

• USING THE • WALLCHART



HOME LANGUAGE
INTERNATIONAL

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NOTES ON THE USE OF THE HOME LANGUAGE INTERNATIONAL PICTURE

FOR STUDENTS WHO WISH TO IMPROVE THEIR SPOKEN ENGLISH

(To avoid confusion, the tutor is referred to as “She”, and the student as “He”)

SOME PRELIMINARY NOTES

Tutors will, of course, be concerned with the practicalities of teaching, but it may be of interest first to refer to the background, particularly if EFL is not the field in which a tutor generally works.

It should be understood that the primacy of speech is now generally accepted: historically it came first and children learn it first. Some languages never acquired a written form and some children never learn the written form.

It is generally agreed that languages do not 'evolve' from the primitive to the civilised. All have a similar level of complexity of structure.

English grammar was once seen as related to Latin grammar and analysed accordingly; Now, it is in everyday terms regarded as a distinct, totally English grammar though some linguists (grammarians) see it as a sub-heading of the Universal Grammar that may one day be revealed.

Since the tutor will be concerned with the teaching of language it may be worth reminding ourselves what language consists of:

THE SOUND SYSTEM: Intonation; Rhythm; Stress.

THE GRAMMAR SYSTEM: Changes in word form,
e.g. Tenses and plurality.

SYNTAX: How words combine in sentences, especially word order.
The relationship of sound to spelling (e.g. "Worked" having a "t" sound at the end).

VOCABULARY: Expressions : Collocations
Lexical items as opposed to structural words. E.g.
Pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, etc.

However "ungrammatical" the tutor's approach, she will be concerned with these aspects of language and as she listens to a student's language production will be noting errors of grammar, intonations, word order, choice of vocabulary, etc.

Not the least valuable of the tutor's functions is to identify those areas where correction is needed and provide the appropriate practice to accelerate improvement. Most students want to be corrected when they make mistakes and a tutor should be aware of the categories into which the mistakes fall.

Most of the language practice in one-one teaching will naturally relate to the actual environment of the study room or to the situations chosen or imagined by the tutor bearing in mind the particular needs of the student and his level of competence. However, it is certainly useful to turn to a picture from time to time either for a self-contained practice or as a follow-up to another lesson.

A visual can create the need for the acquisition of new language, elicit already known (but perhaps under-used) language, supply prompts (a context) for role-play, stimulate discussion, encourage the imagination and sense of humour. In any case, most tutors find it a good general principle to change the focus of attention regularly - from book to TV screen to scene outside the window to picture - to help prevent monotony.

Generally, most tutors find that picture use is more suited to work with elementary and intermediate students, since the greater linguistic sophistication of advanced students is less likely to benefit from those types of practice generally elicited from a picture. Such students tend to be dismissive of picture work ("My English is too good for that") unless the tutor is very experienced and thus able cunningly to prompt useful practice involving e.g. the use of idiom, humour, imagination and story-telling.

New tutors are advised to beware of getting into the habit of using a picture simply as a convenient aid to teaching "the names of things": It is only too easy to overload a student with lexical items. It should also be kept in mind that spending much time on words seldom needed is not useful. How often do we need to say "nostril" or "hinge" or even "door-knob"?

Although lexical words seem so prominent in language, it is word order, tense usage, grammatical words, functional language that pose the greater problems for the learner and it is on these that the tutor will be wise to concentrate rather than on the acquisition of new items of vocabulary.

So, apart from the need to focus, at a low level, on essential vocabulary, some of the language activities appropriate to picture use might be:

- Increasing the power of describing objects and scenes
- Talking about actions - in the present, the past, the future
- Expressing preferences, attitudes, surprise, requests
- Comparing things, people, actions

Making guesses, predictions, deductions
Expressing intentions, wishes, appreciation
Asking questions
Taking roles and making up dialogues
Responding to remarks

A picture has visible features, which make up a non-verbal framework for language work, and unseen/unknown aspects for exploration: Who is that man? Where does he come from? Where is he going to? What are his intentions, beliefs, memories? What are your guesses about him? What will he do if.....?

The student will need to begin with....."I think.....suppose.....imagineguess" and know how to switch readily from talking about the past to talking about the future, and the tutor will need to vary her prompts in an imaginative way, while interrupting the flow as little as possible. (One way of doing this is to prompt remarks or a story or a description about one person in the picture and then to say "And what about the woman near the car?" to elicit practice similar but with different details).

So the tutor will:

Identify a need
Select language or structure(s) appropriate
Prepare an approach (not necessarily a long task)
Explain or illustrate with examples what is wanted
Practise the language or structure(s), noting any problems

Later, perhaps:

Evaluate the work done, being self-critical
Transfer the language to another context, if possible, by encouraging its use elsewhere, e.g. in the kitchen
Decide whether further practice is needed.

Language Functions: The communicative purpose of language

It may be useful to remind tutors of some of the many general areas of the functional use of language:

To persuade, recommend, predict, invite
To express degrees of necessity, obligation
To judge, approve, disapprove, agree, disagree, concede
To be polite, ask, tell, introduce, apologise
To suggest, advise, warn, agree, deny, offer, seek information
To attract attention, give or seek permission
To express uncertainty, joy, love, anger, surprise, concern
To greet, be grateful, be sorry
To forbid, discourage, direct

The tutor has to select the function(s) appropriate for the practice and also the language to be practised. So if she wanted to practise the expression of preferences the language chosen for practice might be “That policeman would prefer.....would rather.....would sooner.....would just as soon.....”

The degree of sophistication in the language chosen would, of course, depend on the level of English of the student. Since such language is so obviously useful, lessons based on language functions are generally popular with students.

100 VERBS TO USE WITH PICTURES

A. REGULAR VERBS

Arrange	Serve
Ask	Shade
Book	Shout
Call	Show
Carry	Sign
Clean	Sip
Cross	Smell
Earn	Smoke
Fold (Unfold)	Snore
Glance at	Start
Ignore	Stay
Invite	Stroll
Juggle	Tip
Listen	Travel
Live	Visit
Look	Walk
Look forward to	Waste time
Order	Watch
Play	Work
Pour	Worry
Relax	

B. IRREGULAR VERBS

Awake	Go	Sell
Be	Grow	Shake Hands
Be about to	Have	Shine
Become	Hold	Show
Begin	Know	Shut
Blow	Lay	Sing
Break	Learn	Sit
Bring	Let	Sleep
Buy	Lie	Speak
Catch	Lose	Spend
Choose	Make a complaint	Spread
Come	an appointment	Stand
Cost	enquiries	Sweep
Do	friends	Swim
Drink	a guess	Take
Drive	Mean	Take down
Eat	Meet	Take an order
Feel	Pay	a photo
Fly	Pay attention to	Teach
Forget	Put	Tell
Get = become	Put off	Think
= obtain	Read	Throw
Get on = board	Ride	Understand
Get off = alight	Say	Wear
Give	See	Write

ELEMENTARY

The use of contractions is optional. The sorts of exchanges suggested will generally follow a period of instruction. Typical questions or prompts by the tutor are in quotation marks, followed by typical answers or replies by the student. However, it should be remembered that quite often the tutor might decide on “changing roles” and get the student to prompt while she answers or responds. Such a decision must, of course, be left to the individual judgment.

1. SIMPLE VOCABULARY USE (Pointing to things)

“What’s that?” It’s a bicycle.

“What are those?” They’re knives.

2. CHOOSING THE RIGHT PREPOSITION

“Where is the plate?” It’s on the table.

“Where is the briefcase?” It’s under the table.

“Can you see a carpet?” Yes. It’s in front of the desk.

3. ACTIONS The Time is “Now” Encouraging Longer Answers
(Pointing to people in the picture)

“What is he doing?” He’s reading a newspaper.

“What are they doing?” They’re shaking hands.

“Is she reading?” Yes, she’s reading.

“Is she having breakfast?” No, she is walking near the shop.

“Is that boy waiting for a bus?” No, he isn’t waiting for a bus, he’s looking at the juggler.

4. HABITUAL OR REPEATED ACTIONS (Probably pointing and insisting on the use of an adverb of time e.g. “Sometimes”, “often” etc, where appropriate.)

“Does she often ride a bicycle?” No, she doesn’t.

“What does that man do every morning?” He walks to work.

“And that girl?” She lies in the sun every morning.

“And that man?” He works in the café every day.

“Does he have breakfast here every morning?” No, he doesn’t have breakfast here every morning. He sometimes has it at home with his family.

“What do the waiters do at six each day?” They start work.

“And at midday?” One of them has lunch and the other goes on working till one.

* When prompting the use of tenses, tutors will be guided by the student’s level and amount of confidence as to the degree of complexity in the sentences required.

5. SHORT ANSWERS (Mixing tenses, increasing response speed.
Pointing at people)

“Is he a business man?” Yes, he is.

“Are they working?” Yes, they are.

“Is that boy reading?” No, he isn’t.

“Does he come here often?” Yes, he does.

“Does she sometimes smoke?” No, she doesn’t.

6. CONTRASTING TENSE USE (The tutor encourages the use of selected tenses first by using them herself, then, when the student has the idea, by shorter prompts.)

“That man is driving a taxi, but he doesn’t drive one every day. Tell me about the waiter.” He’s working, but he doesn’t work every day. “And the girl there?” She’s riding a bicycle, but she doesn’t ride one every day.

7. ASKING QUESTIONS

“Ask some questions about people you can see.”

(Give some examples of what you want and hope to get, e.g.

What is she doing?

Is she waiting for a friend?

Does he eat here every evening?

Is he driving or waiting?

Do they meet here every day?

Usually the tutor will answer the questions briefly. Students generally try to avoid the question form at this level, so “questions” such as: “You often come here?” are not allowed.

8. USING SOME COMMON PAST FORMS

(This might be a follow-up to a previous lesson. With knowledge of the verbs the beginner knows, the tutor wants to practise a few common past forms (e.g. “Went”, “came”, “saw”) mixed with some (easier) “.....ing” forms. By both asking and answering the questions herself, as a preliminary, the tutor will make clear what she wants. Even at this level, the student should be encouraged to come out with longer than minimum sentences).

“This was the scene in the town yesterday. Let’s talk about what we saw.

“Did you see the policeman?”

Yes, I did. He was near the car.

“Did you see that man?” Yes, he was sitting at the table.

“Did you see the bus?” Yes, it was going round the corner.

“Did that woman come by bus?” No, I think she came by car.

“What was she doing?” She was talking to the policeman.

“Did her car hit something?” No, she was going too fast.

“Why was she doing that?” She was late for work, perhaps.

“Tell me about that old man?” He was crossing the road.

9. INTENTIONS “.....going to” (Pointing to people)

(Students find the practice more interesting and “realistic” if the prompts are varied).

“What is he going to do?” He’s going to buy something.

“And that girl?” She’s going to visit her aunt.

“Are they going to talk business?” Yes, they are.

“What about that man?” He’s going to order lunch.

“And the woman?” No, she’s not going to eat here.

10. MINI - STORIES (By way of introduction, the tutor might say, for example: “Tell me about that man. He is a businessman, so probably he has some habits”. The tutor may have to encourage and supply items of vocabulary.

The student might say:

“Every day, that man leaves his house at 8 a.m. He catches a bus and gets to town about 8.45. He walks to his office and opens his letters. Then he calls his secretary and dictates some letters. Later, he.....”

11. EXPRESSING DOUBT (The tutor wants the student to use the words “not sure” and “may” so will give examples she wants copied, e.g.

I’m not sure, but I think he’s expecting somebody.

I’m not sure, but I think she comes here every day.

He may be expecting somebody.

She may come here every day.

12. POINTS OF VIEW Encouraging discourse.

(The tutor wants little stories and chooses whether they are to be about “now” or about “the past”. She may begin a story and then assign a role to the student, e.g.

1. “You are the policeman. I saw this woman driving very fast.
What happened?” I stopped her. I asked to see her papers. I wrote her name and address in my notebook. Then I.....

2. “You are the waiter. The café is very busy today.
What is happening?” This man looks very unhappy. Maybe he has a headache. He is not eating the fish. The other man is waiting for his meal. He is going to have some goulash. I am taking some wine to the other table.....

3. “You are the taxi driver. I am going to work until five o’clock
What are your plans?” than I am doing to meet my wife and go to the cinema. I think we may have dinner at a restaurant and then.....

13. PREFERENCES Waiter-Customer Conversations
(Tutor and student take each role in turn)

“Do you like coffee?” Yes, but I prefer tea.

“Would you like some red wine?” I would rather have tea, please.

“White bread or brown?” I’d rather have brown bread, please.

14. ABILITIES (Typical sentences to expect, after suitable examples are given. The tutor wants to practise affirmatives and negatives)

That man can play the guitar, but I can't.
That girl can't ride a bicycle, but I can.
That boy sings well, but I don't.

15. GIVING ADVICE OR MAKING SUGGESTIONS (After being given appropriate examples, the student is asked to make comments about people in the picture).

That woman should drive more carefully.
The hotel shouldn't be so expensive.
She shouldn't stay in the sun too long.

16. OBLIGATIONS (Now, the student is to talk about some of the things people have to do. The examples given should be clear, and contrasted with those of para. 15. The pronunciation of "have" and "has" needs care).

Most of the people have to work every weekday.
But they don't have to work on Sundays.
That girl has to get home by six.
The waiters have to share their tips.
The bar doesn't have to close until eleven p.m.

17. PRACTICE WITH QUESTION WORDS

This may be a two-part practice:

(a) by suggesting a question word for use and asking e.g.
For sentences in "the present" or "the general present":

"Who"	Who is that boy with the aeroplane?
"What"	What is his name?
"Where"	Where is the bus going?
"Why"	Why is that boy playing the guitar?
"How much"	How much does a bottle of that wine cost?
"How many"	How many people have lunch in the café every day?

(b) by allowing the student to choose which question word and (perhaps) which tense to use in sentences about the picture. A good deal of help may be needed at first but this is very useful practice since beginners in a language often need to ask a lot of questions.

18. COMMENTS AND ADDITIONS (The tutor gives examples similar to those she wants from the student).

That man smokes a lot and so did I.
That girl often rides a bicycle and so do I.
The young waiter is working hard and so is the old one.
I don't like coffee and nor does the girl in the café.
She is not reading anything and nor am I.

19. DIALOGUE CONSTRUCTION Learning and Using Useful Words

(Each dialogue is prepared beforehand, corrected and perhaps added to, then learnt and practised).

Shopkeeper - Customer	Receptionist - Guest
Waiter - Customer	Taxi-driver - Fare
Policeman - Woman	Friends meeting
Between two businessmen meeting	

20. THINKING BACKWARDS

Practice although it is somewhat artificial.
To check that structures are thoroughly understood, the tutor asks for the questions that prompted the replies which he supplies. Students generally try to avoid the construction of question forms (in particular those without question words) so this is useful

Yes, she's working hard. ("Is she working hard?")
Sometimes. Quite often. Never. Yes, he comes every day.
No, she can't. No, they don't. Yes, she did. Etc.

INTERMEDIATE

When working with intermediate students, both low and high, the tutor must decide how much control she wishes to impose on the student's use of language. Obviously, a Beginner has very little ability to improvise and the 'control' will be imposed by ignorance as well as by the decision of the tutor.

However, with a more advanced student the tutor will usually need to make a conscious choice about the amount of linguistic freedom allowed. In a nutshell:

Choice 1

“

“

Tutor determines in advance the structure(s) or language to be used then.....

Choice 2

“

“

Tutor allows free speech

A Tight control

OR

B Progressively looser control

OR

C Loose control

OR

D No control

The first and crucial decision, then, is whether to work with a very specific aim in mind - the practice of a particular structure or designated functional language - or to say, simply, "Talk to me as you look at the picture" The second choice, where there is no intention to impose any control on what the student says, is valid:

1. As an aid to diagnosis, finding out more about what the student's language needs are, what mistakes are being commonly made, what lexical items are not known, what language needs greater sophistication and/or accuracy, and to listen to the pronunciation, intonation and so on. It is often easier for a student to talk when there is something in front of him to talk about, and the listening tutor will make notes to help future decisions about what to teach. If she hears e.g. "He said me that I must come earlier" she will make a note to practise the structure of "He told me to come earlier", which is also common in sentences with other verbs, such as "ask", "would like", "advise", "expect", etc.

So the tutor will not interrupt the student unnecessarily but just listen and learn. Hesitations are themselves indicative of areas where help is needed.

2. As a challenge to the student, who may previously have had very little opportunity to come out with more than one sentence at a time in the only too familiar pattern of 'question - answer, question - answer', which is inescapable in the class situation and beloved of one-to-one tutors who only feel comfortable in that particular rut.

It can hardly be emphasised enough how satisfying it is for a student just emerging from the Elementary chrysalis to be positively encouraged to produce eight or ten simple sentences without being interrupted because the teacher wants to make corrections or prefers to do most of the talking herself.

So there are sensible reasons for deciding to allow free speech at times.

Free speech is also the object of the other choice, but only after a preliminary, often lengthy, period of control. The tutor chooses what is to be taught, assimilated, practised, corrected, repeated and concentrates practice on:

- Making deductions from what can be seen, or
- Using the gerund after certain verbs, or
- Using the infinitive of purpose, or
- Describing actions, or,
- Using the passive voice, or
- Asking questions, or
- Expressing doubt or ignorance or surprise, or
- Talking about the past - the future - the present, etc.

So in some practice sessions the intention will be to concentrate on a particular structure - a tense, uses of the infinitive, similar patterns but with various verbs - and in others the emphasis will be on the correct or idiomatic expression of certain language functions such as the communication of preference, suggestions, surprise and anger.

These sub choices will be made by the tutor according to her judgment of the student's needs and abilities. The structure or chosen language must be of an appropriate level of difficulty and accepted by the student as such. He must also feel that what he is being taught has relevance to his world and can be used in his world. The tutor must also be careful in deciding how long a particular practice should last.

A. TIGHT CONTROL

This is appropriate with a low level student who clearly needs greater accuracy of language, intonation, etc. to express himself more comprehensibly in a particular area of language use. Such control makes the practice akin to a drill.

There will be plenty of repetition and (for example where a tense is part of the target structure) practice in changing to negative or question forms. No mistakes are ignored. Accuracy is the object of the operation. In this type of practice 'question and answer' sessions are often inescapable. The student relies on the prompts, questions and corrections of the tutor.

B. PROGRESSIVELY LOOSER CONTROL

With a somewhat higher level student, the tutor may - after assuring herself that the selected structure or language is understood - allow minor mistakes in longer sentences in order not to interrupt the flow. There is always a trade-off between accuracy and fluency and one of the tutor's most important functions is to decide on which has the priority at the time.

C. LOOSE CONTROL

The assumption may be that, although the structure or selected language is reasonably well-known to the student he doesn't yet use it with sufficient ease; he is therefore encouraged to talk in a general way, bringing it into his discourse as often as possible. Prompts and corrections by the tutor should be kept to a minimum.

D. NO CONTROL (Though still asking for the use of a particular structure of language)

The student is to use the structure or language only as often as seems natural, during a monologue about the picture and any wide range of thoughts prompted by the picture.

The tutor's function will, hopefully, be mainly to look pleased and perhaps smug. The object is to check that the structure or selected language is being used effectively and idiomatically, so discussion may well follow from any errors or awkwardness noted during the student's monologue.

Of course, in real (EFL) life such distinctions are seldom clear-cut and the tutor is likely to rely on her instinct about when to abandon any previous decisions about prompting, intervening and correcting. Low students can seem suddenly inspired and higher students have their off days. Tutors, as is well-known, are always inspired and always on form.

Of the greatest importance, as is always true in this field, is that the student understands exactly what the tutor wants.

“TALKING ABOUT” AND “TALKING WITH” A PICTURE

This useful distinction is to remind tutors that in work with all students (except, perhaps, beginners), pictures can be used in two basic ways:

1. “What’s that?” It’s a racing-car.
 “What’s she doing?” She’s riding a bicycle.

2. “Why has the policeman stopped the car?”
 Because she was driving too fast.
 I think she was driving badly.
 She must have been driving recklessly.
 She didn’t stop at the red light.
 The woman looks calm. Maybe the policeman is her son.
 How do you know he stopped it?
 He’s not a policeman. He is going to a fancy-dress dance.
 He had an argument with his wife.

The point is, of course, that what is on view is only a very small part of the story. Tutors should take every opportunity of encouraging the imagination, escaping from the merely descriptive. This more communicative approach is welcomed by all students whose command of the language is good enough for them to welcome the greater freedom.

Of course, the danger is that at the end of an hour or so of ‘talking with the picture’ it is difficult to assess what has been gained. But this is no reason to reject such an approach, since it gives an antidote to the drill-like aspects of many “habit-forming” exercises. Both ways of eliciting responses are valid and valuable and both should be explored. A question like, “Why did the policeman stop the car?” should invite the use of imagination, humour and even downright anarchy in the response; a good tutor will give thought to the sorts of questions that can encourage the creative use of language and allow the student to find out what he lacks in power of expression: an excellent chance for the tutor to jot down teaching points for future lessons. And there is no better way of convincing a student of the necessity for a particular lesson than for that student to have previously felt the need for it. A few suggested questions to stimulate “Free-fall” answers:

Why are they meeting? Why is that man wearing sunglasses?
Who is he waiting for? Why is there nobody in the hotel?
Why is the woman pointing at the car?
Why has the wall of the house been torn down?
What is in that brief-case? Is that waiter really a waiter?
Why are those men shaking each other’s left hand?
Are we really on earth or is this some other planet?

WORK WITH TENSES

Asking about and describing actions (or states) is the most obvious type of practice when using a picture and generally considered well worth doing with most students. Nouns, adjectives and adverbs cause few problems for the student of English as a foreign language (apart from the inescapable vagaries of spelling and pronunciation) but verbs, which are a continuing headache for the majority, particularly since a large number of very common verbs are irregular in forming their past and past participle forms.

It is, perhaps, worth listing some of the structures from which a tutor would have to choose before deciding on her strategy in a lesson having for its object practice with verbs:

(Some variations of the Simple Past Tense as an example)

He wrote a letter.
He didn't write a letter.
Did he write a letter?
Didn't he write a letter?
He wrote a letter, didn't he?
He didn't write a letter, did he?
So he wrote a letter, did he?
Why did he write a letter?
What did he write a letter for?
When did he write the letter?
Who did he write a letter to? (To whom did he write the letter?)
Where did he write the letter?
Was the letter written last night?
The letter wasn't written last night.
Wasn't the letter written last night? And so on.....

The tutor has to decide which of the forms should be practised, whether to make the practice a blatant drill by allowing constant repetition of the same verb, whether to give the student a written list of verbs to use, whether to allow the student a lot of thinking time or whether (from the start or later in the practice) to allow a free choice of verbs, forms, active or passive voice etc.

These are not questions that can be glibly answered. Tutors differ in their approach, students differ both in their reactions and their needs and the strategy should be cautious until tutor and student have sized each other up.

The student may be required to utter single sentences (with or without tutor prompts), to answer questions, to ask questions to use only passive forms, to vary his sentences constantly by using “He”, “She”, “We”, “They” etc. Or he may be asked to tell a story about events starting at 7 a.m. and finishing at midnight.

The new tutor is reminded to bear in mind that only in an ideal world can all language practice always be meaningful (i.e. into context), as well as habit-forming, since for the average learner the eventual power to communicate effectively in English rests largely on his patience first to practise structures without a context of “reality”. Certainly the tutor should always try to ensure that “meaningless” repetition should end with the transfer of the acquired skill to “real” (or at least “almost real” situations) but, in the world as it is, most of that transfer has to be done by the student elsewhere. What the tutor can do is to ensure that by insisting on speed in the practice the student is pushed to produce correct language without too much thought. It is that speed which oils the wheels which make the revered “meaningful communication” much easier when the student speaks in the world outside.

The following paragraphs suggest some more exercises for use with the picture: some obviously “controlled” and others allowing for - often calling for - the use of the imagination when students should be encouraged to speculate, comment, prophesy, argue.

The suggestions in the first paragraphs are aimed at the “Lower Intermediate” student; those coming later at the “Higher Intermediate” student.

Every teacher has a similar notion about the meaning of these terms but would be hard put to it to define them with any exactness: “A Higher intermediate student is one who has stopped being Lower Intermediate” about sums up the general opinion. Obviously, the distinction has to do with power of comprehension, amount of vocabulary in active use, understanding of idiom, clarity of speech, intonation and so on.

A tutor should choose a particular exercise because she knows from listening to him) that the student needs the particular practice it will provide: that is a far better guide than a label in a book saying “High (or low) Intermediate Exercise”.

1. RECENTLY COMPLETED ACTIONS (The tutor wants sentences similar to these she gives)

She’s bought some flowers.

The people have given the buskers some money.

The bus has stopped at the corner.

2. ACTIONS STILL GOING ON (“Tell me about things that are happening”)

She's been lying on the beach for an hour.
He's been sitting there all the morning.
The waiter hasn't been working here for long.
They have been working here since six o'clock.

3. CONDITIONALS (a)

If he plays for much longer I shall get a headache.
If she lies there all day she will get sunburnt.
If her friend doesn't come by four she won't wait.
Will he change the wine if I ask him to?

4. CONDITIONALS (b)

If he were rich he wouldn't eat at this café.
If she had time she would wait longer.
What would he do if the waiter didn't speak French?
If it rained would the customers all leave?

5. CONDITIONALS (c)

If he had drunk less last night he wouldn't look so ill now.
If he had gone to bed earlier he would have woken up in time to get the train.
If she had telephoned her husband would he have come to meet her?
If he hadn't come on business he wouldn't have brought his brief-case.

NOTE The reasons for the choice of a particular form of conditional sentence should be made clear and good examples given before the student is asked to talk about people in the picture. This is an easy-to-manage practice and affirmatives, negatives and questions should be practised.

6. SPECULATIONS (The student is asked to make or ask for guesses about people)

I think he may be German. I think she may be rich.
Do you think he might be a regular customer?
I think she may come here every day.
I think he may be feeling unwell.
Do you think she may be going to class?

7. MORE SUGGESTIONS (But it's too late now.....)
REPROACHES The tutor asked for examples, e.g.

He should have got up earlier.
He shouldn't have smoked so much yesterday.
They shouldn't have stayed here for so long.

8. IMPERATIVES (The tutor asked to be told about things some of the people have (or don't have) to do..... Today.....tomorrow.....next week.....)

He has to work from nine till five.
She has to wait here for the bus.
He doesn't have to go to work today.
He will have to get to the office before five.
They will have to finish their meal soon.
That man won't have to leave till six.

9. REALITIES AND POSSIBILITIES

(The student is asked to contrast what was done with what might have been done instead)

They ordered fish but they could have asked for lamb.
She came at six but she could have come at five.
They sprayed the car white but they could've sprayed it black.
Could he have come by car instead of by taxi?

10. HABITS (a)

He used to smoke but he has stopped now.
She didn't used to swim well but she took lessons.
Didn't that waiter used to work at the hotel?
That man doesn't live in the town now, but he used to.

11. HABITS (b)

He's not tired: he is used to working long hours.
He isn't used to life in a town: he is used to living in the country.
Are the buskers used to people staring at them?

(In these two exercises the student is asked to talk, or ask questions, about some of the people.)

12. COMPARISONS

(The tutor gives some examples of comparing things or people and asks for similar sentences. She may also prompt such sentences by saying, e.g. "The policeman is 24. The waiter is 24", expecting to get: "The policeman is the same age as the waiter". The tutor should have some prompts ready to facilitate the practice.)

The taxi isn't as big as the sports car.
That boy is as old as my son.
Are three buses as long as the aeroplane?

13. ASKING QUESTIONS (Testing a student's knowledge)

"What are his (her) immediate intentions?"

"What has he (she) been doing recently?"

"What does he (she) do most days?"

"What has he (she) been doing often but has stopped doing now?"

"What is he (she) good at and why?"

"What did he (she) do yesterday afternoon at 4.30?"

"What was he (she) doing from six till ten yesterday?"

14. SOUNDS AND SMELLS

What sounds can you hear? What can you smell?

What is the policeman listening to?

What can you smell in the middle of the town?

15. POINTS OF VIEW

The student chooses to be somebody in the picture.

What can he see? He must distinguish between the nearby and the further away. Can you guess who the person is?

16. MAKING DEDUCTIONS

From what people are doing or saying or from what can be seen in the picture or inferred from it, the student is asked to make some deductions, e.g.

That taxi driver must know the town very well.

He must be playing well: they have given him a lot of money.

He can't be feeling well: he is wearing dark glasses.

She called the waiter "Pierre"; she must know him.

17. MAKING DEDUCTIONS

He said, "Hello Ann", so he must have met her before.

She must have done something wrong or the policeman wouldn't have stopped her.

They are not speaking to each other so they must have had an argument.

She looks white: she can't have stayed in the sun for very long.

18. WITNESS

"When I saw him it was half past three on August 16th. He was wearing grey trousers, a striped jacket, a tie and black shoes. His hair was short and he was carrying a brief-case of brown leather. He was shaking hands with another man. I think he was about thirty".

Another person is chosen and talked about in a similar way.

19. TRAVEL

With reference both to things seen and things not seen in the picture, the student talks about modes of transport and his preferences.

20. PRETENCE AND REALITY The student is asked for sentences similar to these:

That girl told her mother she's shopping but really she's going to visit her boy-friend.

I told the policeman I was on my way to the hospital but really I'm going to see my aunt.

21. STILL MORE SUGGESTIONS (And it's still too late)

He shouldn't have been sitting there: he should have been working.

The woman shouldn't have been driving so fast.

The meat shouldn't have been left on the table.

The little boy shouldn't have been allowed to play in the street.

22. EYES AND HANDS

What (or who) is each person looking at?

What is each person doing with his or her hands?

23. THE USEFULNESS OF OBJECTS '101 Uses for a Dead Cat'

The student talks about an object in the picture. Your preceding example might be:

"A sofa is for sitting on, but it's also for flirting on. You can sleep on it if you have to. You could sell it if you had no money. You burn it if you were cold. You could drop it on the T.V. if you didn't like the programme. You could put wheels on it and an engine and drive it into town."

24. POCKETS (The student may need to learn some words)

Choose a few people in the picture. Ask the student to guess what they have in their pockets. If e.g. the student doesn't know the word "comb" he will have to describe it and its use so that you can supply the word for him. (Mime, though natural, is not allowed).

25. DASHED HOPES - LAST MINUTES SAVES - SAD REFLECTIONS

He was to have married that girl, but.....
She was to have become a doctor, but.....

He was just about to cross the street when.....
She was just going to swear at the policeman when.....

If only he hadn't agreed to lend her the car.....
If only he hadn't carried that heavy T.V. set.....
(The student is asked to provide other examples)

26. CERTAINTIES ("Can you comment about them?")

That little boy is bound to get bored soon.
The weather's bound to change soon. It's bound to rain.
I am bound to make mistakes.

27. VARIOUS

There are some oddities (some strange things) in the picture.
The student is asked to talk about some of them.

The student is to talk about those things which are more or less the same in a town in his country and about those which are different.

Dialogue construction (as in Elementary 19) but more sophisticated.

Points of view requested, e.g. on pubs, advertising, buskers, traffic lights, Concorde, open-air cafes, public transport v private cars, food (England versus the World), etc.

After some previous experience with the picture, the student is asked to describe (sight unseen) what can be seen in the picture, or part of it. (The tutor will be noting areas of language difficulty but may prompt from time to time.)

Tutor: "I am thinking about somebody in the picture. Who is it?"

Student: Is he young?.....A man?.....Tall? Is he wearing a hat?.....
A jacket?.....Is he sitting near.....? Etc.

(Of course, the tutor may only answer "Yes" or "No" or "Maybe")

28. DIALOGUE COMPOSITION

Conversation appropriate to a chosen situation may be discussed between tutor and student, then written down and practised, e.g.:

A. The man in dark glasses and his friend

Friend: "What's the matter? Are you feeling ill?"

Man: "Not really. I had a late night and drank too much, I'm afraid"

Friend: "Really? You didn't used to drink much".

Man: "I know. I'd better try and stop it".

B. Two businessmen meeting

1. Greetings. Enquiries about health.

2. Fixing a time for an office meeting.

3. One man excuses himself (too busy?)

4. The other successfully persuades him .

5. Final resolution.

29. ASKING DIRECT QUESTIONS When an indirect statement is given as a prompt.

E.g. "Ask him how he came here this morning".

"Excuse me. How did you come here this morning?"

30. "YOU'RE THAT MAN"

The student is told that he is to imagine he is a certain person in the picture. Then he must respond to the tutor's prompts as to certain situations in which he finds himself e.g.:

"A man has just asked you for some money".

(Response: "I'm afraid I haven't any change" or

"Go away or I'll call the police". or

"Here's £100. Ask for more tomorrow".)

"The waiter has just said the café closes soon".

"Excuse me but where is the bus-stop?" Etc.

Students usually enjoy responding according to the role they have been given, perhaps in ways uncharacteristic of their real selves.

31. BUILDING UP A STORY

The tutor provides the prompts for a continuous narrative, which may be set in the present, the past or the future, according to her direction.

The student may be given (on a sheet of paper)

“That man.....last night.....train.....2 hours tired.....hotel..... room.....Dinner.....horrible.....complaint.....7 a.m. Breakfast..... office.....Telephone.....coffee.....more work.....towards café..... old friend.....Lunch.....

This is a useful exercise because it gives the student the opportunity for continuous speech in English (perhaps previously a rare treat or torture), and gives the tutor a chance to assess e.g. the student’s command of verb forms and grammatical words.

32. SWITCHING

The tutor provides a box of squares in each of which is a prompt for language use. She points to a box and also to a person in the picture.

The student must respond appropriately, speaking either to a person in the picture or about him or her.

E.g. The tutor provides:

Greetings	Asking Directions	Comparing buildings
Asking About Food	Expressing Surprise	Saying Goodbye Politely

Possible utterances:

“I was astonished to see John near the cafe”.

“I look forward to meeting you tomorrow”.

“He asked the old man the way to the station”.

“Excuse me but could you tell me the way to the station?”

“What’s on the menu today? Have you any fried fish?”