

Questions for Reflection and Analysis across the Stories

These questions are designed for making thematic connections across the stories. They may also serve as a basis for creating a general or theoretical framework for understanding the process of language acquisition and the factors that promote or impede that process.

BACKGROUND FACTORS AND INFLUENCES

1. Examine the historical and political circumstances surrounding the characters' lives. How do such factors affect language learners' motivation and performance?
2. Examine the effect that a colonial system of education has on the characters' linguistic, cultural, and racial identities. On the basis of your own experiences, observations, or reading, what evidence do you see that colonial attitudes continue to affect language teaching and learning?
3. Examine how school and community attitudes toward students' first or heritage language and culture affect the characters' language and literacy acquisition. What role do you see for a student's first or heritage language and culture in the English language classroom?
4. How does the move from one country to another shape the characters' linguistic and cultural identities? How might a teacher or tutor take these factors into account in creating language lessons?
5. Examine the role families play in influencing the characters' attitudes and behavior. How might a teacher or tutor take these factors into account in creating language lessons?
6. Examine the role that age, gender, ethnicity, culture, race, religion, class, or linguistic background play in the characters' language acquisition. How might a teacher or tutor take any of these factors into account in creating language lessons?

7. How do the characters' identities outside the classroom differ from their school identities? How might an awareness of different identities shape or transform a teacher's assumptions about students' classroom behavior and performance?

THE PROCESS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. What different language teaching methodologies or approaches are demonstrated in these stories? How do these different approaches affect learners' motivation or their performance? How might you revise an approach that seems to be counterproductive?
2. How are the characters' language errors addressed in different stories? Which approach to error seems to be most productive? How do you think error should be addressed in the context of teaching and learning language?
3. What role do nonverbal gestures play in facilitating communication or enabling the characters' understanding? How might teachers or tutors translate this factor into effective practice?
4. What role does silence play in the characters' acquisition of language? What might be the most effective way to address a student's silence in the classroom?
5. Note the similarities and differences between the way adults acquire language and the way children acquire language in these stories. How might teachers or tutors translate an understanding of these similarities and differences into practice?
6. Note the similarities and differences between classroom-based teaching and one-on-one tutoring in these stories. How might teachers or tutors translate an understanding of these similarities and differences into practice?
7. How are the challenges of teaching or learning English language *literacy* similar to or different from the challenges of teaching or learning *spoken* English in these stories? How might teachers or tutors translate an understanding of these similarities and differences into practice?

8. Note the similarities and differences between teaching and learning English in an English-medium country and teaching and learning English as a foreign language (for an EFL context, see “Private Lesson” by Lindsley Cameron, pp. 179–195). How might classroom or tutorial approaches be informed by an understanding of these similarities and differences?
9. Drawing on the knowledge you have gained by reading these stories, what do you think teachers or tutors could do to facilitate the process learners undergo when they transition from merely studying a language to taking ownership of the language?
10. Drawing on the knowledge you have gained by reading these stories, what factors or circumstances do you think might lead teachers or tutors to reflect on and improve their pedagogical approaches?
11. Drawing on the knowledge and understanding you have gained by reading these stories, what do you perceive to be the best ways to promote language acquisition?