefully before the lesson, you can find out what are the new items, and teach them by the oral method before the pupils meet them in the book.

(g) Remedial work can best be done by means of the kind of drills we have been considering.

(h) Miss Maylam thinks that some textbooks contain reading material which is too full of new words, phrases and grammatical structures to be suitable for 'our' sort of teaching. Her colleagues recommend her to look ahead in the book, and to sort out those pieces of new language which she thinks should be clearly taught at this stage, and those pieces which can be left as mere 'passive' reading until a later stage.

(i) An example is briefly considered:

Dick and Jim are both standing by the fence.

They have been lounging there for half an hour.

It is recommended that, as the class has not yet learnt the use of 'both' the teacher should concentrate on teaching them this and let the other new items in the passage wait for another time.

(j) Mr. Trench asks for suggestions for a kind of work scheme, one which could be adapted to any circumstances. The Tutor suggests taking units of about two hours' work—probably three lessons, in a normal secondary school timetable. And the beginning of each lesson would have something to relax the pupils, such as a song.

(We see and hear Mr. Billows leading a song. 'One man went to mow.' It goes on, as you would expect: 'Three men went to mow, went to mow a meadow: three men two men one man and his dog, went to mow a meadow. Four men went to mow...' and so on, for as many as you like!)

Then the pattern of the lessons might be something like this:

1. Exercises on pronunciation, rhythm, intonation.
2. Revision of past work, especially structural words, patterns, or vocabulary likely to be needed in the ensuing lesson.
3. Introduce and practise the new unit of language—whether it is a new pattern, a new tense, some new vocabulary, or anything else they haven't met before.
4. Let the pupils write something in which the new language material is used, and let them read something which contains the new material.
5. Try to encourage conversation practice, using all the language so far learnt, including the new material. (In the early stages of teaching the spoken language, conversation is the final product).

The above five headings would require varying lengths of time, but probably it is best to have a little of each of them in every two-hour period of language learning.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXERCISES AND DISCUSSION

1. Discuss what is implied by the recommendation: 'Pupils should learn to speak before they learn to read and write'.
2. A choral method of teaching in the early stages has been recommended. What are its advantages, and what are its dangers if not carefully used?
3. What are 'sentence patterns'? Why is it especially important to teach these thoroughly? What are the other main aspects of language from the teacher's point of view?
4. 'They must connect what they say with reality'. Suggest some of the many ways.
5. 'We must appeal to, and develop, their imagination'. What methods have been suggested in the films? Can you add more? Why is this important in connection with language teaching?
6. How far can a teacher appeal to the children's sense of humour safely?
7. How can you test whether your teaching has been successful, without letting the pupils think they are forever being tested?
8. If there is an official syllabus for use in the schools where you work or are going to work, examine it, and see if it lends itself to the methods suggested in these films.
9. Look at a chapter or section about halfway through a First Year textbook, and see what 'new language material' comes in. Do the same with a Second Year and a Third Year textbook. Look not only at the formal lessons, but also at the reading material provided in the texts.
10. On the lines of the Tutor's suggested work-scheme for 3×40 -minute lessons, try to make a detailed work-scheme for use in the classes you are most familiar with.

