


*FLASH-PICTURES*, by Carol J. Kreidler and M. Beatrice Sutherland, 1963. Distributed by Follett's Michigan Bookstore, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

*FLASH-PICTURES*, according to the sub-heading which appears on the sheet of text accompanying them, is "A Set of 252 Cards Used as An Aid to Teachers of English as a Foreign Language." Thus, one of the questions to be answered by any language teacher considering the role of visuals in his work is answered: These are meant to be aids and not materials—as the distinction is currently made between these two terms.

Examination of the page of text provided with these pictures and the "Drill Suggestions" outlined for their use bear this out. The authors emphasize the necessity in language learning for "a great deal of practice" which can most effectively be provided through "varied, fast moving" drill "related to situations or environment." *Flash-Pictures*, then, is presented as "an efficient tool" in the effort "to establish a new system of habits."

Flexibility seems to be the great advantage of the cards. Their size, 7" x 10", makes them easy for the teacher to handle, and the "text of each item"—or the identifying words appearing on the back of each picture—contributes to the speed of the teacher's maneuvers. Anyone who has seen Miss Sutherland manipulate class recitation with these cards can testify with awe to the facility they afford. She and Mrs. Kreidler state on their page of suggestions that their size makes them suitable for large classes, but obviously there would be a practical limitation of visibility.

The simple, black, line-drawing was done by Lorraine Donakowski on color and is quite effective. As we all know, a picture is what the teacher says it is. In other words, if a black dot, for, say, an economist, can represent 25,000 people, then there is no reason why  can't here represent 'in the morning'. This is no doubt what the introductory sheet means by the statement that "pictures are a recognized and conventionalized substitution for actual situations."

The colors on which the black line-drawings appear have a language of their own, intended for the teacher. Each of the ten colors *Flash-Pictures* uses represents a different category of items, or, to use the terminology of the authors, "word families." Thus the teacher's job of sorting and storing the cards is simplified: flexibility again.

As a classroom technique for use in fast, oral, drill work, there is no doubt that *Flash-Pictures* has great possibilities.

A glance now at what the pictures represent:

The authors say that these pictures "widen the classroom walls in a practical way with a visual reference to situations the students will encounter in daily life." The emphasis, then, is to be on language used in appropriate situations, and we applaud the goal. The "situations" depicted indeed are those a student in the United States is likely to recognize. The authors group them thus:

People and occupations - White  
 Regular verbs - Aqua  
 Irregular verbs - Yellow  
 Place - Buff  
 Time - Cherry  
 Countable nouns - Green  
 Countable nouns - Ivory  
 Uncountable nouns - Blue  
 Subjects - Pink  
 Adjectives - Salmon

And evidently Mrs. Kreidler and Miss Sutherland find this a useful cataloging system. From a logical point of view, however, one might wonder what distinguishes "People and occupations," "Place," "Time" and "Subjects" from "Countable Nouns" and "Uncountable Nouns" and why, for instance, "bookstore" landed in the "Place" group while "bookcase" landed in the "Countable Nouns - Green" group. Or why "Mathematics," "Law," "Chemistry," etc., should be indicated as "Subjects" unrelated to "Uncountable Nouns," and similarly, why pictures of a bus, a train, a ship, etc., are grouped under "Countable Nouns - Ivory" as distinct from "Countable Nouns - Green." Labels of a consistently semantic nature might avoid this kind of puzzle.

However that may be, the grammarian will ask, if there is a set of cards for "Adjectives," why is there not one for "Adverbs"—the "-ly" words? The traditionalist will ask, if there are cards for "Nouns," "Verbs" and "Adjectives," why not for the other five parts of speech? The structuralist, dividing words according to their lexical and grammatical significance, will of course assume that the grammar frame with which the subject matter on the cards is to be used can take care of at least four of those five missing parts of speech. Clearly, for maximum results, the sentences required from the students must be judiciously chosen in order to ensure sufficient practice for learning the grammar and the sound patterns characteristic of English. The authors have provided in their "Drill Suggestions" examples of substitution type exercises without attempting to illustrate use of even these in all the patterns of English. Thus, we conclude again: What we have here is an

aid—not material complete unto itself. The teacher who expects to teach with Flash-Pictures must have a firm grasp of the grammar and sound patterns of English.

Those students who learn to handle the lexical items represented by the 252 cards will have under their control around 280 (since all but five of the Adjective cards represent concepts in opposites; e.g., good - bad). It is possible that the flexibility of the "Verb" cards is unnecessarily limited, since the "text" appearing on the back reads, for instance, DRINK MILK, FEEL TIRED, GET SOME ICE CREAM. Obviously, it would be unfortunate if the wording on the cards precluded treatment, of, say, transitive and intransitive constructions, and limited words such as "get" to only one of its meanings.

Nevertheless, the teacher using these cards has tangible evidence of his students' lexical knowledge, or, as the authors say, "the semantic content of a useful high frequency vocabulary." (They do not give us the source of their frequency count—whether it is an objective one or simply intuitive, based on their own experience.)

Flash-Pictures was originally developed in Indonesia by Miss Sutherland in her work with Indonesian teachers. There is no doubt that her reputation as a classroom teacher coupled with that of Mrs. Kreidler will ensure wide sale acceptance.

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