

Representational Teaching in the L2 Classroom

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Abstract

The author using research by McRae (1991) advocates the implementation of 'representational' materials when teaching reading skills to L2 learners. The paper puts forward the relevant research in this area and how it can be applied to L2 learning environments. It should be noted that this style of teaching is sometimes referred to as 'creative reading'. Next, the paper provides guidance on text selection and the benefits of using representational materials in an L2 pedagogical setting. Finally, the author will detail how he implemented representational task-based activities with a class of nine-year-old L2 learners at an international academy in Seoul, South Korea using two literary texts. The author also notes his observations of student behaviour during the lessons.

Keywords: representational materials, referential materials, creative reading, reading skills

1. Introduction

Since the 1980s a large amount of research has supported the use of literature in language teaching. McRae (1991) credits Widdowson (1975; 1984) with initiating the fundamental ideas, and acknowledges those that provided further research in this area such as Brumfit and Carter (1986), Carter and Long (1991), Duff and Maley (1991), McRae (1991) and Widdowson (1992). McRae (1996: 17) suggests that the "key concept in the application of literary materials to language teaching is that of referential materials and representational materials."

Representational ideas derived from the work of Jakobson (1960) who claimed a set of six essential factors occur during any speech event.

- Expressive
- Conative
- Referential
- Phatic
- Metalingual
- Poetic

(Cited McRae, 1991: 2)

McRae believes that 'representational language' acts in contrast to Jakobson's 'referential language' which focuses on deixis and description. McRae (1991: 2) defines 'representational' as "language which, in order that its meaning potential be decoded by a receiver, engages the imagination of that receiver," and he accepts it includes elements from Jakobson's (1960) conative, metalingual and poetic functions.

Now with an understanding of the two types of language, the remainder of the paper will explain how this can be applied to L2 teaching practices. First, the author will outline the differences between 'referential materials' and 'representational materials'. Next, how and why representational materials should be implemented into an L2 teaching syllabus, and finally, practical examples highlighting how representational teaching techniques and task-based activities have been successfully used in the classroom.

2. Referential and Representational Materials

In her guidebook for teaching reading skills in an L2 classroom, Nuttall (2005: 30) established that "traditionally text based focus in ESL classrooms has been on pronunciation, vocabulary or structure." This style of teaching is referential as words "remain close to what they mean in a dictionary sense" (McRae, 1996: 17). He (McRae, 1996: 17) goes on to explain that "One word has one meaning, one grammatical construction is right and another wrong, the words mean what they say, no more no less." His primary criticism of referential materials is that they tend to be 'reductive' in style. McRae (1991: 3) explains this by stating that:

"There can be a very wide range of factors which influence the nature of the language used: the social situation, political constraints, the linguistic ability of the participants in the discourse, their attitudes, aims and desires. These factors might indeed involve Jakobson's

emotive and phatic functions – but, at the level of second language learning and teaching, the language we are concerned with is largely referential.”

In contrast representational materials aim to step beyond referential materials in the sense that they require negotiation or processing as a method to understand the text. The belief is that the use of representational materials incorporates standard teaching elements, but also advances on it by implementing the “the indispensable but often ignored or taken-for-granted fifth skill, thinking” (McRae 1996: 23).

In support of representational teaching techniques, Nuttal (2005) believes that the reader must contribute to the meaning of a text if they are to effectively comprehend it. Nuttal (2005: 18) states that “we all have different processes in reading, different opinions, backgrounds and experiences, and thus different schemata.” A schema is a mental structure that does not relate to a single experience, but it derives from all the particular experiences we have. The schema determines how people interpret texts and the more experiences a reader has the quicker they are able to interpret a text.

Despite being advocates of representational teaching, it should be noted that Nuttal and McRae do not doubt the significance of referential teaching. For instance, McRae (1996: 17) states that “it is fundamental to any learner’s knowledge about language and of a language system that rules, structures and grammar be acquired and that the way the language operates be understood in an ongoing way.” Nevertheless, what they do stress is the necessity for more creative reading. Through increased creative reading Nuttall (2005: 30) suggests students are given the opportunity to not only read a foreign language but also to “derive messages from the texts. The meaning is central and any new language item learned is an accidental benefit.”

The next section will detail how representational materials should be implemented into the L2 learning environment and the benefits of using them.

3. Implementing Representational Materials

3.1 Text Selection

To be successfully implemented, certain consideration and procedures must be followed when selecting representational texts for a reading lesson. This is because various styles or texts make different demands on the reader. Readers’ views and interests vary, different readers respond in different ways to the same text and a reading lesson must make allowances for both the variety of texts and the variety of readers. McRae (1991: 42) found “to be usable and valid, a short text must have a clear and readily identifiable setting, and/or situation, and/or characters.” Selecting the right text is difficult and ultimately subjective but there are a number of aspects to consider that can assist the language teacher.

3.1.1 Accessibility

Accessibility represents how most imaginative texts are not instantly accessible to the reader and the teacher must use techniques to help the learner. The teacher must overcome all of the

issues which make the text inaccessible and present the material in a way that will allow the student to get through to the end rather than giving up because they don't understand elements such as its register, syntax or vocabulary. Techniques such as listening or listening and reading help to make the text more accessible. Also, clear instruction as to what the learner must do will help them complete the text and also to deal with the associated activity. It is crucial to ensure the text falls into context with the course and does not appear to be unrelated and chosen at random.

3.1.2 Difficulty

McRae (1991: 42) explains that difficulty is a controversial issue, but he highlights the need for the student to feel they can “get something” from the text. The text should be attuned to the students' level and they should be given the possibility to answer any associated questions. Reading beyond the students' level is also possible depending on what the learner is asked to do with the text.

3.1.3 Story Element

McRae (1991: 44) states that “the best texts contain some element of story.” He later describes how the greatest advantage of stories is their encouragement towards increased reading and reading for pleasure. This also ties into the issue of promoting autonomy which is explained in more detail in sub-section 3.2. For instance, if students can have successful experiences using stories in the classroom, they will be more likely to seek them out for self-reading in their free time.

3.1.4 Theme-based Approach

The theme-based approach enables a teacher to combine a group of totally diverse texts because of a thematic link. Objections to this approach have been made because it can be perceived as reductive, seen as a misrepresentation of the whole text, and also as a trivialisation by giving too much value to what is only a passage of text. Nevertheless, McRae (1991: 46) believes especially for L2 learners these claims can be countered as almost any text can be used and it allows learners to be subjective about different texts. Furthermore, they can be encouraged to seek out the whole texts from which the passages have come from. This method gives learners an introduction to a vast amount of different representational materials.

3.1.5 Text Grouping

Similarly to the theme-based approach, text grouping involves putting texts under many kinds of headings such as argument, narration, humour, philosophy, but without concerning the thematic content. Here how the groups are formed will dictate the relevance and interest of the lesson.

3.1.6 Text Pleasure

The pleasure of the text relates to considering cultural curiosity because for instance, a text that evokes great interest in England could create the opposite reaction in a South Korean

school. McRae (1991: 50) states that “imaginative stimuli of various kinds constitute the basis of this approach.” Crucially he claims the most important element is gaining student attention as there is no subject that will be intrinsically interesting to every learner of English.

3.1.7 Relevance and Recognition

Lastly, relevance and recognition explains how the text should be analysed to ensure it is relevant to the student. The teacher should consider whether the text has lost its value somewhat or whether it is an extract linked to the other texts the students have been reading.

3.2 Benefits

McRae (1991:89) explains that “with representational materials, students are encouraged to expand their reading competence in various ways.” There are three key benefits gained from implementing representational materials in to the L2 classroom. Firstly, the ‘extension of reading range’ which covers variations of lexical and syntactical choices as well as the length, style and contents of different texts. Secondly, an ‘extension of reading scope’ which encourages reading for pleasure and requires the reader to appreciate word-play and textual openness, the capacity to cope with various points of view and other language techniques. Lastly ‘extension of affective reading’ which explains the emotional and intellectual involvement found in representational reading.

In contrast McRae (1991: 90) highlights that referential texts focus on low order tasks and questions such as wh- questions or true/false exercises which simply analyse “comprehension.” On the other hand:

“Representational texts invite the reader to move on fairly rapidly to *high order* questions, probing the interpretative possibilities of the text, and beginning to look at the author’s presumed intention, at the connotations and implications of what is written, at the wider subject matter the text touches upon.”

(McRae, 1991 Chapter 9:3).

The objective is that through these techniques students will be gaining an understanding of content in the text such as lexis, syntax, cohesion, phonology, graphology, semantics, dialect, register and period.

Additionally, representational materials encourage autonomous learning and Sinclair (1996) explains how this style of learning is disapproved of by many teachers. He (Sinclair, 1996: 140) states “such teachers often equate autonomy with lack of control and, possibly, chaos in the classroom.” However, the whole theory of reading representational materials promotes autonomy as it requires the reader’s response and reaction to the text. In support of this Sinclair (1996:159) states that “literature teaching provides an ideal context in which to develop not only the individual learner’s intellectual potential, but also his/her capacity to take on more responsibility for his/her development.”

The following section will highlight how two different texts could be taught to L2 learners using representational materials.

4. Practical Examples

In this section the author highlights two texts that he has successfully taught using representational teaching with L2 learners. The author will detail the procedures he used and also the observations he made during each stage of the class.

4.1 The Author's Teaching Context and Approach

In 2011, as a teacher at a privately owned Korean Academy in Seoul, South Korea, the author was tasked with instructing a class of nine-year-olds using a K12 American curriculum that encompassed all key subjects. The class size was made up of 15 high-level students. The school was located in an affluent neighbourhood and 5 of the students had spent some time living in an L2 country. Despite class materials being provided the author was given freedom in the procedures used to teach them. Each text highlighted in this paper was taken from a Language Arts class that was 50 minutes in length.

Additionally, a quote by McRae and Vethamani (1999) highlights the author's approach to teaching literature in the classroom. It states that teachers should "focus more on processes than on facts, on students' interaction with texts, on opinions and interpretation rather than received opinion" (McRae and Vethamani, 1999: VX). The author strived to follow this advice while planning and implementing his syllabus, and this can be observed in the teaching strategies highlighted in the next two sub-sections.

4.2 Example Text 1

The first example the author puts forward is a piece of poetry. Often L2 teachers shy away from using poetry as they find it less accessible to other forms of representational materials, but the author believes it provides a number of possibilities for learning potential as he will highlight below.

Prior to reading the text (see appendix 1) the students were only provided with the title and asked what 'modern' means. They were then put into small groups and tasked with providing evidence of modern vs. old techniques for an activity such as cleaning or transportation. Students were allowed five minutes to consider and compare traditional methods to those of the modern day related to their given topic. This operated as a pre-presentation activity to warm-up the students in preparation for the main text. The author observed that this kind of activity works well to motivate and focus the students in preparation for viewing the text. Next the poem taken from Click Magazine (2006, April) was presented to the students in the following form:

'A _____ is a dragon that roars through the dark. He wriggles his tail as he sends up a spark. He pierces the night with his one yellow eye, And all the earth trembles when he rushes by.'

The author read the poem aloud on the first occasion, and then the students were encouraged to read the poem as a group the second time. A number of students had some issues with the word "pierces"; however, at this stage the author did not highlight this and instead reassured the students that they should not worry about words they did not understand or could not pronounce. The author asked the students what kind of text it is. In the author's case one of

the students quickly identified that it is in fact a poem. If nobody had answered this question the author would have provided hints such as highlighting the rhyming words. At this point the author then went on to explain the word “pierces” briefly using images drawn on the whiteboard.

Next, the class were told that they would be working with their group again. The goal now was for the students to establish what the poem is about. A worksheet was given to each group highlighting the figurative language ‘roars’ ‘wiggles his tail’ and ‘one yellow eye’. The author explained the difference between figurative language and literal language using examples. After the students were reminded that the title refers to something ‘modern’ and asked to establish what these figurative meanings could be and to see if they could discover what the second word of the poem should be. The students were allowed about ten minutes to complete this task and each group actively discussed their opinions on each aspect.

Each group then presented their poem and explained what they believed was the literal meaning for each of the figurative expressions. After each group presented, the students were eager to know the actual word missing from the poem. In the author’s circumstance one of the groups successfully selected the word ‘train’ and they were clearly thrilled. To clarify student comprehension the author highlighted how the literal meanings can be linked to a train. For example ‘roars’ literally means the sound of the train’s engine.

The enrichment part of the class came in the form of questioning how the poet managed to pack so much action in to a mere four lines. The students were given a few minutes to identify and underline the vivid action verbs in the poem that help paint the picture for the reader.

Finally, the author explained what rhyming couplets are by briefly re-highlighting the rhyming words in the poem. Returning to the word ‘modern’ students were individually given the task of creating their own four line rhyming couplet poem about a modern object. After seven minutes all of the students had completed the task, however, some required extra assistance from the author while completing this activity. Next, the author told the students to erase the object word in the poems like was done with ‘train’ in ‘A Modern Dragon’. After the students had done this the author instructed the class to swap poems with another student. The students were then tasked with reading the poem and trying to guess what object was being described in the figurative meanings. After a few minutes as a class the author checked to see if each student guessed correctly and the students were visibly entertained by this activity. This was the final activity used in this specific class, but what has been outlined here certainly does not exhaust all of the potential representational activities that can be used with this text. For instance, to stretch the text even further gender issues could have been brought into the equation and the students could have been asked why the writer referred to the train as a male.

From what is only a small text it has been shown that a vast amount of activities can be created, which engage and require the student to use the fifth element of “thinking” that McRae (1996: 23) associates with the use of representational materials. The key to taking this text away from a referential sense was the removal of the word ‘train’ at the beginning of the

lesson as it encouraged interaction. McRae (1991: 91) explains that “representational texts do not reveal reality in the way that referential texts do,” and furthermore he states “most textbooks, methodological approaches, and, I fear, teachers, still tell students what to think.” The suggestion is that the teacher should act as a middle-man between the author, text and the receiver and the author believes he achieved this during his lesson.

4.3 Example Text 2

The author’s second text is a famous short story by Hans Christian Andersen called *The Emperor’s New Clothes* (see appendix 2). The text used in the class was a translated and updated version by Frank (2005). As the text is much longer the material was spread over three lessons and the author has highlighted some of the key representational activities that he used during those classes. Montgomery et al (2010: 251) uncovered two dimensions to narratives which they call “narrative form” and “narrative content.” The first is a “collection of represented events, along with the participants in those events, and the circumstances of those events”. The second is the way that the events are “represented through a particular narrative medium” (Montgomery et al, 2010: 251).

The version used by the author contained a certain amount of vocabulary that certain members of his class did not understand, but he did not see this as an issue. Representational techniques do not take up a vast amount time finding out the meanings of all the language the students do not understand as occurs in many reading classes following a referential style. Instead, the author placed priority on what the text meant rather than how it meant. Throughout the classes when certain students were in doubt the author encouraged them by asking how many words they understood the meaning of in a few sentences in comparison to how many they did not understand.

The grouped motivational pre-reading exercise involved eliciting different types of leaders and then to defining between what makes a good leader and a bad leader. Two groups thought of bad elements whilst the other two groups thought of good elements. After a few minutes there was a class feedback discussion.

Due to some of the difficult vocabulary and length of the text the author read and the students listened with the text in front of them so they could see the words. However, to maintain alertness every so often the author randomly called on students to read pre-selected sentences that he knew the students were capable of reading to avoid embarrassment in front of their peers. The author read with enthusiasm and character as to maintain student engagement.

After reading the first two paragraphs of the story the author asked the students on the basis of the information provided to predict what the story is about. They were given a few minutes to discuss with a partner and a feedback session was conducted as a class with the ideas concisely written by the author on the whiteboard. After the author continued to read the story until its end. Then as a class several comprehension check questions were asked with students actively volunteering to answer.

The students were told to join their small group and to write a summary of the story with a word limit of 40 words. Carter (1997: 63) explains that this is a good linguistic exercise as the

writer must use “syntactic re-structuring, deletion and lexical re-shaping” to meet the word limit. Additionally the student must consider what the significant points of the story are and attention can be focused on how and what is narrated. Once completed the groups compared and criticized each other’s summaries. Some groups did have difficulty with this task; however, following support from the author they were able to complete the task.

Another activity involved the students debating whether they felt bad for the emperor or if they thought he deserved the treatment he received. The author then turned the classroom into a courtroom and assigned students roles such as ‘judge’, ‘defendant’, ‘lawyer’, ‘prosecutor’, ‘witness’ and ‘jury member’. A mock court case was carried out over ten minutes and the judge came to a decision about what sentence the defendant should receive based on the evidence and arguments put forward. The students clearly enjoyed sharing their opinions and being able to imitate a real life work place environment which broke away from the monotony of structured classroom lecturing. This also provided the students with some autonomy as the author took a back seat role once the task had been explained and modelled clearly.

The author also tasked the students with a guided re-writing where students pretended to be reporters producing a news report on the story as if they were living in the emperor’s kingdom.

The next task was used by the author in the final class as a summary. The students were asked to break down the structural points of a story. This followed a model developed by Labov and his associates (Labov 1972). Labov studied oral narratives on Black English Vernacular (BEV) and uncovered that successful narratives had “structural properties in common” (Cited in Carter, 1997: 69). There are six structural properties that he identified and the students were grouped and tasked with applying them to the *The Emperor’s New Clothes*. “Abstract” is the first point and this encapsulates the point of the story in a short summary. The students needed to identify the main point from the title and the opening two paragraphs, which provide a clear introduction. Second, “orientation” helps the reader/listener to identify in some way the time, place, persons, and their activity or situation. Therefore, in this story the students needed to recognize that this centres on the Emperor with the narrator clearly portraying his personality in the opening paragraph with supporting quotes from the Emperor himself in paragraph three. Paragraph two gives a description of the ‘two rogues’ whom are the other main characters of the story. Third, the students had to identify the “complicating action” which Carter (1997: 69) explains as the minimal units of the narrative and are temporally ordered, in that “a change in their order will result in a change in the temporal sequence of the original semantic organization.” This can be observed from the beginning of paragraph four. Next, “evaluation” is considered to be “internal” (Carter, 1997: 69) as the comment by the child that the Emperor is wearing no clothes is imbedded and at a specific moment of the action. The fifth point “resolution” is witnessed as the narrator in the final paragraph comments after the boy cries “But he has nothing at all on!” Finally, the “coda” provides the story with a sense of completeness and can be witnessed in the Emperor’s reaction to finding out he had been duped by the two rogues. Although this seems like a challenging task for a group of nine-year-olds by simplifying the language and explaining the

task clearly all of the students were able to complete it successfully.

The last representational activity the used involved the students writing their own ending to the story. On completion volunteers presented their own endings which were creative and varied. Carter (1997: 73) explains that:

“By doing it themselves students can begin to appreciate from the inside, as it were, the relationship between narrative structure and how different readers might come to understand and interpret the story in different ways.”

As highlighted with text one, the activities detailed in this section certainly do not exhaust all of the potential representational materials that could have been used with this text.

5. Conclusion

In this paper the author has highlighted the importance of using literature in L2 pedagogy and added to the ongoing debate about the methods that should be used in the classroom. The author detailed the developments of representational strategies that advance on the traditional referential styles that the author believes are reductive, yet still essential to class content. The author presented and explained two texts that he has used in his L2 classroom and the representational task-based activities that he successfully incorporated into his lessons. Overall, the author believes it is the responsibility of teachers and syllabus designers to search and uncover the most productive methods that will create the best environment for students to achieve their potential.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. "A Modern Dragon," by Rowena Bastin Bennett

A train is a dragon that roars through the dark. He wriggles his tail as he sends up a spark. He pierces the night with his one yellow eye, And all the earth trembles when he rushes by.

Appendix 2. The Emperor's New Clothes by Hans Christian Andersen

Once upon a time...

Many years ago, there was an Emperor, who was so excessively fond of new clothes, that he spent all his money in dress. He did not trouble himself in the least about his soldiers; nor did he care to go either to the theatre or the chase, except for the opportunities then afforded him for displaying his new clothes. He had a different suit for each hour of the day; and as of any other king or emperor, one is accustomed to say, "he is sitting in council," it was always said of him, "The Emperor is sitting in his wardrobe."

Time passed merrily in the large town which was his capital; strangers arrived every day at the court. One day, two rogues, calling themselves weavers, made their appearance. They gave out that they knew how to weave stuffs of the most beautiful colours and elaborate patterns, the clothes manufactured from which should have the wonderful property of remaining invisible to everyone who was unfit for the office he held, or who was extraordinarily simple in character.

"These must, indeed, be splendid clothes!" thought the Emperor. "Had I such a suit, I might at once find out what men in my realms are unfit for their office, and also be able to distinguish the wise from the foolish! This stuff must be woven for me immediately." And he caused large sums of money to be given to both the weavers in order that they might begin their work directly.

So the two pretended weavers set up two looms, and affected to work very busily, though in reality they did nothing at all. They asked for the most delicate silk and the purest gold thread; put both into their own knapsacks; and then continued their pretended work at the empty looms until late at night.

"I should like to know how the weavers are getting on with my cloth," said the Emperor to himself, after some little time had elapsed; he was, however, rather embarrassed, when he remembered that a simpleton, or one unfit for his office, would be unable to see the manufacture. To be sure, he thought he had nothing to risk in his own person; but yet, he would prefer sending somebody else, to bring him intelligence about the weavers, and their work, before he troubled himself in the affair. All the people throughout the city had heard of the wonderful property the cloth was to possess; and all were anxious to learn how wise, or how ignorant, their neighbours might prove to be.

"I will send my faithful old minister to the weavers," said the Emperor at last, after some deliberation, "he will be best able to see how the cloth looks; for he is a man of sense, and no one can be more suitable for his office than he is."

So the faithful old minister went into the hall, where the knaves were working with all their might, at their empty looms. "What can be the meaning of this?" thought the old man, opening his eyes very wide. "I cannot discover the least bit of thread on the looms." However, he did not express his thoughts aloud.

The impostors requested him very courteously to be so good as to come nearer their looms; and then asked him whether the design pleased him, and whether the colours were not very beautiful; at the same time pointing to the empty frames. The poor old minister looked and looked, he could not discover anything on the looms, for a very good reason, viz: there was nothing there. "What!" thought he again. "Is it possible that I am a simpleton? I have never thought so myself; and no one must know it now if I am so. Can it be, that I am unfit for my office? No, that must not be said either. I will never confess that I could not see the stuff."

"Well, Sir Minister!" said one of the knaves, still pretending to work. "You do not say whether the stuff pleases you."

"Oh, it is excellent!" replied the old minister, looking at the loom through his spectacles. "This pattern, and the colours, yes, I will tell the Emperor without delay, how very beautiful I think them."

"We shall be much obliged to you," said the impostors, and then they named the different colours and described the pattern of the pretended stuff. The old minister listened attentively to their words, in order that he might repeat them to the Emperor; and then the knaves asked for more silk and gold, saying that it was necessary to complete what they had begun. However, they put all that was given them into their knapsacks; and continued to work with as much apparent diligence as before at their empty looms.

The Emperor now sent another officer of his court to see how the men were getting on, and to ascertain whether the cloth would soon be ready. It was just the same with this gentleman as with the minister; he surveyed the looms on all sides, but could see nothing at all but the empty frames.

"Does not the stuff appear as beautiful to you, as it did to my lord the minister?" asked the impostors of the Emperor's second ambassador; at the same time making the same gestures as before, and talking of the design and colours which were not there.

"I certainly am not stupid!" thought the messenger. "It must be, that I am not fit for my good, profitable office! That is very odd; however, no one shall know anything about it." And accordingly he praised the stuff he could not see, and declared that he was delighted with both colours and patterns. "Indeed, please your Imperial Majesty," said he to his sovereign when he returned, "the cloth which the weavers are preparing is extraordinarily magnificent."

The whole city was talking of the splendid cloth which the Emperor had ordered to be woven at his own expense.

And now the Emperor himself wished to see the costly manufacture, while it was still in the loom. Accompanied by a select number of officers of the court, among whom were the two honest men who had already admired the cloth, he went to the crafty impostors, who, as soon as they were aware of the Emperor's approach, went on working more diligently than ever; although they still did not pass a single thread through the looms.

"Is not the work absolutely magnificent?" said the two officers of the crown, already mentioned. "If your Majesty will only be pleased to look at it! What a splendid design! What glorious colours!" and at the same time they pointed to the empty frames; for they imagined that everyone else could see this exquisite piece of workmanship.

"How is this?" said the Emperor to himself. "I can see nothing! This is indeed a terrible affair! Am I a simpleton, or am I unfit to be an Emperor? That would be the worst thing that could happen--Oh! the cloth is charming," said he, aloud. "It has my complete approbation." And he smiled most graciously, and looked closely at the empty looms; for on no account would he say that he could not see what two of the officers of his court had praised so much. All his retinue now strained their eyes, hoping to discover something on the looms, but they could see no more than the others; nevertheless, they all exclaimed, "Oh, how beautiful!" and

advised his majesty to have some new clothes made from this splendid material, for the approaching procession. "Magnificent! Charming! Excellent!" resounded on all sides; and everyone was uncommonly gay. The Emperor shared in the general satisfaction; and presented the impostors with the ribald of an order of knighthood, to be worn in their button-holes, and the title of "Gentlemen Weavers."

The rogues sat up the whole of the night before the day on which the procession was to take place, and had sixteen lights burning, so that everyone might see how anxious they were to finish the Emperor's new suit. They pretended to roll the cloth off the looms; cut the air with their scissors; and sewed with needles without any thread in them. "See!" cried they, at last. "The Emperor's new clothes are ready!"

And now the Emperor, with all the grandees of his court, came to the weavers; and the rogues raised their arms, as if in the act of holding something up, saying, "Here are your Majesty's trousers! Here is the scarf! Here is the mantle! The whole suit is as light as a cobweb; one might fancy one has nothing at all on, when dressed in it; that, however, is the great virtue of this delicate cloth."

"Yes indeed!" said all the courtiers, although not one of them could see anything of this exquisite manufacture.

"If your Imperial Majesty will be graciously pleased to take off your clothes, we will fit on the new suit, in front of the looking glass."

The Emperor was accordingly undressed, and the rogues pretended to array him in his new suit; the Emperor turning round, from side to side, before the looking glass.

"How splendid his Majesty looks in his new clothes, and how well they fit!" everyone cried out. "What a design! What colours! These are indeed royal robes!"

"The canopy which is to be borne over your Majesty, in the procession, is waiting," announced the chief master of the ceremonies.

"I am quite ready," answered the Emperor. "Do my new clothes fit well?" asked he, turning himself round again before the looking glass, in order that he might appear to be examining his handsome suit.

The lords of the bedchamber, who were to carry his Majesty's train felt about on the ground, as if they were lifting up the ends of the mantle; and pretended to be carrying something; for they would by no means betray anything like simplicity, or unfitness for their office.

So now the Emperor walked under his high canopy in the midst of the procession, through the streets of his capital; and all the people standing by, and those at the windows, cried out, "Oh! How beautiful are our Emperor's new clothes! What a magnificent train there is to the mantle; and how gracefully the scarf hangs!" in short, no one would allow that he could not see these much-admired clothes; because, in doing so, he would have declared himself either a simpleton or unfit for his office. Certainly, none of the Emperor's various suits, had ever made so great an impression, as these invisible ones.

"But the Emperor has nothing at all on!" said a little child. "Listen to the voice of innocence!" exclaimed his father; and what the child had said was whispered from one to another.

"But he has nothing at all on!" at last cried out all the people. The Emperor was vexed, for he knew that the people were right; but he thought the procession must go on now! And the lords of the bedchamber took greater pains than ever, to appear holding up a train, although, in reality, there was no train to hold.

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