# CROSS 交潮 CURRENTS

COMMUNICATION/LANGUAGE/CROSS-CULTURAL SKILLS


THE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE OF JAPAN

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## ABOUT *CROSS CURRENTS*

*Cross Currents* is a biannual journal published by the Language Institute of Japan in an effort to contribute to an inter-disciplinary exchange of ideas within the areas of communication, language skills acquisition, and cross-cultural training and learning. We are interested in articles covering a wide range of concerns, including these specific areas: 1) Language teaching and learning, especially regarding English as a Foreign Language, 2) Language teaching and learning as they apply to the situation in Japan, and 3) Cross-cultural communication issues. We also welcome reviews of recently published books in these same areas.

Although a large proportion of our articles deal with Japan and Japanese students, we are also concerned with teaching methodologies, techniques, and general issues which are multicultural rather than culture-specific. While articles demonstrating solid and thoughtful research are greatly appreciated, always kept in mind is the necessity for readability and practicality for our readers, the classroom teachers. We make every effort to balance abstract and theoretical articles with articles directly applicable to the classroom.

* * *

All articles submitted for consideration should be typed, double spaced, and in duplicate, with references placed in the body of the text in parentheses with the author's last name, date of the work cited and page number. Footnotes on substantive matters should appear at the bottom of the page on which the footnote occurs. Please include: 1) a paragraph precis of the article, 2) a short biographical sketch, and 3) a bibliography which should conform to the M.L.A. Style Sheet. Manuscripts should be 5–20 pages in length. Authors of articles accepted for publication will receive twenty reprints.

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*Donna Ilyin*

The most frequent questions about testing are: Where do we place students in ESL/EFL programs? How do we do it? and What tests do we use? These questions assume a language acquisition hierarchy: from no proficiency through middle to high proficiency or what is commonly referred to as beginning, intermediate and advanced ESL/EFL. This report provides stages to ESL abilities, suggests ways for quick student evaluation, describes six adult school ESL levels and relates some published and available tests to those levels.

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*Robert Ruud*

Much can be said in support of the use of student-generated material in ESL classes. Approaches such as Community Language Learning contend that students learn better when they have a vested interest in the language they are using. Islamabad is one technique used in a CLL context which can be adapted for target-language-only situations and which can be modified to focus on specific grammatical or conceptual areas.

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## ABOUT THIS ISSUE

With this issue, *Cross Currents* enters its tenth year of service to the ESL community. The present editorial staff salutes the tremendous contributions to the journal made by previous editors, LIOJ directors, authors, advertisers, distributors, and most importantly, our subscribers and readers. The momentum in the office for continued improvements in all phases of the journal was very strong when we came aboard last summer, taking over from Gerry Ryan who left us with fine manuscripts and suggestions for office management. We have tried to live up to the tradition by increasing advertising, systematizing the editorial process, moving from typewriters to a word processor, and changing the layout in an attempt to make the journal easier to read and to bind. Further, we plan to celebrate the tenth anniversary by making an index of our articles available to our subscribers.

This issue features three articles that suggest classroom lessons and describe techniques for teaching them effectively. Roger E. Gannon describes methods for using text effectively in the classroom. Walter Matreyek tells how to get the most out of a common, and often ignored, classroom prop—the chalkboard. Miriam R. Eisenstein, Clarice Wilks Kaltinick, and Ellen Shaw share a listening lesson that provokes students' thoughts on dialects and the cultural attributes people associate with them.

Three other articles focus on topics never far from the teacher's mind: teaching strategies, designing curriculum to meet students' needs, and testing students efficiently. James W. Ney reviews the recent evolution of ESL teaching theory with attention to the balance between drill and free expression. Rowland Harker tells how he adopted various teaching methods into his program to overcome the common Japanese problem of silent English classes. Donna Ilyin explains her methods for giving oral and written tests to students in a large adult program in San Francisco as well as describing the merits of many popular tests.

Rounding out the set of articles, Robert M. March writes about cross-cultural communication problems as illustrated in Japanese-Western business negotiations. The patterns and quirks of both sides come under scrutiny.

In addition, this issue has two bright ideas from LIOJ teachers as well as reviews of two classroom texts and three books on American-Japanese cultural communication topics.

We hope that this issue will contribute to the quality of ESL lessons around the world. With your continued support, we will strive to provide an even better journal in the next ten years.

*Cross Currents*

Thomas Walter Smith
Andrew Blasky
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# *New from Regents*


## PROSE AND PASSION

*by Gary Gabriel*

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Learning to speak English can be difficult, but learning to express emotions in a new language is harder still. **Prose and Passion** is a sensitive, but lively functional text to help intermediate non-natives decide what to say in social situations.

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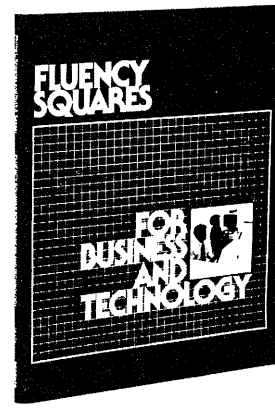


## Fluency Squares for Business and Technology

*by Phillip L. Knowles and Ruth A. Sasaki*

**Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced**

Professional people today have to discuss job descriptions, company descriptions, market shares, productivity, and energy-efficiency in English. They have to understand the concepts of cause, state vs. event, proportion, rate of change, numbers and operations, classification, and sequence. **Fluency Squares for Business and Technology** offers professionals in those fields the opportunity to develop their listening and speaking skills by discussing concrete, realistic situations, problems, and economic changes.

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# Approaches to Text

*Roger Gannon*

As ESL and EFL teachers we rely heavily on text.[1] It is the mainspring of our classroom activities, yet many of us fail to exploit it for its true worth, particularly with more advanced students. What follows is a discussion of a number of ways in which text can be used to improve the English of adult students who are well on their way to becoming advanced students of English. The paper proceeds by first defining an advanced student in terms of required abilities and then by discussing a number of activities that the author has found useful in developing such abilities.

To qualify as an advanced student of English, a student should be able to do a considerable number of the following:

a. Use an appropriate standard dialect of English, e.g., standard British English or standard West African English, and be aware of the differences between dialects.

b. Within that dialect select language appropriate to topic and area. For example, an area (engineering) will consist of a number of topics (tooling up, calculating stress, etc.).

c. Within that dialect select language appropriate to function. For example, a student must be able to choose the language appropriate to "persuading" if that is what he wants to do, or "amusing," if that is what he wants to do.

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Roger Gannon teaches English and Linguistics at Glendon College, York University, Toronto, where he is an associate professor in the English Department. He is currently doing research on language planning and language problems in Canada and writing a book on English as a World Language. Before emigrating to Canada in 1968, he was Director of the International Teacher Training Institute in London, England.

[1] The word *text* should be understood to refer to any stretch of meaningful language, spoken or written. *Student* and *learner* will refer to learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) as well as learners of English as a second language (ESL).

d. Within that dialect select language appropriate to the person he is speaking to, i.e., formal and informal language.

e. Within that dialect select language appropriate to the mode in which he wishes to operate, since there is considerable difference between certain types of written and spoken English. For example, the language of real conversation is very different structurally from that of its equivalent in a play, however realistic it may be.

If he is to reach the level described above, the second-language learner will need to:

a. Remember newly encountered items or sequences of language and how to use them.

b. Develop his ability to combine known items with more recently encountered items in old and new situations, thereby increasing his active and passive knowledge of and skill in the language.

c. Develop his ability to interpret and produce *language chunks.* Native speakers encode and decode in blocks or chunks of language. Thus, a native speaker of English would produce "I have not a clue" as one phonological unit: *Ihaventaclue.* By learning to deal with such language units, students will be able to listen more easily and speak more naturally.

d. Develop his ability to guess from context, in order to predict or anticipate what is to come and to reconstruct the full meaning from partial clues. Learners of a second language confronted by a steady stream of speech need to develop this guessing ability to cut down on the number of uncertainties that face them.

In developing these abilities, teachers and students can use text in two different but complementary ways:

They can explore a text internally in order to understand real speech or conversational English.

They can use a text as a jumping-off point for increasing learning and learning skills.

## Exploring a Text Internally

1. *Examining Lexical, Phonological, and Grammatical Components*

Teachers and students can undertake a systematic examination of the language employed in a particular text: for example, un-

familiar words and expressions; words and expressions that have caused problems in the past; familiar and unfamiliar grammatical features; odd spellings; linking devices used to hold the text together; important phonological features, such as vowel length used for emphasis or pauses used to heighten a particular meaning or effect; and so on.

2. *Examining Overall Meaning*

This is a necessary follow-up to the preceding activity. Teachers and students can study the fuller and often hidden meaning of a text by discussing the intention of the writer or speaker, the formality or informality of the language, deliberate ambiguities, and so on.

3. *Extensive Reading or Listening Activities*

In such an activity students read or listen to a text and choose, from a number of sentences or paragraphs written by the teacher, the one that most accurately reflects the meaning of the text. Students should be prepared to defend their choice. This type of work encourages precision reading and listening: learning to decode the message accurately, rather than obtaining only a vague sense of the text's message. Teacher summaries can be devised to test varietal knowledge, as well as more factual knowledge. For example: "The writer *sarcastically* describes life in the village" compared to "The writer *humorously* describes life in the village."

A variant of the above activity is the true/false quiz. Here, students listen to or read a text and state whether a number of assertions about the text are true or false. This requires some skill in the preparation of questions. If it is done well, it encourages students to think clearly about what they have heard or read.

4. *Precis*

Precis work, or summary writing, has been out of fashion in the ESL/EFL world for a number of years. It is difficult to understand why, since it is a useful activity for teaching students how to write summaries, how to write tightly without padding, and how to read or listen for essential meaning. Precis writing can also be used to teach students to prioritize, i.e., to arrange facts or arguments in order of relevance and importance.

5. *Translation*

Another activity out of favor for a number of years in the language teaching field is translation. Translation can be used for teaching the nuances of language and for showing students exactly how an item functions in English. By exploring the variety of expressions available in English for rendering an item or phrase in his own native language, a student can learn much of value about finer points of the English language. A useful exercise is to ask students to read a text in their own language and then to translate certain key sentences (chosen by the teacher for the knowledge their translation will offer the student).

6. *The Jumbled Text*

In this activity students read a text and are then presented with the "same" text, but this time with a jumbled sentence order. Their job is to reassemble the text in its logical order. The exercise is an excellent means of teaching sequencing and coherence skills.

7. *The Distorted Text*

This exercise also helps students organize their ideas in a manner appropriate to English. It is similar to the jumbled text, but in this case the cohesion of the text is interfered with. For example, lexical and grammatical links are used inappropriately and students are asked to spot the errors and correct them. Other errors might include ambiguous pronoun reference or pronouns with no apparent referent. All distorted text should, however, be based on errors typical of the students the teacher is working with. Otherwise, the exercise becomes simply an intellectual game or puzzle with little relevance to the students' needs.

8. *The Poor-Style Text*

The poor-style text exercise has much in common with the previous two exercises. Students read a text and are then given a rewritten version of the text which contains a number of stylistic errors, e.g., too many sentences of the same length or construction in close proximity to one another. Students pick out the errors and rewrite those sections of the text with appropriate changes. This activity helps improve the student's own style by developing an editing ability in the student. As in previous exercises, the errors should be based on typical errors made by one's students.

9. *Text-Construction*

This activity is also designed to assist students in improving their text-building ability, but unlike the previous exercises, this one is more active. Rather than spot errors, students build a text from materials provided by the teacher. The text to be built consists of a number of sentences, say one hundred, divided into groups of four each. From each of these groups, students have to choose the most appropriate sentence for the construction of the overall text. The students can be asked to explain their choice and the discussion that ensues provides a convenient forum for learning about the structure of text.

10. *The Cloze Test*

The cloze test can be used with texts previously seen or unseen for a number of related purposes. In particular, it can teach students how to guess intelligently, a skill that is essential to the good language learner. In a cloze test, key items are removed from a written or spoken text and students must fill in the gaps with an appropriate word or words. In order to fill in the blanks and reconstruct the message in its entirety, students must anticipate what is to come by using the given information.

The preceding exercises are essentially concerned with examining the internal components of a text. They focussed on the grammatical, lexical, and phonological structure of text–essential knowledge for the language learner. In contrast, the exercises that follow use the text as a jumping-off point for a different but complementary type of activity.

**Jumping Off From Text**

1. *Discussion of Text*

In discussing the text students can air their own views and make criticisms of the text's viewpoint. The text, too, can be used as a jumping-off point for a related discussion. Such discussions encourage students to combine items in the text with what they have previously learned and to develop different ways of saying things, as in an informal class discussion of a formal text. They also provide new situations for items recently encountered in the text and this repetition in the discussion increases the chance of items being remembered. Furthermore, the more a student

becomes familiar with certain items, phrases, and structures through these discussions, the more likely it is that he will increase his ability to chunk.

2. *Live Listening*

This activity requires students to discuss a topic they feel strongly about. Each student states his position *in turn.* After the first student has stated his views, the next student has to repeat the argument *to the previous student's satisfaction* before he can add his own opinons. Random choice of student participation order encourages attentive student listening. Such an activity provides for non-rote repetition work and the learning of different ways of getting the message across.

3. *Sequel Writing*

In this activity students write, or produce orally, a sequel for a given text. The text can either be a genuinely unfinished text or one with its conclusion removed. This exercise encourages students to use the items which they have encountered in the text and to combine these new items with old items from previous language experience. In addition, sequel writing provides the student with a task in which he can concentrate on accuracy since much of the language he will need for the sequel he will already know.

4. *Role Playing*

Role playing is an activity in which students act out language situations. At the elementary level, much of the activity is inevitably controlled by the teacher or the textbook. At the advanced level, the student can play a much more active part in this activity. This I can best illustrate by describing an exercise I used with my own students. They had read a text on water divining and a village's search for water. In the text there was a reference to a heated discussion at a local council meeting. Having read and discussed the piece, the students were asked to recreate that discussion. First, they were asked to write it in the form of a tape-recorded transcription of the discussion, then as part of a play in spoken prose, and finally they were asked to act out their spoken prose version. Role playing can help second language learners develop confidence in speaking English. At the same time it can

help them remember newly-encountered items. The particular assignment described above also gave students practice in switching from one variety of English to another.

5. *Conversion Exercises*

The ability to recognize and use different varieties of English can be developed through conversion exercises, which require students to convert a text from one varietal form to another. For example, students can be asked to rewrite a verbatim account of a debate in the form of spoken prose or to convert a formal speech into an informal speech. They might be asked to transform a formal article into a speech containing off-the-cuff remarks, or to rewrite a didactic description of a planned nuclear power plant into a polemic for or against construction of the plant. A text designed for the specialist could be converted into a text aimed at a more general audience.

Conversion exercises serve a number of purposes. First, they sensitize students to the different varieties of English and their functions. Second, they assist students in acquiring the typical language of particular varieties. Students may already be familiar with some of the language used, but it is often a scattered knowledge. Conversion exercises help them to bring this scattered knowledge together and to see it as belonging to a particular variety of English. Third, these exercises provide students with an opportunity to make considerable use of newly-encountered items without the risk of rote learning. Moreover, students can concentrate on accuracy of expressions since the exercises present fewer new facts for them to wrestle with as they convert the language from one variety to another.

In closing, I would like to make one final point. Experience has taught me that students need both types of exercises that I have described. Not studying the internal aspects of text tends to lead to inaccurate, error-filled language. Ignoring the opportunity for learning afforded by jumping off from the text tends to produce students who cannot express themselves with imagination, students who are often carbon copies of their teacher or textbooks, unable to function in the linguistic give-and-take of the real world. We as teachers must take care to exploit both approaches to text.

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# A Case Study in Dealing with Cultural Reserve as an Impediment to Language Learning

*Rowland Harker*

For a long time, I have wished that teachers would write frankly about how they were coping with problems like mine—the reluctance of students to speak up. Therefore, I offer this case study with some of the ideas that I have found to be helpful.

For the past year and a half, I have been teaching English to young women in a part of Japan that keeps many of its traditional attitudes towards the feminine sex. Factors coming from this conservative background where women seem to be given a special image of themselves, in addition to factors growing out of attitudes generally held by Japanese about oral communication, have created very reticent students who find it difficult to say anything in as formal a situation as a normal class. The experience of working with these students has impressed on me the point that attitudes and feelings in the classroom may be far more important for language learning than the manner in which various aspects of the language are presented.

This is what Stevick means, I believe, when he says "We forget that social decisions are made prior to linguistic constructions" (Stevick, 1976: 108). Also, Rivers was referring to this when, in speaking of attitudinal problems, she said that these had to be dealt with or "most of what is learned will be stored unused, and we will produce individuals who are inhibited and fearful in situations requiring language" (Rivers, 1972: 80).

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Rowland Harker is Chairman of the Department of English at Kagoshima Immaculate Heart College in Kyushu. He was a co-founder of the Language Institute of Japan. He began his teaching career in Japan in 1939 and has taught at the First Higher School and Aoyama Gakuin University. He also taught for three years in government universities in Iran.

While my recent experience has been with women students in southern Kyushu, my previous experience over many years in men's and mixed classes in the Tokyo area makes me feel that what we confront here is just an extreme form of a problem confronted wherever English is taught in Japan and, to some extent, in other parts of the world.

Our college opened a new English major program in April 1979, with the determination to create something fresh in the field of language education and hopes were high among both the teachers and the sixty-four students who entered the first class. One could hardly have hoped for a better situation for language teaching in a Japanese college today. Yet there were serious problems and frustrations—partly, I presume, because of the goals that had been set. The frustration came from the fact that the problems seemed unnecessary. They grew mostly out of attitudes toward class participation that made it difficult to get any kind of spontaneous production of English going in class, even on a level where it seemed clear that the students were fully equipped with the grammar and vocabulary needed. When the students were called on one by one, they could produce adequately, but the class never seemed to take off into the spontaneous response or exchange that is the basis of real communication.

This was especially frustrating for the foreign staff, who at that time made up half of the full-time teaching staff. We tried, at times, to get some kind of free discussion going in class. We would start with easy questions, knowing that the students could answer easily. Yet, almost invariably, the scenario went something like this:

> Teacher: We have some time now. Let's talk about Western food. How many meals do most Westerners eat? (No response.) Oh come now, you all know the answer to that. How many times do Americans and Europeans eat every day? (No response.) Now, I know you all know the answer. Why doesn't someone have the courage to give it? Let's try again. Of course, you know what the first meal of the day is called. What is it called? (No response.) It's breakfast, of course. And the meal we eat at noon? Lunch, of course. And in the evening? Dinner. Do Westerners eat any more meals in a day? Of course, the answer is usually no. Then, how many meals does that make? Breakfast, lunch, and dinner—that's how

many? (No response.) Well, if no one will volunteer, I'll have to call on someone. Emiko, what's the answer?

Emiko: Three.

Teacher: Why didn't any of you volunteer the answer? How can we have a discussion if you won't speak up without being called on? I guess I will just have to ask questions and call on you individually for answers, but I really thought you would enjoy having your own discussion.

Of course, this is simplified, but it is the kind of situation that teachers seemed to get involved in again and again. It might be added that during this kind of exchange the faces of the students seemed to become blank, as though they feared that any sign of comprehension might mark them for being called on.

Because much of the class time was spent with drills and exercises, with responses being either in unison or as a result of individuals being called on, the teachers felt it was important to get free conversation moving as a means of transfer from the drills of the text to the freer English of real life, but we found it difficult to get anything going.

Fortunately, the picture was not all black. We began to find strategies that did work in class. Also, all our students lived in the same dormitory with some of the teachers and there they found many chances for real English communication that helped their studies come alive. Five weeks of intensive study in America with many assignments involving going out into the community and interviewing people and with several home stays added another positive factor. The students ended the year far ahead of where they had started.

Considerable time was spent thinking about the reasons for the unsuccessful attempts at classroom discussion mentioned above. Over a period of time working in Japan, one becomes aware that the six years of English instruction that precede a student's graduating from high school have produced in the student certain habits and attitudes that will never of themselves lead to fluency in English except for the gifted few who are endowed with special traits that make them somehow able to succeed despite all obstacles.

Junior high and high school classes in Japan, so far as I have been able to learn by direct observation and by questioning teachers and graduates of the system, are places where teachers teach facts

about English, using the Japanese language, and where students memorize these facts. The students, at least the better ones, become experts at doing grammatical drills and at translating English into Japanese. This is what the university entrance examinations require, and this is what students are prepared for at school. The students produce practically nothing in English on their own except as answers to specific questions where the main idea is already given. The result is that students are not prepared to present their own ideas in an English discussion.

The basic attitude toward learning a language, or anything else, is to sit passively while the teacher pours out information and then to memorize until the student can give back what the teacher has said. Of course, language production requires different skills. It requires having one's own idea and then finding the means of saying it in whatever language one is trying to speak. Merely memorizing what the teacher has taught about grammar, vocabulary, etc., will never produce real communication of ideas. Passivity in the learning process is a major problem.

Another problem grows out of the group-mindedness of Japanese. Even if students do have ideas that they might be prepared to express in class, the fact that in a class they are always part of a group can be a formidable barrier in a society where the pressure is against individual assertiveness (Reischauer, 1977: 127). The individual tends not to feel free to make a statement without getting group approval. For one student to show that she knows the answer to a question or has an idea of her own to offer seems to mean that she is showing herself to be better than those who do not have anything to say.

Many times one sees a person who wants to volunteer first look around or even confer briefly with those nearby before venturing to speak out. The person who might want to speak up when others are silent fears that this might gain the disapproval of others. It is safe to say that among women in Japan, and especially in southern Kyushu, where men are traditionally assertive and women traditionally retiring, the problem of getting women students to speak up voluntarily is acute.

This group-mindedness has another aspect. From childhood, one of the chief sanctions used in disciplining children is laughter. Shame is emphasized rather than guilt (Edamatsu, 1978: 17). The fear of making a mistake and being laughed at can create

a paralyzing state of mind that can inhibit the best of students (Harker, 1980: 84). Doubtless, this is one of the important factors in producing the situation described earlier where students failed to respond to the teacher's prodding.

There is one further point that may be worth mentioning in this regard—the attitude of Japanese toward oral communication (Ozaki, 1978: 227). In the reports that our first-year students wrote after spending six weeks in an intensive English course in America in 1980, several of them mentioned how grateful they were to be Japanese because the Japanese language, unlike English, does not require one to tell in detail all the points that one wants to convey. The homogeneousness of the Japanese people makes communication a matter of hints rather than specific statements in many situations. Because the listener shares so much knowledge with the speaker, the less said, the better, so long as it is enough to hint at what one wants to convey (Reischauer, 1977: 136). This attitude is totally inadequate for speaking English and the change in personal character, at least superficially, that is necessary for Japanese to make in order to become good speakers of English is a real barrier.

By the time we were ready to start with our second group of students in April 1980, I was more convinced than ever that getting the students to speak, to express their own ideas in English, was more important than their mastering further points of grammar or vocabulary. I knew that the students already had far more passive knowledge than they were able to use in any real communication and that further drills or admonitions were not going to be helpful.

Thus it was that I decided to try something fresh. Hints for this came out of a brief workshop on Community Language Learning (CLL) that I attended in the spring of 1980, just before the new school year was to start. CLL sees language learning in terms of what happens to the student rather than in terms of the mechanics of the language being taught (see La Forge, "Community Language Learning," 1976). From the beginning to the end, it deals with the process, including emotional aspects, of what goes on inside the language learners as they move from ideas to real expression in the target language. It was the discovery of this emphasis that gave me hope that there might be valuable suggestions for dealing with our teaching problems here. One of CLL's by-products

is "a very special kind of community involvement . . . an intense atmosphere of warmth and belonging. The student never feels isolated and alone but rather always senses the strong reassurance, help and positive regard of everyone else" (Curran, 1976: 1). This seemed to address the problems coming from the group-mindedness of our students.

Now what was it possible to get out of CLL for our teaching situation? It made it clear that in our own entering classes there may have been people at all the first three or four stages of learning as outlined by CLL. In the two classes that we have received so far, there have been students who were still very insecure and afraid in the language learning situation. Others were over their fear but could speak little. Some were beginning to be independent and some had begun to resent the need for further dependence.

There were two points out of CLL that I felt I could safely put into practice immediately, even though I was unsure about how to do it. They were both suggested in Father La Forge's "The Problem of Shyness in Speaking English" (La Forge, 1976: 39). The first point that I felt we could use was to divide my class of thirty-four students into smaller groups, and so we made six groups of five or six each. This was with the new students that entered in April 1980. Most days, during periods of ten to fifteen minutes, the groups were instructed to talk freely among themselves, of course in English, sometimes about any subject they liked, and sometimes with a topic suggested after some kind of brief presentation. During this time I moved about the room listening in on the different groups, sometimes offering suggestions, sometimes helping with the production of a sentence that someone was struggling with, sometimes making mental notes to be covered later with the whole class.

The second point was to have occasional times of reflection when the students were asked to look at their own role in such discussions. Were they making full use of the opportunity to speak? Were they helping others to take part? Twice in the spring term I asked them as homework to write up very briefly the results of this reflection. These assignments were the only time they made known the results of their reflection.

Spending so much time with "free" activities sometimes made me wonder if I was doing things the right way. Were the students getting the grammar and vocabulary that they should be getting?

Yet I knew that all my efforts on the mechanics of the language had produced little the year before.

Fortunately, there was a chance for outside evaluation. In 1980, the same as in 1979, the first-year class of the English department went to America for a summer intensive course in English at Fort Wright College in Spokane, Washington. There, the same leadership was responsible as in the previous year. It was a source of considerable encouragement for me when I heard that the people who had welcomed both groups reported that the 1980 group arrived in Spokane with a very different attitude from those of the year before. It was said that they were more ready to take the initiative and seemed much freer when speaking. They were reported to be far better prepared in general than those of the previous group. This came not only from the teaching staff, but also from the various people who were involved in the dormitory and cafeteria and in other aspects of college life. Whether it was true or not, at least it gave me some confidence in continuing to try to find new ways to develop what had been started.

The autumn 1980 term had a program largely based on CLL. A considerable portion of the time for oral work was spent in small groups where there were occasional periods for free conversation. Sometimes a topic was introduced by the teacher and then the groups discussed the topic or offshoots from it. Sometimes activities included questions or requests from one group to another. Sometimes the conversation was basically free but the students were asked to experiment with using some particular grammatical form such as the passive, the subjunctive, or one of the perfect tenses. These three points happened to be the main fields of grammar where I felt the students were especially weak.

We have used Father La Forge's suggestion about recording the conversation created by a group; however, we have had six to eight groups going at once so that the whole class could be involved. Recording the conversations encourages students to use more sophisticated structures and vocabulary than they ordinarily use in free conversation. The fact that students record each part of their conversation only after they have had time to think it out carefully gives the opportunity for them to put to use all that they know and not just say the simplest things that come to their minds.

In this type of activity, groups are often very creative and reserve is no problem. Some produce panel discussions similar to

a radio or TV program; some make radio news programs of real or imagined news; some take a subject and discuss it freely without any particular form. Sometimes an important event in the school or outside gives a general direction to all the groups.

Usually about five minutes of recording comes from most groups after a fifteen or twenty minute session. The next day the class enjoys listening to what has been recorded by each group and the teacher can call attention to points where help is needed, using simple drills to imbed the point for all the students. This has been a very useful method for getting all the students involved in real English production.

One of the most effective activities was also adapted from one of Father La Forge's ideas (La Forge, 1978: 47–8). We had students sit in two concentric circles facing each other. After short periods of conversation (three to five minutes), one circle shifted one seat to the right or left. We have tried this with free conversation, suggested topics, and suggestions to try certain grammatical constructions. The students took such an enthusiastic part in this that it was necessary to be sure that there were no other classes nearby that might have been disturbed. This is quite a contrast to the quietness of our older methods where it was difficult to get anyone to speak.

On Saturdays, for the sake of variety, we conducted a "College Bowl" where, in smaller groups, the students prepared questions about grammar, vocabulary, and spelling, as well as general information questions, for a quiz program that took the last part of the ninety-minute period. Toward the end of the term there was an elimination contest among the twelve teams into which our whole group of sixty-seven was divided.

A quiz show program helps students get excited about speaking English and doing it correctly. The factor of competition seems to break through the barrier of reserve, especially because it is competition by teams. The desire to have the team win and the chance to confer with one's teammates takes care of the need for group support. The requirement that the representative of the team be entirely on her own at the moment of speaking gives a good chance for individual performance. The rule that responses be in correct English to get full points gives great pressure for students to pay full attention to structural details.

In the summer of 1980, I was able to attend a workshop on the Silent Way conducted by Shakti Gattegno, wife of the pioneer of this way of teaching, Caleb Gattegno. This remarkable method of language instruction has had considerable influence on my thinking and teaching. The whole experience seemed to fit right into my quest for ways to deal with the matter of getting the burden of language teaching onto the student, where it belongs. Caleb Gattegno describes his principles in his latest book on the Silent Way (Gattegno, 1976). My observations are based on my experience in the workshop.

Some of the fundamental principles of the Silent Way stand out in my mind as a result of the workshop. The first is the idea that at all times one must teach at the level where the students are, and not be bound by any course plan or textbook. Whatever the goals for a term may be, one can never meet the needs of the students by rushing on to new material when the basic prerequisites for the new material have not yet been adequately absorbed. I know how often I have been guilty of letting the pace of a course be tied to a course plan rather than to the students' needs.

Another point basic to the Silent Way is something that I had long felt to be true but had applied only at times. It is the idea that students can learn not to make mistakes only as they learn to recognize the mistakes themselves and correct them themselves. Rather than being a good idea to be applied when convenient, this is the very essence of language learning. How much easier and quicker it is for the teacher to make the corrections needed and then for the students to repeat the corrected form, without realizing that this is robbing the students of their chance to gain the skills for producing correct English themselves.

This point is connected to another important idea, that students learn to do what they practice doing and little more. If they practice mimicking the teacher, then they become skillful in mimicking, not in speaking. If they memorize passages, they become skillful in memorizing, and so on. If they are to become skillful in expressing their own ideas in English, this is what they need to practice. The teacher must be constantly aware of what is actually going on. Are students learning to express their thoughts in English or are they learning something else?

Then there is the point that the teacher must try as hard as possible to make sure that only one new point at a time is being taught so that students will not be confused. Of course, this is one of the main reasons for using rods in the earlier stages of the Silent Way technique—because it is easy to limit the subject under consideration.

The techniques described in the CLL and Silent Way workshops I attended were aimed at beginning students. They are clearly not appropriate for entering college students who have already had six years of study of the language, but it must also be obvious that the basic principles of these methods can be applied. In fact, the most important thing in teaching any group of students is to be fully aware of the situation in which they stand and to mold one's teaching in accordance with it. Just because one knows that the students have covered certain areas of grammar and vocabulary in their previous work is no reason for going on from there, giving more advanced work. The average Japanese student entering college knows a lot of detached facts about English but cannot make practical use of it for living communication. If one is sensitive to the real needs of the students, one will realize that as far as communication is concerned, it will be necessary to go back, almost to the beginning, and make what they have learned in an abstract way come alive. Again, if one teaches from the standpoint of the students' ability, one will have to take into consideration the great psychological blocks to full self-expression in the new language that have already been mentioned.

The Silent Way principle of helping students find their own errors and correct them themselves is applicable at any stage of learning. Speaking or writing is a matter of having an idea and then finding a way of expressing it. The teacher's correction of mistakes in the end product rarely helps students correct the process by which they arrive at wrong conclusions. If hearing and seeing correct English were enough to insure the production of correct English, then learning a language would be easy. What is needed is for the students to learn how they themselves can conduct the process that produces correct English. This happens when students are helped to correct their own errors rather than having them corrected by someone else. And this is likely to apply as much to errors in pronunciation as to errors in structure. Students are more apt to remember how to make a new English

sound that they have found out how to pronounce correctly by themselves (with help other than modeling, such as a gesture that indicates whether the student is nearer or farther from the sound) than those that they have tried to learn simply by mimicking a model. It is the *process* of finding the right answer that is to be stressed rather than the right answer. If people have the process, they will get the right answer most of the time. If they are given the answer ready-made, then the next time, in a different situation, they will not know what to do.

These are the conclusions I have come to after studying these two methods that I believe have meaning for our own situation. In addition, from CLL I have realized that when students come to a certain point in their language learning, the issue of whether they will advance or not depends entirely on whether they really want to make the effort to go on or not. Those that have attained enough skill for their immediate aims—perhaps enough for travel arrangements and simple everyday conversation—are very apt to settle for that. Any effort to push them beyond this by outward means will surely fail. The only hope is somehow to get them excited again about language learning. If we cannot do that, we cannot do much else, no matter how skillful our classroom technique may be. Now as we near the end of our third year, I can report that our first-year students do take part in free discussions in their smaller classes in a way that is very different from what was happening in our earlier experience. They are learning to speak up.

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# Student-Centered Chalkboard Activities for Beginning Learners

*Walter Matreyek*

Many, if not most, foreign language classrooms have a chalkboard. While chalkboards come in a variety of sizes, shapes, and colors, there are two almost invariable things about them. The first is that the chalkboard, together with the teacher's desk, defines the front of the classroom, with the students' desks oriented towards both. The second is that the chalkboard is thought of as the teacher's territory by both teacher and students.

These two variables often lead to a rather unfortunate consequence: they contribute, albeit unconsciously, to teacher-centered teaching. They contribute to a situation where the teacher stays at the front of the classroom and writes important things on the chalkboard while the students copy what is written there into their notebooks. The teacher, whether he or she wants to be, is in the position of not only being in control of the learning process, but also of assuming all initiative and responsibility for what is to be studied and learned. The teacher, then, becomes the center of all activity, while students adopt more passive roles.

It is quite possible, however, to make the chalkboard more a part of the students' territory. In doing so, the teacher may take some steps towards incorporating more student-centered activities. In these activities, the teacher presents the students with a problem which the students work on and solve by using

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the chalkboard as a common work area. The students need to use their newly developed language skills in order to come up with a solution to the problem. The activities turn the chalkboard into a public forum: what is done there is for everyone to share and to learn from. It also involves a public commitment to what is done there. While some people are at first hesitant to go to the chalkboard in this way, once they begin to feel that they are free to make mistakes, that hesitancy falls away.

Through the use of these chalkboard activities, a number of important things can be accomplished:

*Students take a more active part in their own learning.*

Once the problem has been presented, the teacher lets the students take the primary initiative and responsibility in solving the problem and in their own learning. It should be noted that the teacher retains primary control of the class by virtue of presenting the problem, providing guidance and direction when needed, and by handling the concluding phases of the activity. The students take a measure of task-oriented control, however, in that they need to manage one another's behavior in order to reach a solution to the problem.

*Students connect meaning to language and language to immediate lives and surroundings.*

The chalkboard can be used as a center of action and image as well as for words. The students draw pictures of what they hear or read; they speak or write about what they see; or they do various exercises in which they or people, places, things, and events they know appear. Consequently, the language they study and learn becomes more alive.

*Students develop better error correction skills.*

Once a comfortable, non-threatening procedure for error correction is established, the things produced by the students while working at the chalkboard can become very valuable sources of error correction work. Because of the public nature of the activities, everyone has a chance to recognize and correct errors that may occur. In addition, weaker students have a chance to see that stronger students make many of the same errors as they do, and that they can sometimes help in the correction. Specific

error correction exercises can be given drawing on errors previously made and worked on in class.

*Students receive on-going reinforcement of old skills as they integrate new ones.*

The chalkboard activities presented in this article are all general-usage ones. This means that, with planning, almost anything that students are studying can be worked into the activities. The teacher can combine previously-studied areas with ones which students are in the process of studying.

It should be noted in relation to this point that because these activities are general-usage ones, they need to be used in the context of an encompassing plan of organization. They may be used to supplement what students are studying in a textbook, or they can be used to flesh out a structured curriculum. In other words, the activities are not an end in themselves, but rather a means to achieving certain ends.

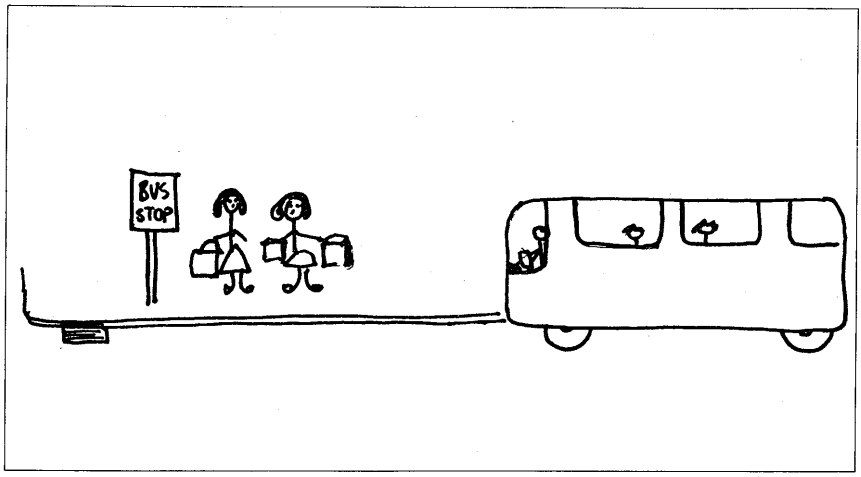
The exact way in which these activities are used depends on the amount of chalkboard space available. If there is only a small chalkboard when the problem is presented, only a few students work on it while the others watch, taking their turns later. If you are fortunate enough to have a lot of chalkboard space, then the students can be divided into work groups at different sections of the chalkboard, and the same or a number of different problems can be given. In this case, a sharing time when each group presents its solutions needs to be provided.

## The Activities

*Story-Picture*

This is a comprehension-oriented activity. The simplest version of this activity is a dictation. The chalkboard has the numbers 1 to 4 written vertically with a large square under the 4. The students hear a sentence but, before they write the sentence, they draw a picture of what they understand. For example, after each of the sentences in this dictation, students draw or add to the picture:

1. Two women are standing at a bus stop.
2. One woman has a big shopping bag.
3. The other woman has two big boxes.
4. The bus is coming to the bus stop.




In higher level versions of this activity, the students hear or read a set of instructions, a story, or a conversation, which they are then asked to transform into an action sequence and/or visual image. It is best if a number of people go to the chalkboard at the same time, so that differences in possible images can be seen. After they're finished, the students can be asked to retell the instructions, story, or conversation in their own words.

Here are some examples:

Instructions: Go to the chalkboard. Take a piece of green chalk. Draw a picture of two men. One man is tall and the other man is short. The tall man has a small book, and the short man is holding a big box. Sign your name under the picture. Put the chalk down on the table. Return to your desk and sit down.

Story: This morning I bought a newspaper and went to the park. I sat on a bench under a big tree. I read the newspaper slowly. Two boys walked on the path in front of me. They both had a baseball bat and a ball in their hands. There was a small brown dog with them.

Conversations:

Bob: Hi, Tom. Where are you going?

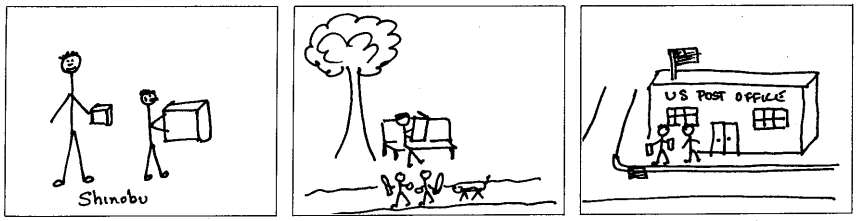
Tom: Hi, Bob. I'm taking these books back to the library. How about you?

Bob: I'm waiting here for my brother. He's inside the Post Office here buying some stamps.

Tom: Oh, yeah. I see him. Well, I'm going to go. I'll see you later, huh.

Bob: Yeah. See you later.

Here are some sample pictures for the instructions, story, and conversation above:



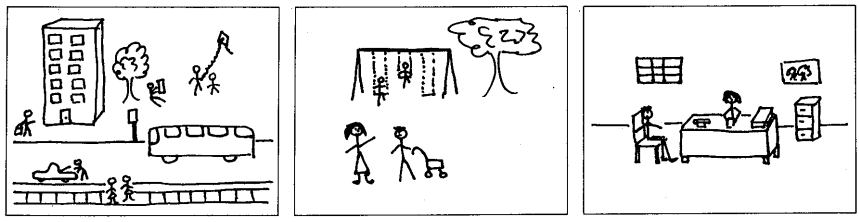

*Picture-Story*

This activity is a more production-oriented one. The students are provided with a picture about which they write or speak. The picture can be drawn on the chalkboard by the teacher or, if work groups are used, given on a piece of paper—one to each group. You can ask for three different kinds of things: a story, a conversation, or a general brainstorming. If you want a story, first ask the students to write down any sentences that come to mind when they see the picture. After they have written five or ten sentences, you can ask them to put them into order, dropping, adding or changing things in order to make a smooth story line.

If you are asking for a conversation, the students need to talk about and understand the situation and then try to come up with what the people are saying. Alternatively, you can provide the first few lines and ask them to continue.

In the general brainstorming, you provide a picture; for example, a person sitting at a personnel manager's desk for a job interview. You ask the students to write ten questions that the personnel manager might ask the interviewee, or ten questions that the interviewee might ask the personnel manager.

Here are three simple pictures that might be used for a story, a conversation, and a brainstorming situation:



At later stages, the students can be asked to provide the pictures that the teacher or other students work on. When given this chance, students often incorporate specific things they want to know into the pictures.

*Conversation on the Chalkboard*

In this activity, two or more people have a conversation by writing on the chalkboard. The conversation can begin with the teacher writing a question or comment. A student goes to the chalkboard and responds to it. The teacher can continue with another question or comment, which the student responds to, and the conversation is built in this way. After the conversation is completed, it can be read by the teacher and student. Later variations of the activity involve students initiating and guiding the conversation with the teacher or the students having such conversations with one another.

While it may seem strange to have a conversation on the chalkboard, doing so has a number of benefits. Because it is written, it allows the students to see the things that people say to them or that they want to say to other people. The spoken word dissipates too quickly into the air. Also, the conversation proceeds slowly enough that students can work on the mechanics of the exchange as well as grammatical accuracy. In addition, it provides a better forum for error correction: they can see what errors they make and work on them more easily. Finally, it allows a personalization of what is being studied by injecting people, places, things, and events everyone is familiar with into the conversation. The conversation on the chalkboard is not meant to replace spoken conversation in class, but rather to provide an interesting little twist to it.

*Error Correction*

While error correction is a background part of all other activities, it can also be developed as a specialized one. In this activity, the teacher writes a set of statements, questions, or instructions which have errors in them on the chalkboard. They should generally be things that students have worked on before. If students know how to correct them, they go to the chalkboard and do so. If they don't, then some clues can be given. Examples of this activity might be:

X I am go to school at 9:00 every morning.
X Do you living in a house or apartment?
Xx Was you watch TV in home last night?
XX I wearing a shirt blue.

The size and number of Xs give students a clue to the size and number of errors contained in the sentences. The same system of Xs can be used with error correction in other activities as well.

*General Exercises*

There are a number of other common exercises that can be profitably used at the chalkboard. These include such exercises as fill-in-the-blanks, sentence completion, scrambled sentences, pattern brainstorming, word sortings, and others. While these are often given in textbooks or as individual homework assignments, there is also a value in using them as chalkboard activities. The value comes from the public nature of the activity and the fact that students are able to watch and learn from each other. They often see possibilities that they may never have thought of themselves.

*Games*

With a little adaptation, any number of games can adapted for use as chalkboard activities. Such games include Hangman, crossword puzzles, Concentration, and Twenty Questions, among others. Again, the value of games as chalkboard activities comes from the public nature of the activity and from students watching and learning from each other.

**Instructional Approach**

When working with the chalkboard activities presented in this article, there are a number of important things to keep in mind.

*Work from the background*

This has both a physical and psychological meaning. Physically, it means that the teacher should not hover around the chalkboard while students are working there. Let the chalkboard become a part of the students' territory and learning space. Psychologically, it means that the teacher gives the minimum necessary instructions to set up the problem and to get the students going, after which time the teacher becomes quiet and lets the students work their way through the problem as best they can. Let the students begin

to take more initiative and responsibility themselves. Time and again you will find yourself drawn to the chalkboard to help. However, it is important to stay away until the students can do no more themselves.

*Don't call on students to go to the chalkboard*

Set up the problem and let the students themselves decide to go or not to go to the chalkboard. The students may be a little hesitant at first, but once you have communicated that you will not return until the problem is finished, social pressure will push people to solve the problem. There will be people who dominate and others who will never go. This can be handled by naming the people who cannot go to the chalkboard. In addition, set up multiple work areas or divide the problem into enough parts so that everyone needs to take a turn. These chalkboard activities are a very good way to foster more voluntary active participation in class; calling on students will work against that happening.

*Encourage students to help and learn from each other*

The best way to accomplish this is to provide students with the requests, questions, and answers needed to complete the task. They need to learn such things as: "Please help me." "Can someone help me?" "Is this O.K.?" "How do you spell_____?" "_____ is spelled_____." You will be able to see what language becomes necessary as you work with the activities. This will take a little time because the students won't learn these things until the situation calls for them. Once they have learned them, however, they will generally use them fairly well, as this kind of language represents a way of exercising control over their own work.

*Don't correct errors*

Of course, students will make errors. A key to success in these activities is that the students feel it's O.K. to make errors and that they can learn from the errors they make. As much as possible, transfer the error recognition and correction responsibilities to the students. Let the students involved, or other students who are watching correct the errors that occur. If they can't, the teacher can help by drawing attention to the sentences where errors have been made by using the system of Xs mentioned above. As the teacher, you should do correcting only as a last resort.

*Put students into the content of the activities*

Since you are making up the actual content of the chalkboard activities as you go along, you can usually relate the content to the students' lives and surroundings. For example, use the students' names, positive information you have about them, and places, things, and events they are familiar with. Students will become more involved than they will with textbook exercises that stress practice with no connection to the students' lives.

*Don't go beyond what students can do*

We are often tempted to stretch students a little farther than they have studied. Doing so often results in nobody knowing what to do and everyone feeling helpless and frustrated. These chalkboard activities are a good way of building confidence. They are a good way of reinforcing the old and integrating the new in a different, interesting fashion. In using these activities, we need to be aware of, and to stay within, the students' limitations at a given point in time.

In closing, there are two things that need to be recognized concerning these chalkboard activities. The first is that none of the activities is totally new. Many teachers are perhaps familiar with them and are using them, though not as chalkboard activities. It is, however, the way they are used–at the chalkboard, as a whole-group activity providing public opportunities for learning–that makes these activities special. Used in this way, they enlarge the students' territory and learning space and involve the students in more active learning.

The second thing that needs to be recognized is that these activities, by themselves, will not constitute student-centered learning. They need to be a part of a larger whole. They represent, however, a small and easy first step for people who want to move in that direction. They also contribute to a group process with which both the teacher and the students can feel comfortable. When these things happen, it becomes easier to find more ways to move in the direction of more student-centered learning.

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# Introducing Dialects in the ESL Class

*Miriam Eisenstein, Clarice Kaltinick, and Ellen Shaw*

Many English learners live in environments in which they are exposed to different social and ethnic dialects of English. While some learners are in the process of acquiring the nonstandard English spoken by their neighbors or fellow workers, others report an inability to understand the nonstandard dialect speakers that they come into contact with every day (Eisenstein and Berkowitz, 1980). Television and radio also expose learners to a variety of regional and social dialects, and students often recognize that these forms of the language differ from the English presented in class (Eisenstein, 1979). Although some materials for the ESL learner consider formality and contextual appropriateness of language, dialect differences in English have been largely neglected in the ESL classroom. In helping English learners achieve communicative competence, we as teachers must consider the varieties of English which students encounter.

Research in second language acquisition has demonstrated that nonstandard dialects pose problems for learners in many

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different settings. Eisenstein (1979) found that adult ESL students in New York City had difficulty understanding the range of dialects they heard. These included black English (Dillard, 1972) and New York nonstandard English (Labov, 1966), which will be referred to in this article as *New Yorkese* English. Harvey (1973) discussed Navajo English learners exposed to two versions of English: *classroom English,* the standard form taught in schools, and *dormitory English,* the local nonstandard form spoken on the reservations. In her study, Harvey found that differences between these two forms of English interfered with learning, and she stressed the need for teachers to address this special linguistic situation. The role of variation in English as it affects the listening comprehension of native French speakers was investigated by Roussel (1972). He concluded that dialect differences contributed to learners' errors in comprehension. Kachru (1976) points to the need for educators to deal with Third World varieties of English, exemplified by the numerous dialects of English spoken in India.

In addition to understanding the varieties of English they hear, it is important for learners to be aware of the values and attitudes ascribed to particular dialects in their speech community. Swacker (1976) found that native speakers of English judged foreign students using a colloquial East Texas style more negatively than Americans who speak this dialect. She stressed the "need for foreign language students to develop positive attitudes about regional and social dialect variation while learning dialectical patterns that will best facilitate their widest acceptance into a community of target language speakers."

This paper suggests a classroom activity for introducing dialects to English learners—an activity that will help make them aware of their own developing attitudes towards speakers of standard and nonstandard English.

The approach uses the matched guise technique originally developed by Lambert (Lambert et al., 1960) to investigate attitudes towards different languages or dialects in an experimental situation. A bilingual (or bidialectal) speaker records a passage more than once, each time using a different language variety. The semantic content of the passage remains constant. Listeners are asked to judge the speaker on each tape on a variety of characteristics. The listeners make their judgments under the assumption that they are reacting to different individuals, unaware that the

speaker is the same. This technique was first used in Canada to study reactions to varieties of English and French.

In the case of students learning English as a second language, matched guise tapes of bidialectal speakers can be used to contrast different dialects of English. The following is a description of how a bidialectal matched guise approach was used with adult ESL learners in New York City to sharpen their perceptions of the English dialects which they encounter daily, and to investigate the language attitudes and stereotypes which they may already be forming.

The technique was used on an experimental basis with seventy adult learners in five high-intermediate classes at the American Language Institute of New York University.[1] The students, who ranged in age from eighteen to thirty-five, represented a large variety of native languages and cultures and were largely from middle and upper-middle class social backgrounds in their native countries. The majority of these learners had been in the United States less than a year, although a few had been here for as long as ten years. Most of them planned to continue their studies at universities in the United States; the rest wished to improve their English for business or social purposes. All were living in or around the New York metropolitan area at the time.

A tape was recorded by a bidialectal speaker reading a passage of about thirty seconds' duration concerning the American Revolution. A historical topic was chosen so that the content would not lead to value judgments about the speaker. He read the passage first in standard English and then in his native black dialect, which differed considerably from the standard in vocabulary, phonology, and syntax. (The speaker orally translated the passage from standard English to black English, and a written transcription was made. He then read and recorded this transcription.)

Additional sets of matched tapes were prepared by two bidialectal speakers of New Yorkese English. One speaker was male, the other female.

A chart was prepared to assess personality judgments of the speaker based on Osgood's semantic differential (Osgood, 1964).

[1] Eisenstein (1979) found that by the intermediate stage of proficiency, learners are able to discriminate among dialects and are in the process of forming stereotypical attitudes towards speakers of nonstandard English which are similar to those held by native speakers.

This technique elicits reactions and attitudes on the basis of bipolar adjectives presented on a scale. We used a labeled seven-point scale including such characteristics as rich/poor, hardworking/lazy, tall/short, and smart/stupid. We also asked students to choose the most probable occupation of the speaker from among seven possibilities, ranging in status from janitor to doctor (adapted from Shuy et al., 1969).

The instructor told the class, "You will hear two different tapes. When you listen to each one, try to picture the speaker. It's like talking on the telephone to someone you don't know. You just form an impression; it's a guess, and there are no right or wrong answers."

**Figure 1: Speaker Evaluation Chart**

| | VERY | SOME WHAT | A BIT | ——— | A BIT | SOME WHAT | VERY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FRIENDLY: | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | :UNFRIENDLY |
| SHORT: | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | :TALL |
| WELL EDUCATED: | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | :NOT EDUCATED |
| SLIM: | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | :FAT |
| LAZY: | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | :HARDWORKING |
| DISHONEST: | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | :HONEST |
| SMART: | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | :STUPID |
| COWARDLY: | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | :BRAVE |
| POOR: | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | :RICH |
| HANDSOME: | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | :UGLY |

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After students were familiarized with the personality chart, its vocabulary and use, they listened to the black English and standard English matched tapes. The students were under the impression that they were listening to two different speakers. After each tape, students indicated their judgments of the speaker on the personality chart. Students were assured that individual

views would be kept anonymous and only group judgments would be considered. During a short break, judgments of each speaker were tabulated and recorded on the blackboard.

When the students returned, they were asked to make summary statements of how the class generally viewed each speaker, based on the tabulations. (See Figures 2 and 3.) The tapes were then replayed and students discussed differences in phonology, lexicon, and syntax between the speech samples. On the basis of students' comments, with some teacher prompting where needed, some of the linguistic differences were listed.

At this point the instructor revealed that both samples had been recorded by the same speaker; then a guided discussion was held. (See Appendix.) During the ensuing talk, the instructor stressed that the listeners' differing judgments of the speakers—in fact, one speaker—must have come from their attitudes towards language differences rather than from the speaker's personal qualities. In the course of the discussion, dialect was defined as a neutral, nonpejorative term for a language variety spoken by a particular group. Students spoke about dialect differences in their native languages and about their experiences with nonstandard dialect speakers in the New York area.

Next, students listened to additional matched tapes of female and male bidialectal speakers of New Yorkese English and commented on how this dialect differed from black English and standard English.

Figures 2 and 3 summarize the responses of one class; they are representative of a typical sample. As evident from the tables, the occupation scale provided the clearest contrast of students' perceptions of the speakers. Occupations of lower status were consistently assigned to the black English speaker, while the standard English speaker was generally thought to hold a more prestigious job.

Similarly, students rated the standard English speaker's level of education and economic status higher than that of the black English speaker. The standard English speaker was judged friendlier, smarter, more hardworking, more handsome, and more honest. The two speakers were thought to be about equal in height, weight, and degree of bravery.

Black English was perceived to be different from standard English in sound, stress, and melody. Students commented that

**Figure 2: Student Reactions to the Black English Sample**

| | VERY | SOME WHAT | A BIT | — | A BIT | SOME WHAT | VERY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FRIENDLY: | 1 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | | :UNFRIENDLY |
| SHORT: | | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 2 | :TALL |
| WELL EDUCATED: | | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 1 | :NOT EDUCATED |
| SLIM: | | 4 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | :FAT |
| LAZY: | 3 | 2 | 1 | | 4 | 4 | 2 | :HARDWORKING |
| DISHONEST: | 1 | 2 | 4 | | 1 | 5 | 3 | :HONEST |
| SMART: | | 1 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 1 | | :STUPID |
| COWARDLY: | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 1 | :BRAVE |
| POOR: | 1 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 2 | | | :RICH |
| HANDSOME: | 1 | 1 | 4 | | 5 | 4 | 1 | :UGLY |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 10 | 2 | | | | |

**Figure 3: Student Reactions to the Standard English Sample**

| | VERY | SOME WHAT | A BIT | — | A BIT | SOME WHAT | VERY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FRIENDLY: | 5 | 9 | 2 | | | | | :UNFRIENDLY |
| SHORT: | | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 2 | :TALL |
| WELL EDUCATED: | 10 | 6 | | | | | | :NOT EDUCATED |
| SLIM: | 1 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 2 | | :FAT |
| LAZY: | | | 4 | | | 10 | 2 | :HARDWORKING |
| DISHONEST: | | | | 1 | 1 | 8 | 6 | :HONEST |
| SMART: | 5 | 8 | 3 | | | | | :STUPID |
| COWARDLY: | 1 | | 2 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 1 | :BRAVE |
| POOR: | | | | | 9 | 7 | | :RICH |
| HANDSOME: | 3 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 2 | | | :UGLY |

Circle the JOB of the reader.

| JANITOR | TRUCK-DRIVER | POLICEMAN | SALESMAN | REPORTER | ACCOUNTANT | DOCTOR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 3 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 1 |

some words seemed "unfinished," and noted the differential use of *was* and *were,* double negatives, and other uses that seemed vaguely "ungrammatical" to them.

New Yorkese English was perceived to be "nasal," to have "longer sounds," and to be characterized by an intonation pattern which the students found amusing. New Yorkese English was associated with a low level of education and socio-economic status, and, in the opinion of the students, was not a desirable form of English for them to speak.

In the course of the discussion, learners' initial reactions to the dialects and the speakers were reexamined. The students were genuinely surprised to learn that the same individual had recorded the first set of tapes. After hearing their comments, we concluded that this procedure had helped make the students aware that one can be mistaken in judging people merely on the basis of the language variety they speak. Students made perceptive remarks about dialect differences in their own languages as well as linguistic varieties in general. Insights which they offered included the following:

> We change our own speech in our lives.
> Basic intelligence is not a factor in the language spoken.
> [Nonstandard] dialects sound more relaxed and intimate.
> Some people are ashamed to speak [nonstandard] dialects.
> Education makes the dialect.
> Uneducated people speak more different; educated people speak more the same.
> Some [nonstandard] dialect speakers would like to change their speech.
> People are not outside of society because they speak the dialect; they speak the dialect because they are outside of society.
> In the subway people talk to me; I can't understand.
> I understand you [the teacher]. I can't understand the speaker on tape one [black English].
> People speak dialects in American movies.
> We need a teacher who speaks that way.
> We must understand both educated and [nonstandard] dialect speakers.

Response to this experience was overwhelmingly favorable. Learners reported that they had found the activity relevant, interesting, and useful in their struggle to learn English. There was general agreement among the students that it is important to

understand nonstandard dialects in the target language although it is not necessarily desirable for ESL learners to speak them. Students acknowledge that many of their judgments, revealed to them by this experience, had been inaccurate. True, the impression of a nonstandard dialect speaker as poor or uneducated often reflects a realistic picture of society; however, evaluation of personal qualities such as intelligence and honesty should not be influenced by an individual's dialect.

Further classroom activities could be based upon examples brought in by the teacher or the students themselves. Language samples could be written down or recorded from conversations with speakers of nonstandard dialects, or recordings of media personalities could be made from TV or radio broadcasts.[2] A directed approach to gathering language samples has been suggested by Barbara Freed (1978). In this case students prepare, carry out, and report on interviews with people in the community; to the extent that samples represent a nonstandard English-speaking community, this could be an excellent follow-up activity. Also, readings in which different dialects of English are represented would be helpful. Teachers could also create comprehension exercises based on recordings of speakers of nonstandard dialects from the speech community.

Follow-ups to the dialect exercise reported here need not be limited to classroom activities. With their new awareness, learners will be better prepared to deal with dialect differences in their own experiences, which they will interpret in a more linguistically sophisticated manner.

We must acknowledge that the matched guise exercise represents an artificial experience. The judgments about the speakers on the tapes in our study were based purely on auditory stimuli, without the visual cues found in most communicative situations. The tapes were recorded in reading style with none of the give and take that comes with natural conversation.

A problem of a different nature resulted from the learners' confusion of differences between nonstandard dialect, slang, and

---

[2] The only two sources of English dialect recordings known to the author are "Americans Speaking" by McDavid and Muri, 1967, and distributed by The National Council of Teachers of English, and "The Dialect of the Black American" by Western Electric Corporation, which is a record of samples of black English and standard English plus a view of the functions and contexts of these dialects.

register. Clarification of categories of register differences and slang before using the matched guise technique would be helpful.

We have suggested an introductory approach to presenting dialects and dialect-related attitudes in the ESL classroom. Few techniques and materials exist which will help learners deal with varieties of English that they inevitably encounter outside of the classroom. The technique discussed in this paper must be considered exploratory. Nevertheless, the students reacted positively to the experience, and we hope this work will provide a point of departure for presenting English dialects and associated attitudes in the classroom.

This technique was designed for adult foreign students in the New York metropolitan area. However, it could be adapted for any adult learner population in contact with a variety of dialects. We encourage other teachers and researchers to use this technique, making appropriate changes for the specific population and speech community involved.

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## APPENDIX

The following is a summary of how this technique was used in adult ESL classes at New York University. *Use it as a guide and adapt it to your needs.*

*Materials*

Two speaker evaluation charts for each student.
A tape recorder.
Matched tapes of a bidialectal speaker reading the same passage aloud in a dialect and in standard English. In this case, a speaker of black English recorded the passage.
Additional matched tapes—in this case, male and female speakers of New Yorkese made the recordings.

*Procedure*

1. Tell the class: "You will hear two different tapes. When you listen to each one, try to picture the speaker. It's like talking on the telephone to someone you don't know. After each tape, you will fill out a chart describing your impressions of the speaker. It's a guess and there are no right or wrong answers."
2. Distribute two speaker evaluation charts to each student; go over vocabulary and use of the charts.
3. Play the black dialect tape and have students fill out one chart. Then play the standard English tape and have them fill out the second chart.
4. Collect all charts and do a quick computation of class judgments while the class is on a break. List the results on the board. (This will take a few minutes—have a student help.)
5. Elicit summary statements from the class about the group judgments, e.g., "Most of the class judged Speaker One to be poorer than Speaker Two."
6. Play the tapes again and ask students what differences they hear in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar.
7. Tell the class that you played a trick on them. The speaker on both tapes was the same—a black American who is bidialectal. He is able to use standard English or black dialect, depending on which is appropriate.

8. Allow the students to react to this in an open-ended way. Later, point out that differing judgments come from attitudes towards language rather than personal qualities of the speaker.
9. Open a guided discussion. At some point during the discussion, play the matched tapes of New Yorkese English.

*Discussion Guide*

1. Have you ever heard anyone speak this way? If so, tell us about about it.
2. What differences did you notice between the two tapes?
3. Are there different ways of speaking your language? What are the attitudes towards them?
4. How would you rather speak English? Why?
5. Do you know anyone who speaks the kind of English you would like to speak? . . . anyone whose English you wouldn't want to learn to speak?
6. Have you seen any TV shows in the United States that have dialect speakers (not only black)? This might be a good time to play the additional sets of matched tapes (New Yorkese).
7. Elicit or explain: Dialect speakers may come from a low socio-economic group, but this does not mean they are less intelligent than speakers of standard English.
8. Do you need to know anything about nonstandard dialects? Important to establish: students must deal with varieties of English outside of class.
9. When are nonstandard dialects appropriate/inappropriate? Why do some people switch codes in the middle of a conversation: for effect, humor, to show they are part of a group?

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# Transformational Linguistics, Cognitive Psychology, and Teaching English as a Second Language

*James W. Ney*

In 1959, Noam Chomsky, the first of the transformational linguists, reviewed B.F. Skinner's *Verbal Behavior,* calling into question many of the beliefs of the behaviorists relating to the learning of language through the use of conditioning. In particular, he pointed out that language usage is essentially stimulus free and innovative; that is, speakers of a language will often make an utterance with no apparent stimulus to account for this utterance. Furthermore, when speakers do produce sentences, generally they produce sentences that are original and unique, that no one has spoken before. This led Chomsky to suggest that conditioning and habit formation could not possibly account for native speaker competence, the ability of native speakers to produce and understand newly created sentences.

Quite soon after this, some writers interpreted Chomsky's comments to mean that *no* facets of language learning could be accounted for by conditioning. Yet as John Lyons has pointed out (1970: 94–5, 125), and as Chomsky himself admitted in his review of Skinner (1959: 42–3), reinforcement, imitation, and conditioning do account for some aspects of language learning. Consider the fact that a single generation of native speakers use *hana* (Japanese), *nez* (French), *nariz* (Spanish), *dahk* (Papago), and *nose* (English) to refer to the same appendage of the human body. Conditioning in the culture, or a process similar to conditioning, can best account for these differences in languages. Similarly, some rules of grammar must also be attributed to local learning, since they are in no real sense universal. For instance,

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the rules for the creation of tag questions in German, French, and English are quite different. However, as Chomsky has indicated, certain properties of natural languages, such as the ability to string sentences together into an indefinitely long whole or to imbed one sentence within another, cannot be accounted for by conditioning. Chomsky attributed these properties of language to the innate faculties of the human mind and thus described them as universal properties of language.

So it is that, although most transformational linguists such as R. Lakoff (1969: 23), Chomsky (1965: 51), and Katz and Postal (1964: 174) argue that conditioning plays a very small part in language learning, they do not rule out the possibility that some aspects of language may be learned through conditioning. This suggests an approach to language learning and teaching as illustrated by Figure 1, an approach that combines the principal features of the direct method and the audio-lingual method (Figure 2) with those of the grammar-translation method (Figure 3). The theory of transformational linguistics implies that those features of languages which can be attributed to the rules of universal grammar

**Figure 1: Teaching Strategy Implied by Transformational Theories of Language**

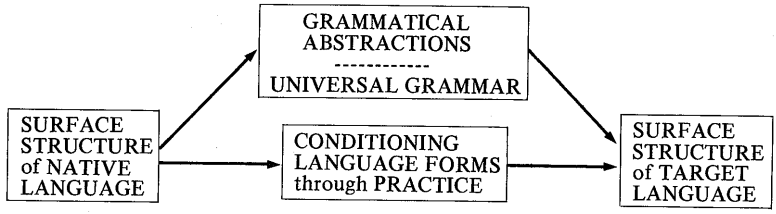



**Figure 2: Direct and Audio-Lingual Methods**

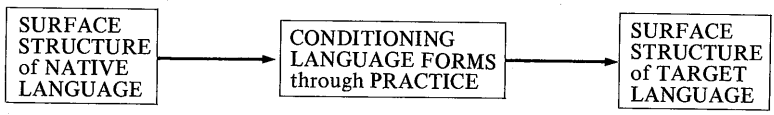
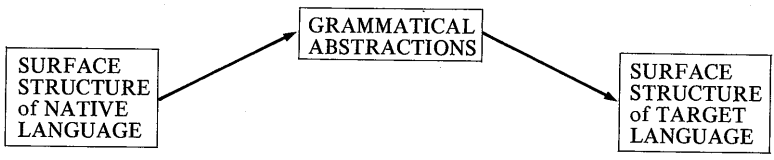



**Figure 3: Grammar-Translation Method**



should be presented to the student deductively as grammatical abstractions, if they are to be presented at all. Since the rules of universal grammar are formed by the mental faculties and processes of the "innate language system" (Chomsky, 1965: 51), there may be no need to teach them. Instead, teachers may rely on the existence of such rules in the brains of their students. On the other hand, those features of language which are found only in the target language should be taught through imitation, pattern practice, and other exercises designed to condition the student to use the surface forms of the target language. (See also Carroll, 1971; Hammerly, 1971; and Belasco, 1970.)

One other response to the development of transformational theory has been the formulation of the cognitive code-learning theory for teaching foreign languages (Chastain and Woerdehoff, 1970). This theory questions the very basis of the audio-lingual theory by insisting that conditioning through reinforcement cannot be accomplished without understanding. Hence, this theory would suggest that no learning of language can proceed without the students' understanding of the grammatical processes in language. An experiment set up by Kenneth Chastain at Purdue University to compare the cognitive code-learning theory with the audio-lingual theory emphasized the presentation of grammatical rules to the students. While the experiment included the use of dialogues and exercises similar to pattern drills developed by the direct and audio-lingual methods, explanations of the grammar of the target language (French) were presented deductively to the students in their own language before they practiced structures orally. Furthermore, example sentences for each exercise were translated to aid the student in comprehension. The exercises were conducted in the context of situations to avoid the meaningless rambling of language patterns common to audio-lingual exercises. Nevertheless, Chastain was unable to establish a clear superiority of one method over the other. Chastain himself suggested a synthesis of the audio-lingual and cognitive code-learning theories, as proposed above.

Another development in language teaching which can be related to transformational linguistics is the current trend to individualization of instruction, as in the Community Language Learning project of Curran (1961). Transformationalists have repeatedly referred to the creative aspect of language use, that is, the fact

that native speakers can produce sentences which are completely novel (Chomsky, 1966: 43–9). It would seem that from the beginning of language instruction, learners of a foreign language should be given practice in creating sentences of their own rather than repeating sentences from a textbook or generating sentences through transformation drills controlled by the teacher.

The response of ESL specialists to developments in transformational grammar can also be seen in textbooks such as William E. Rutherford's *Modern English* (1968). As Rutherford states in his introduction:

> The linguistic orientation of the work is of *generative,* or *transformational-generative* grammar, an exciting outgrowth of research in linguistics of the last decade or so. A prime assumption of transformational theory is that a person's verbal behavior is the result not of reinforced habit but of the "internalization" of an intricate set of abstract rules, which enable him to fashion an infinite number of novel sentences. Although transformational theory as such does not tell us exactly how languages are learned, it has nevertheless revealed the extent to which they have underlying regularity, deep and surface structure differences, and universal similarity—discoveries which do have great relevance for language teaching. This book, then, organizes in an informal way many of these regularities and develops through drill work the student's ability to distinguish forms having similar surface structure but different underlying deep structure. (ix)

As might be expected from the preceding discussion, there is considerable space in each unit devoted to the deductive explanation of grammar rules. Furthermore, the sequencing in the text follows a transformationalist grammatical scheme as, for instance, in the development of *where*-questions from sentences with an indefinite adverb (10–11). The following sentences from an exercise in Rutherford's book follow the transformational linguist's postulation of a time/place transformation:

1. Most of the world's coffee comes from *Brazil.*

   **Brazil's the place** — **that most of the world's coffee comes from.** / **where most of the world's coffee comes from.** / **most of the world's coffee comes from.**

2. They take their coffee break at *ten o'clock.*

   **Ten o'clock's the time** — **that they take their coffee break.** / **when they take their coffee break.** / **they take their coffee break.**

(217)

In some ways, however, the Rutherford text appears quite similar to structuralist texts, especially in its teaching methodology. Each unit begins with a dialogue (presumably for the student to memorize), followed by a pronunciation drill, various structural exercises, concluding with reading and writing exercises. Books written by language teachers during the structuralist decade of the 1950s often had exercises of these same general types. (See, for instance, Ross and Doty, 1960.) The following substitution drills, for example, are of the very type employed by the structuralists:

| A. | He *broke* them. | B. | They *spoke* a lot. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *woke* | | *drove* |
| | *drove* | | *rode* |
| | *wrote* | | *wrote* |
| | . . . | | . . . |

(89)

Similarly, the following transformation exercise could have been borrowed from a structuralist text such as *English Sentence Patterns* (Lado and Fries, 1957):

1. She's 35, but he's 45.
   **He's older than she is.**
2. The Hudson is an important river, but the Mississippi is very important.
   **The Mississippi is more important than the Hudson.**

(199)

While Rutherford owes much to the structuralists, there is one more important difference between his work and theirs. As a whole, Rutherford permits more divergent responses than do the structuralists, as seen in the following example:

His hotel's the Savoy, and hers is too.
**Her hotel's the same as his.**
**She has the same hotel as he does.**
**Their hotels are the same.**

(189)

This creation of drills with divergent responses is motivated partly by the transformationalists' focus on the creative aspects

of language usage and partly by their belief that transformations relate sentences which have similar meanings. In general, Rutherford's work differs from that of the structuralists particularly in its exercises which permit the students a greater amount of practice in the freely creative aspect of language usage. The exercise entitled "discrimination," for example, permits the student to choose among three different structured responses. In the exercise entitled "evasive reply," teacher and student engage in a dialogue structured largely by the teacher's response. In the "free reply" exercise, students are allowed to give any reply that they please (196). In its integration of transformationalist and structuralist methodologies, the Rutherford work implicitly suggests what has been stated explicitly at the beginning of this article: language teachers should work towards a synthesis of the techniques used by the behaviorists and those advocated by the transformational linguists.

The structural linguists had insisted on a complete separation of grammatical analysis and semantics, insisting that linguistic analysis should be done without reference to meaning. For this reason, structuralist grammar drills gave the student ample practice in manipulating the forms of language but completely ignored the problem of how the student abstracted meaning from the grammatical patterns. In contrast, the transformationalists stressed the meaningful aspects of linguistic forms. In accord with this changed attitude towards meaning, the authors of *Using American English* (Newmark et al., 1964) elected to put together dialogue drills composed of sentences which are related semantically, first, and grammatically, second.

The oral lessons take the general form of the following:

A. Where do you live?
B. In an apartment on Sixth Street.
A. Do you have a roommate?
B. No. I prefer to live alone.

1. *Where do you live?*
   Where do you stay?
   Where are you living?
   Where are you staying?

2. *In an apartment on Sixth Street.*
   In a rooming house on King Avenue.
   In a dormitory near the university.
   In a private home close to the post office.

3. *Do you have a roommate?*
   Do you live with someone?
   Do you room with somebody?
   Do you share it with someone?
4. *No. I prefer to live alone.*
   No. I'd rather live alone.
   No. I like to be alone.
   No. I like living by myself.

(21-3)

In their introduction, the authors state:

> The crucial principle which makes our design feasible is that of the *imitation of meaningful linguistic wholes in realistic linguistic contexts*. . . . Mastery of material must be meaningful—in contrast to rote memorization of mere forms or mechanical drill of pronunciation or grammatical patterns.
>
> (8)

It is this new attitude towards meaning, too, that prompts the authors of this text to advise students to use bilingual dictionaries and to request that the teacher supply rough translations of the sentences in the dialogues to students (13). Language teachers oriented towards structural linguistics would not permit either of these practices in the language classroom.

The theories of the transformational linguists have provided many arguments in support of meaningful and creative activity in the classroom. Nevertheless, language teachers cannot dispense with the necessity for having students practice language in the class. The importance of practice can be supported from the works of cognitive psychologists such as Jerome S. Bruner, whose research suggests that drilling is important for the learning of general principles (1964: 59–60). In the actual language learning situation, presenting a generalization about grammar or phonology is often not enough. For the students to comprehend such a generalization, there must be manipulation of the language itself. Furthermore, the general principles of language are rarely, if ever, perfectly understood by either teacher or student. For this reason, practice is necessary for the mastery of specific details and to allow students to internalize their own generalizations about the language.

Teaching students rules for grammar without giving them the opportunity to practice using the language can lead to a merely superficial understanding; true understanding requires some drilling. As Bruner himself states: "In point of fact, drill need not be rote, and alas, emphasis on understanding may lead the student to a certain glibness" (1962: 29).

Another cognitive psychologist, David P. Ausubel, has written even more extensively than Bruner on the place of practice in learning. He concludes that "drill is a necessary and indispensable aspect of classroom learning" (1968: 309). He recommends the retention of pattern practice in language learning, although he does fault audio-lingual teachers for their reliance on rote learning. "The remedy, therefore, is not to eliminate pattern practice drills but to make them more meaningful" (76). According to Ausubel, the meaningfulness of practice requires that the material be potentially meaningful and that the learner expect to find his learning meaningful (276). It would seem that to some extent all language practice is potentially meaningful for the learners simply because language has meaning at its very center.

Ausubel further requires that meaningfulness be related in a "non-arbitrary and substantive fashion to what the learner already knows" (32). It would be of no importance whether this meaningfulness be provided through translation, through the use of realia and pictures, or derived from situations either actual or contrived. It would only be necessary to make sure that all students understand what they are practicing. As Postovsky (1974: 237) has pointed out from an experiment at the Defense Language Institute, those students who are not given the meaning of language patterns regularly do not perform as well as those students who are systematically instructed in the use of language elements meaningful to them. (See also Chastain and Woerdehoff, 1968: 273.)

Within the view of cognitive psychology advocated by Ausubel, feedback—the correction of students by teachers or the encouragement that teachers offer students—plays an important role, just as it did within the classical audio-lingual method. Under ALM teaching, feedback was designed to supply the reinforcement that is so much a part of stimulus-response theory. Ausubel claims that feedback also helps meaningful learning in that it helps to strengthen meanings and associations and aids in the correction of errors (16).

On the question of whether grammar should be taught by induction or deduction, Ausubel's cognitive psychology supports the view of the transformationalists, i.e., that grammar is best taught deductively through rules and explanations (Ausubel, 1968: 76; see also Chastain and Woerdehoff, 1968: 21). Bruner, however, supports the inductive learning-by-discovery principle (1962: 21). It would seem that the cognitive psychologists provide no definitive answer to this question.

It is becoming apparent that a subtle shift is now taking place in second language pedagogy. Current emphasis seems to be moving away from how students learn words, phrases, sentences, or rules of grammar and from how teachers teach words, phrases, sentences, or rules of grammar. The current catchword is "student-centered education," and the current concern is how to create classroom situations in which students themselves learn how to learn a language with the help of an informant/guide filling the role of the teacher of by-gone eras. Students have at least as much responsibility for classroom activities as the teacher. These activities follow nicely the assumption of the transformationalists that children bring to the language learning situation innate mechanisms which give them "a method for devising an appropriate grammar, given primary linguistic data" (Chomsky, 1965: 25). It is this which prompts Jakobovits and Gordon (1974: 30) to object to the sequencing of grammatical patterns. It is this which prompts La Forge (1971) to work with the Community Language Learning project. And it is this which leads Gattegno (1972) to develop the Silent Way for teaching foreign languages and for Stevick (1974) to commend the work of Gattegno so highly.

All of these new methods fit in well with the central constructs of transformational grammar and cognitive psychology in that they allow students to exercise the creative aspect of language use. But the other side to the language teaching paradigm—the use of practice—must never be discarded. It too is implicit in the thought of transformational linguists and cognitive psychologists.

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# Business Negotiation as Cross-Cultural Communication: The Japanese-Western Case

*Robert M. March*

Of all the notable occasions of exchange, social intercourse and communication between Japanese and Westerners, there is one in particular that reveals the depth and complexity of the differences between the two cultures. This special, distinctive type of exchange is negotiation, be it political, cultural, trade or business.

In my experience, Westerners and Japanese discover the significance of their cultural differences more quickly, more concretely from just one negotiation experience than from a thousand exchanges of pleasantries.

I will illustrate this point in two ways, first by looking at and analyzing some actual cases of Japanese/Western business negotiations, and then by looking more closely at the Japanese negotiating style.

## A TELECOMMUNICATIONS NEGOTIATION

To begin, let's look at a case study on negotiations between the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) and the Japanese National Public Television, known as NHK. These concerned television rights granted to CBS to cover former President Ford's trip to Japan in 1975.

CBS is the oldest of the three major U.S. television/radio networks. One area in which CBS holds a distinct lead, and is the pride of the organization, is its worldwide radio/television news network.

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Although CBS is affiliated with TBS (Tokyo Broadcasting System), one of Japan's largest commercial networks, its American competitor NBC is affiliated with the Japanese national broadcasting system, NHK. About ten times bigger than TBS, NHK is the only Japanese network with its own telecommunications satellite system. NHK therefore was the network with which CBS had to negotiate in order to transmit its coverage of Ford's visit to Japan back to the United States.

Two weeks before Ford's arrival, a CBS negotiator flew from New York to Tokyo to arrange for the use of NHK's special equipment, personnel, security, telex, etc. This negotiator was in his early thirties—ambitious and aggressive.

In his first meeting with NHK officials, he made many demands, asking for almost double the amount of everything he actually needed, and was most aggressive and vocal.

The Japanese representative from NHK became increasingly quiet as the meeting progressed and at the end of that first meeting, no promises had been made.

Two days later, one of CBS's top directors suddenly arrived in Tokyo. He personally apologized for the young man's behavior to the NHK directors and asked NHK what assistance they could offer so that the Ford visit coverage could be relayed to America.

The young negotiator was surprised to learn that his negotiating style had almost caused cancellation of the entire project. He later apologized, saying that he had assumed that the negotiating process would be the same as in the U.S.

## LESSONS

The lessons to be learned from this case are:

1. *Negotiating styles differ.* The U.S. side was assertive, verbal, rational, competitive, and direct. In contrast, the Japanese were indirect, polite, restrained, and personal.

2. *Attitudes toward haggling differ.* Indeed, the Japanese did not haggle, whereas the American expected to and was prepared to haggle.

3. *Negotiation is a leading edge of culture.* The collision of cultures in this negotiation was immediate and conspicuous to both parties.

## A NEGOTIATION TRAINING EXAMPLE

Let's look at a different kind of negotiation experience. Each year in Japan, I teach business negotiations to mixed classes of American and Japanese graduate business students.

At our first class meeting, without any introduction to the subject, I split the class into three groups: an American negotiating team, a Japanese negotiating team and a mixed team of observers and monitors.

I then give each team very different briefs for negotiating how class grades will be calculated. One team is to argue for 100 percent based on assigned work and the other 50 percent based on participation in class discussion.

Each team, along with observers, goes to a separate room to prepare for the negotiation session. After twenty to thirty minutes, the negotiation session starts and runs for about an hour and a half. The observers, following a standard observation form, record details of the behavior and interpersonal dynamics of their respective team throughout the whole period. When the session ends, we then analyze what has happened.

Invariably, the experiences and lessons drawn are closely similar year to year. They are also strikingly similar to real life Japanese-American business negotiations. Here is a summary of a recent observers' report.

### About the Japanese team

"1. *Preparation for negotiation.* They developed defensive arguments with no consideration of persuading or selling or converting the other side. Nor did they consider what the other side might be thinking or offering, nor of anticipated strategies, nor of any concession strategies.

"A strong consensus was reached based on the arguments supporting their position after the leader had reviewed these and everyone had noted them down. There was strong group cohesion.

"2. *Negotiating activity.* The Japanese gave the 'appearance of being somewhat overwhelmed by the Americans although they did not in fact make as many concessions.' The tone of the negotiation 'seemed to indicate that the Americans were dominating when the Japanese were only being out-talked, not out-negotiated.' The

Japanese showed little physical and much less verbal activity and nodded frequently, suggesting to Western observers and perhaps to their opponents that their minds were being changed. 'An aggressive approach easily pushed them into a defensive position, but they became less willing to yield.' Other points noted were: their frustration with the language barrier (negotiations were in English); they were unwilling to form a consensus or express disagreement in front of the opponents; they gave strong non-verbal support of their own leaders; they had problems in expressing some of their views in English so the intended meaning seemingly was not conveyed. However 'the final Japanese counter offer was innovative and offered benefits to both sides.'

"One monitor with international business experience observed that the contest presented a very familiar scene in actual business negotiations. 'The U.S. team bombarded the Japanese side with their ideas in so many words and used logic, while the Japanese side lent a seemingly attentive ear with no specific commitments.'

### About the U.S. team

"1. *Preparation for negotiation.* They considered how the other party would conduct the negotiations; decided to explore the position of the other side and then go on the offensive. They agreed to initially ask for more than they wanted, and to be low-keyed in approach.

"2. *Negotiating activity.* The Americans were aggressive and appeared to dominate, continuously agreeing with each other and disagreeing with the other side. They were not low-keyed, and were concerned with proving that their position was right and converting the Japanese to their viewpoint. The Americans showed a more explicit and stronger desire to win, emphasized the benefits to the other party, and gave a passionate presentation with the goal of *winning,* in contrast to the Japanese goal of defending their consensus position."

## LESSONS

Once again, it is easy to see how negotiation easily becomes a collision between different cultural styles. More than that, we can see that a *national* negotiation style which is effective at home, can

be ineffective and inappropriate when transported into the international domain.

## TWO FAMOUS NEGOTIATIONS

Let us turn now to some famous Japanese-Western negotiations. One is the Japan-Australia sugar dispute of 1976–77. The other is a U.S.-Japan baseball player contract dispute reported in Robert Whiting's book *The Chrysanthemum and the Bat.*

What can we learn from these two disputes?

Both of these—the sugar and baseball disputes—essentially involved contracts. The sugar case was a debate over the price of sugar fixed by a long-term contract signed by the Japanese sugar refining industry and the Australian Sugar Board.

When the contract was concluded in December 1974, Australia was to supply 20 percent of Japan's sugar needs. At that time, the price per ton of sugar on the world market was about £400 sterling, having declined from a peak of £600. The contract price agreed upon was £229 but within six months the world price had slumped from £400 to £130. The world price continued thereafter to decline slowly over the next three years, so within that period, 20 percent of Japan's sugar was double the price of the remaining 80 percent. In addition, consumer demand had stagnated, inventories soared and the bigger refineries went heavily into the red.

Given these circumstances, Japan attempted for about 16 months—from July 1976 to October 1977—to obtain a substantial price reduction from the Australians. In spite of refusing Australian sugar at the wharf from July 1977, in the end the Japanese only achieved a 7 percent price reduction with a compensating extension of the contract period.

The baseball dispute reported by Whiting occurred during the period 1964–66. It involved a young Japanese pitcher the Nankai Hawks sent to spend a season with the San Francisco Giants. This arrangement was part of a player exchange agreement between the two national baseball commissions. This agreement included an option clause that allowed the Giants to purchase the contract of any Japanese player who made the parent team for $10,000. Naturally the Hawks never believed a Japanese player would be successful enough to be snapped up.

Well, the unbelievable happened. Murakami, the young pitcher, became a star in the U.S., the Giants sent the Hawks $10,000 and all seemed well.

But, when Murakami returned to visit Japan at New Year's in 1965, he came under intense pressure to stay in Japan. He was Japanese, the eldest son, and his duty was to play at home. By the end of January, Murakami had agreed to stay in Japan and signed a contract with the Hawks.

A dispute then arose over the Japanese violation of the baseball reserve clause. It was finally resolved in April when the U.S. side agreed to let Murakami return permanently to the Hawks in 1966, after he served another year with the Giants.

## ATTITUDES TOWARDS CONTRACTS DIFFER

In both of these disputes, there was intense hostility and resentment focused on Japan. The primary reason was the cultural difference in attitudes toward contracts. For Westerners, the sanctity of a contract is essential to a permanent relationship so the law is seen as an inflexible principle above man. For the Japanese, it is the spirit rather than the letter of a contract that is important. This was the case in the baseball dispute.

In the sugar case, the Japanese also had held expectations that the Australians would help one of its good customers, namely the Japanese sugar refining industry, when it ran into difficulties. Preoccupied with their economic and market problems, the Japanese sugarmen earnestly sought to convince Australia that Japan was really in dire straits. It was only when they recognized that Australia was not going to yield or be swayed that they seriously thought about refusing sugar shipments.

What can we conclude from this brief review of these negotiation cases? Once again, we see that negotiation is, as psychologists put it, *culture bound.* When we negotiate, willy-nilly we show the color and regularity of our cultural patterning.

In both of the above cases, Westerners stressed the rightness and sanctity of the contract and the morality of the relationship. The Japanese, on the other hand, used a personal approach and made emotional petitions as well as many appeals for understanding. This distinction, which is easy to see in other aspects of the Japan-Western relationship, is a *major* difference.

Why do the Japanese stress emotional and personal factors in matters which, to Westerners, seem impersonal, rational and legally determinable?

Let me present some of my own thoughts on this, which I organize under three headings: *naniwabushi,* melodrama, and victim mentality.

## NANIWABUSHI

In Japan, the most commonly used method to resolve or to avoid disputes is called *naniwabushi. Naniwabushi* is actually a popular Japanese narrative chant that goes back to the fifteenth century. Its performers sing tales of chivalrous robbers and the rise and fall of great families. *Naniwabushi* has three phases.

The opening, which is called *kikkake,* gives the general background of the story and tells what the people involved are thinking or feeling. Following this is the *seme* or account of critical events. Finally, there is the *urei,* which expresses pathos and sorrow at what has happened.

In business, a negotiation following the *naniwabushi* structure might go like this. Suppose you wish to negotiate revised terms for repayment of your automobile because of a business recession. In your approach to the creditors, you would:

1. Open with a statement that explains your relationship with them over the years. You would then tell them what a good customer you've been, how meticulous you've been about repaying on time, how you've brought new customers to them, etc. This is the *kikkake.*

2. In the *seme* you would focus on the disastrous effects the recession has had on your business. Turnover had declined, you've severely pruned costs, your family now eats nothing but rice, you've given up pachinko and gambling, but still this is not enough. You can only continue to survive if the creditor cuts payments in half.

3. In the *urei,* you explain what will happen to you if the creditors do not grant this request. You will lose the automobile and all your income will be lost. Then you will not be able to pay them anything. So you plead, "grant our request."

Thus, *naniwabushi* as petition begins with a background statement, is followed by a dramatic account of the crisis events and

concludes with an anguished plea for leniency, embroidered with a story of the dire consequences if the request is not granted.

A *naniwabushi* plea can be dressed up appealingly with melodrama. For example, you can take your starving wife and children with you and have them stand silently, weeping at your side; or you might indicate how close you are to self-destruction by producing a pistol or sword or bottle of poison at the right psychological moment.

*Naniwabushi* is artful, premeditated, calculated . . . and it works! The more tragic and moving the story, the easier it is for Japanese listeners to forget contracts or commitments. Indeed, listeners who do not compromise or show compassion in such circumstances would be condemned as being cold-hearted or mercenary.

## MELODRAMA

What is it about the Japanese that makes them susceptible to such sad stories? A clue lies in the melodramatic quality of *naniwabushi* and the permissive environment for self-pity.

Every Japanese, in his heart, is the hero of a great melodrama starring himself. It is the story of his heroic struggle to achieve some modest success in the face of Japanese society's adamantine rules and keen competition with other men. Moreover, the Japanese, as a hero, sees himself as also having the same difficulties and sufferings as others and thus responds compassionately.[1]

Japan's melodramatic bias is seen not only in domestic *naniwabushi*-type negotiations but also in international negotiations. I see it very clearly in the sugar dispute. Moreover, the American political scientist, Michael Blaker, in writing about Japan's international diplomatic negotiating style, has pointed to the florid language and anguished pleas used by Japanese diplomats and politicians in the last-ditch stages of negotiations. Phrases like the following are common:

"We must endure the unendurable."

"It must be war or indescribable hardship."

"We no longer have room to move."

[1] If this may seem as one-sided criticism, let me say in contrast, that every Westerner in turn is a tragic hero in his own heart, star of his own "Greek tragedy," struggling to overcome his contrary impulses to love purely and lust mightily, to be selfless, seeking to reconcile the twin-faced Janus, god or beast in his heart.

Blaker also reported the techniques that Japanese diplomats use in final stage negotiations. For instance, they rationalize final moves with assertions that "great efforts," "great sacrifices," or "compromising what is uncompromisable" have been made, albeit in a futile cause. But such rationalizations only serve to clear the conscience of all involved.

Again, Japanese negotiators, when faced with failure, seek to shift the blame to someone else. Blaker commented that "beneath attempts to transfer the blame is the belief that Japanese policies are intrinsically correct." So, until failure is conceded, the Japanese persistently believe that if only the right method could be discovered—for instance, the right negotiator, the right communication style (man-to-man or heart-to-heart discussion or a frank exchange of views)—then a breakthrough would be possible.

This belief that one is right and the absence of inner conflict concerning rightness is vintage melodrama. Blaker's research also showed that the Japanese negotiator, as a hero, is centrally a character of melodrama.

## VICTIM MENTALITY

The Japanese psychological makeup contains a strong vein of conscious innocence. The Japanese appear to be saying to themselves, "whatever is harmful that happens to me, as the hero of my own melodrama, is unearned and undeserved. I am made victim to a blind fate." Thus, whenever the Japanese are threatened or attacked by others, they see it at once as unfairness. They portray themselves as being weak, defenseless and victimized, thus requiring from the attacker some explicit compensation—at least a sincere apology or in serious cases, a tangible tribute such as an *isharyo,* "consolation money."

The Japanese victim mentality, or *higaisha ishiki,* appears frequently in both domestic and international business negotiations. In the Japan-Australia sugar dispute, the local sugar refineries felt deeply victimized by the events that led to the sharp drop in world sugar prices and local demand. In the U.S.-Japan textile dispute, the local textile industry felt victimized by the U.S. attempt to impose quotas.

And, in perhaps every *naniwabushi* negotiation, the plaintiff is most pathetic and most convincing when he conveys the feeling

that he is the victim of circumstances and hence, his demand for a changed relationship has been forced upon him. Refusal to meet that plea is thus regarded as a double play of fate—a victim squeeze of intolerable intensity.

## FOREIGNERS AND THE JAPANESE COMPANY

What is the significance of the Japanese negotiation style and expectations for foreigners working in Japan?

The Japanese negotiating style, especially *naniwabushi,* works because both sides share common cultural values.

The extent to which foreigners will be regarded as a natural part of the Japanese social system, and therefore expected to play the appropriate role, varies between companies.

If you work for or with a Japanese company it is certain that you will be judged by Japanese standards and your Japanese employers and counterparts will hope that you will play the game the Japanese way. They'll expect you to respond sympathetically to *naniwabushi* appeals when they are made to you and for you to seek out assistance and consolation when you in turn are victimized.

But this dual role is far from easy for Westerners and many of us fall into the hidden trap of feeling victimized by the non-rationality of the Japanese social system. We then become non-rational about non-rationality.

Personally, I try to avoid any feelings in myself that I am a victim or that *they* are doing this to me. But I am also willing to use *naniwabushi* at any time, in the most melodramatic way, if I feel it will help me achieve my goals in business. Many Japanese feel the same way.

This does not mean that I have to deceive myself. If I fail, I can think of other ways to accomplish my goals. I would always like to think that I am master of my own destiny even in Japan and to accept that the learning I gain from negotiations with the Japanese is a part of my own personal development.

In conclusion let me say that I see international business negotiations involving people of different countries as a kind of force-fed cultural learning. It is unpalatable learning when it involves conflict.

In the case of great public confrontations such as those involving sugar, baseball or textiles, they can, and do, become politicized into minor international crises and result in unfavorable cross-cultural experiences not just for the few but, via the mass media, for the millions.

When we examine negotiations within Japan, we discover that the most common style is a melodrama which unfolds in three acts. It is such an engaging, heart-tearing tale that it is impolite for a person not to become involved.

Foreigners in Japan will also be the object of melodramatic *naniwabushi*-type negotiations. Frequently they may be hard to refuse but often foreigners will have little leverage. So you must bow to the inevitable. Do you then say, "Ahh, they did it to me again? They are victimizing me, just because I'm foreign, or a woman, or whatever." You must choose on that.

For me, such situations make for rewarding challenges in which I can learn more about myself and to become, not a victim, but more responsible for whatever happens to me in this intercultural frontier.

I hope you will be challenged to use your next international negotiation encounter as a new adventure in your personal odyssey, a melodrama with *you* as hero.

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# Placement: Where and How?

*Donna Ilyin*

Some of the most frequent questions that I have had to answer about testing are: *Where do we place students in ESL programs? How do we do it? What tests do we use?* These questions take for granted that there is a hierarchy of language acquisition going from no proficiency to a middle proficiency and then to a high proficiency: what is commonly referred to as beginning, intermediate and advanced ESL. They also imply that there may be general levels of definable and testable proficiency.

Ideally each entering student should be interviewed, tested if the student knows any English, and given orientation material about the school's program. The orientation should also include an explanation of the program's goals in relation to the students' goals. Adult school programs often do not have such testing and orientation procedures and teachers arrive to meet a large number of unknown students in a class the first day of school.

When suddenly faced with a new group of students with a wide disparity in ability, a teacher needs to know how much English the students have already learned or acquired. By determining the levels of proficiency, a teacher can select challenging materials which are not too difficult, and group students for efficient and successful learning. Because time is usually limited, a teacher needs a method to quickly assess the students' relative levels of proficiency and to determine the readability of materials. Later,

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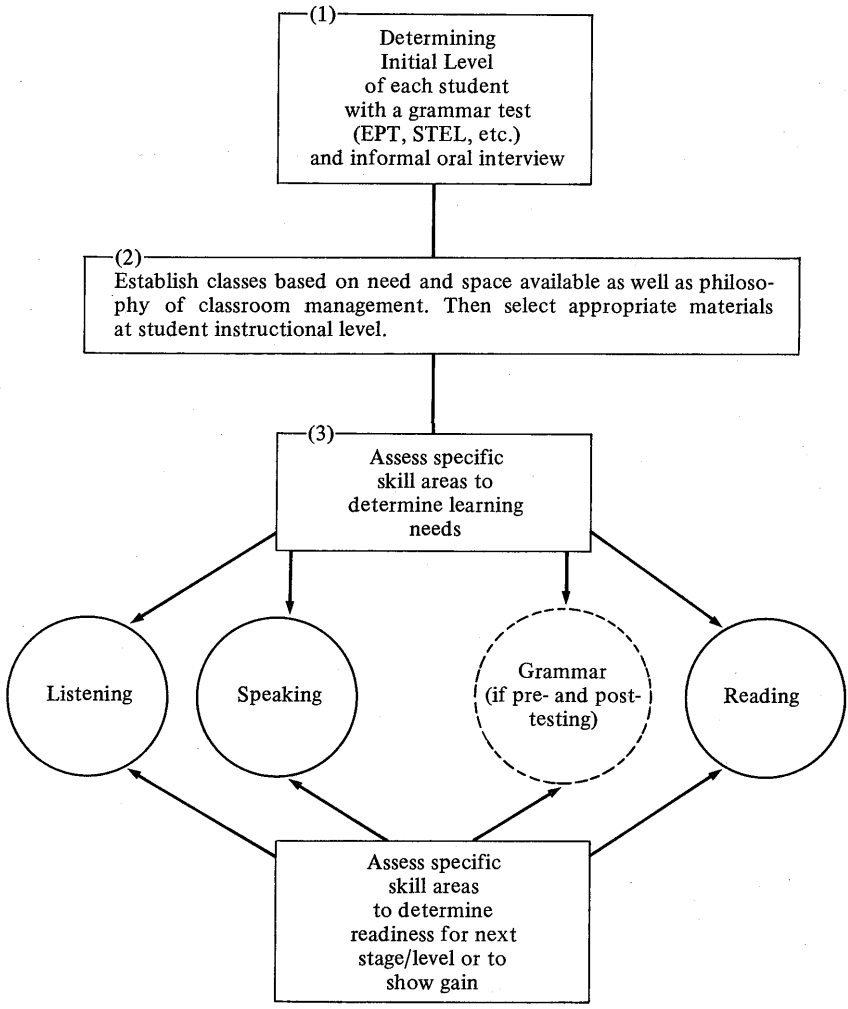
when more time is available, a teacher may want to select other appropriate tests to further evaluate specific skills. Often such tests are given at the beginning and/or at the end of three-month learning periods.

This article discusses stages of ESL abilities and provides some suggestions for quickly evaluating students. Also included are a list of tests used for assessing specific skills, a short description of the six adult school ESL levels referred to in the article and a summary relating some published and available tests to those levels.



## ESL Stages of English Language Acquisition

Most ESL programs try to organize lesson materials and learning experiences into relevant, interesting, and useful chunks of information which are carefully selected according to a hierarchy of acquisition (of vocabulary, grammatical structures, etc.). Part of the hierarchy is based on research and a lot of it is based on common sense, frequency and need, and experience in working with ESL learners. Although each student, class and program is unique, there is an overall pattern of what is easy or difficult, what should be delayed until a later stage, and what is actually achievable in the time allotted for the level. One of the key decisions each teacher and program administrator has to make is how to organize the class or the program into levels that provide success in the time frame provided for most students who attend the classes regularly.

ESL programs usually have definable beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. In order to provide a common frame of reference for this article, I will use the system we developed in San Francisco for our adult school ESL programs. It is based on a continuum starting at zero with no upper limit, although most students score between zero and 800. Beginning courses are in the 0–200 range, intermediate in the 300–499 range, and advanced in the 500–599 range. Students whose test scores are above 600 are sent on to a different school. (See Appendix A for a brief description of those levels and for a chart showing how test scores place students into those levels.)

The definition of levels varies from program to program. For example, intensive English language programs for foreign-born college students usually start beginning classes in the 300–499 range, intermediate from 500–699, while advanced classes would be in the 700–899 range. In our own system, we have had to provide a number of sub-levels: 50, and pre-50 for students who have no school experience and who cannot complete our beginning class (level 100) in the time provided. We have also combined levels 300/400 and 500/600, and have even had multi-level classes 100/200/300 when space and/or number of students at various levels made these designations necessary.

**Quick Assessment for ESL Placement**

At the beginning of a program, a teacher or counselor often cannot take time to evaluate each student individually. Even if the program has a recommendation system for continuing students, there is still a need to place new students quickly. If faced with a large number of students at the beginning of an instruction period, you should first decide how many students you can test in the time allotted and give that many numbers out each day. Ask students if they want to take a test to determine their level. Students respond by raising their hands if they know some English and want to have a number for a test. Assign those students who have never studied English or who do not know any English or who are afraid of taking a test to your very beginning group.

Next, give one of the short grammar tests (STEL, EPT, etc.) to those who can read some English. It helps if you have an aide do this in another room. However, if necessary, give the test in a corner of the room, or wait until the end of the period.

**Assessing Specific Language Skill Areas**

As the program continues, you should also set aside enough time to do quick individual checks of students' oral abilities and reading levels, as well as to give tests that assess specific language skills. (Appendix B gives explanations of the acronyms.)

*Listening*

ALCPT, CELT-L, ELI, LCPT and LCWT, and NCT assess listening skills. Most use a printed modality for multiple choices so that reading skills are also necessary. NCT requires reading as well as listening skills, but students also have to write in words. The LCPT uses picture choices and has no reading. The LCWT requires students to write answers to oral cues.

*Speaking*

Use the Grid (below) as a guide to help you ask a variety of questions when you want to give a quick informal interview and do not have time to give the IOI. Be sure to use a variety of question words and auxiliaries to begin your questions. Too often, people use too many questions beginning with "What."

**GRID**

| | is | are | was | did | do | does | has | have | will | can | should | etc. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes/No | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| When | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Where | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| What (obj.) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| What (verb) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| What (subj.) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Who | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| How? long soon often | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Why | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| etc. | | | | | | | | | | | | |

*Beginning level*

1. Start with a question using a form of *do* or *be* (horizontal Grid section), e.g., "Did you study English before?" (If the answer is no, ask, "How did you learn English?" and continue.)
2. Follow with question words only (vertical Grid section), such as: "Where? When? How long?"
3. If the student does not answer appropriately, place him/her in your beginning oral group even if other passive tests give a higher score.

*Middle level*

4. If the student answers easily and appropriately (even with grammar mistakes), expand the questioning, cross-checking the responses with other related questions and using question words and auxiliary combinations, e.g.: "What languages do you speak? Are you from_____? (Use a country you know is not correct.) Where are you from? When did you come to this city? How long have you been here?"

5. Continue to ask enough questions to check most question words and auxiliaries. (Caution: Don't overuse "What" questions, and those requiring only a yes or no answer.) Attempt to determine if the answer relates realistically to the actual situation. As a cross-check, the answer to, "How long have you been here?" should give the same information as, "When did you come to this city?" If you had students complete a simple application form at registration, you can also cross-check information for accuracy.
6. Ask some more questions which you know require a negative answer. For example, refer to a book that belongs to the school and ask, "Is this your book?" Follow with, "Whose book is it?" to elicit a student response of, "I don't know," or "Maybe. . . ."
7. If the student is beginning to have problems giving appropriate answers, place him/her in your middle oral group. You may also want to note how grammatical the responses have been.

*Advanced level*

8. If the student continues to understand and answer appropriately, ask the student to describe or tell you something. Then ask the student to question you about his/her description or story.
9. Assign a student who expands well and asks relevant questions to your advanced oral group.

This informal interview gives the tester an idea of the student's oral understanding and production. As the course continues, the accuracy of the placement can be checked by giving the interview to five persons already in each of your levels. Set the standard to be followed by their answers. Ask yourself, "Does this new student respond like those in the lower, middle, or advanced group?" Assign a level accordingly.

*Grammar*

If you want to pre-test and/or post-test grammar skills, do not use the same test you used for placement. CELT-S, DTESL, ELI, EPT and STEL are useful to place students *if* they score in the 40% range or higher. Placement below 40% is not accurate

if you are placing students in a number of lower levels. At our center, we use EPT for initial placement and the STEL and CELT-S at the end of a period of instruction (along with other evaluations) to determine if a continuing student is ready for the next level of materials.

Grammar tests may not be accurate for measuring the communicative ability of students who have acquired a middle or high oral fluency in English from contact with native speakers. These people have not studied English in any systematic way. They make many errors, but have a wide range of vocabulary and rather interesting ways of making themselves understood. If such students can read English and take one of the tests, place them a little higher than indicated by the test score.

*Reading*

ELSA and NCT can be used to place students into levels, and the MTELP also has a reading section. In addition, Haskell (1974) has outlined an easy way to determine if reading material is good for the instruction level or for independent reading. After determining the oral level and grammar level of students, choose a section of material from a text or another source that you feel is appropriate for the group and follow Haskell's method:

> Leave the first one or two sentences as written. Then delete every seventh word in the rest of the material (every fifth word for shorter selections) until you have twenty-five or fifty blanks. If the word to be deleted is a proper name, leave out the next word and continue. Instruct students to fill in any word they think is appropriate. Even though you may plan to use these responses later as a lesson to discuss which words are acceptable or appropriate, at this time, give only one point for each exact word (the word the author used). To get the percentage, count the number of exact words filled in and multiply by four if you had twenty-five blanks, by two if you had fifty.
>
> If the readability is less than 44%, the text is too difficult. A text with a readability of 44–53% is appropriate for instruction, while material with a readability of over 54% can be used for independent reading.

## Selecting Appropriate Tests

Tests should neither be frustrating nor too easy for students. At the beginning of a semester, students should score above 30%

or the test is too difficult. If they score above 65%, the test is too easy. If students' test scores tend to be too low, students will have little possibility of making gains after a three-month period of instruction. The tests will serve little purpose except to frighten and frustrate the language learner. (Many adult students drop out of school if continually faced with failure.) If students' test scores tend to be too high, it is also difficult to measure language gain. You may have to use more than one test in a series to determine placement and gain.

The end of a semester is a good time to check the difficulty of tests for your students. We have found that tests with class averages between 40–70% at the end of a semester are the best for our adult school students. Most of the students want to take pre-tests and post-tests to check their language gain. When students are given the option to take a test, more students come to class on the test date than at regular class periods. If you have chosen the tests at the right difficulty levels, measuring gain is possible.

When beginning the selection process, choose a test that you feel may be appropriate and give that test to your highest level students. If students' mean scores at the end of the term are 70% or better, give the test to students at your next highest level, and so on. When the mean scores at the end of the course are below 40% (or above 70%), do not use the test for that level of students.

**Setting Your Own Placement Cut-off Points**

The end of an instruction period is also a good time to make your own placement tables for each level of instruction. With the help of a small, inexpensive calculator, you can determine the mean and standard deviation for each level. Test scores at the end of a semester can be used to determine placement scores for the next highest level at the beginning of the semester. Since scores always tend to overlap, a simple mathematical formula—the multiple classification scheme (MCS)—can be used with the mean scores and standard deviations of your levels to determine the cut-off point. It is a simple statistical procedure suggested by Cooley and Lohnes and used by Brière and Hinofotis (1979) as one of their procedures for a placement study. The MCS formula is:

$$\text{Cut-off Point} = \frac{(X_1 \cdot SD_2) + (X_2 \cdot SD_1)}{(SD_1 + SD_2)}$$

X = Mean
SD = Standard Deviation
1 = one level
2 = the next level

By setting your own placement cut-off points for each level, your placement of new students will reflect your own program rather than one used for developing the test.

If the above procedure does not appeal to you or you are just beginning a program and want some idea of the difficulty of tests, perhaps the following summary of tests used in our program will help you begin your selection and use of tests:

| LEVELS AND TYPES | TESTS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ALCPT | CELT - L | CELT - S | DTESL | ELSA BC | ELSA BN | ELSA IC | ELSA IN | ELSA AN | | EPT A | EPT B | EPT C | EPT D | EPT G | EPT H | IOI | LCPT | LCWT | MTELP | NCT | STEL B1 | STEL B2 | STEL I1 | STEL I2 | STEL A1 | STEL A2 |
| 100 | | | | | + | + | | | | | + | + | + | + | | | + | + | | | | + | + | | | | |
| 200 | | | | + | + | + | | | | | + | + | + | + | | | + | + | | | | + | + | | | | |
| 300 | + | | | + | | | + | + | | | + | + | + | + | | | + | + | + | | | + | | + | + | | |
| 400 | + | + | + | + | | | + | + | | | | | | | + | + | + | + | + | | + | | | + | + | | |
| 500 | + | + | + | | | | | | + | | | | | | + | + | + | | + | | + | | | + | + | + | + |
| 600 | + | + | + | | | | | | + | | | | | | + | + | | | | + | + | | | | | + | + |
| 700 | + | + | + | | | | | | + | | | | | | | | | | | + | + | | | | | + | + |
| 800 | | | | | | | | | + | | | | | | | | | | | + | + | | | | | | |
| Group Test | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Individual Test | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | + | | | | | | | | | | |
| Listening | + | + | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | + | + | + | | + | | | | | | |
| Speaking | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | + | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reading | | | | | + | + | + | + | + | | | | | | | | | | | + | + | | | | | | |
| Writing | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | + | | | | | | | | |
| Grammar | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Vocabulary | + | | | | + | + | + | + | + | | | | | | | | | | | + | | | | | | | |
| Picture Choices | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | + | | | | | | | | | |
| Reading Choices | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + | | | | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Oral answer | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | + | | | | | | | | | | |

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## APPENDIX A

### ADULT EDUCATION ESL PROFICIENCY LEVELS USED IN THIS ARTICLE

These descriptions are from the Instructional Master Plan for English as a Second Language (San Francisco Community College Center 1976). The condensation here was done by the English Learning Center, 534 Westlake Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98109. FSI (Foreign Service Institute) rough equivalents have been added by Pardee Lowe, Jr. from the Central Intelligence Agency. The San Francisco Master Plan also lists published material used at each level.

*ESL 100. (FSI S – 0/0+).* Specifically designed for the absolute beginner. Students learn principles of language acquisition, basic structures and vocabulary. Oral production and listening comprehension are stressed. Basic literacy is developed. Course content revolves around basic communication necessary for interaction in an English-speaking environment.

*ESL 200. (FSI S – 0+/1).* Students review fundamentals of English and continue work on pronunciation, vocabulary expansion, and basic grammatical structures. Work on oral English is supplemented by an increased use of reading, composition, and listening comprehension exercises.

*ESL 300. (FSI S – 1).* Continued assimilation of basic grammar, phonetics and syntax. Students develop speaking, reading, listening, and writing fluency within limited contexts. Emphasis is on the development of a sense of structure, with more work on writing than at previous levels. A reading laboratory is used at this level to improve reading skills and build vocabulary. Students find entry-level jobs.

*ESL 400. (FSI S – 1/1+) (LICV – 1+/2).* Students develop freer improvisations in conversation, increase their understanding of English spoken at normal speed, and improve reading speed and comprehension. Previous grammatical knowledge is fully assimilated through oral and written sentence production. Free composition is introduced. Students are in job training for upgrading.

*ESL 500. (FSI S – 1+/2) (CSCW – 2).* Students learn to use more advanced grammatical structures and assimilate proper stress, intonation and rhythm of spoken American English. Use of idiomatic expressions and style variations is emphasized. Fluency is achieved in oral production and written compositions of paragraph length. Language preparation for future academic or vocational goals is intensified at this level. Students may take specialized "vocational English" classes dealing with the terminology of specific occupations or educational subjects.

*ESL 600. (FSI S – 2/2+) (LICV – 2+/3) (CSCW – 2+/3).* Students prepare for regular (non-ESL) academic and vocational classes or fluency within employment situations. Skills in taking notes, writing outlines, understanding lectures, composing business and personal letters, writing paragraphs and essays are developed. Materials emphasize advanced (often technical) vocabulary, complex sentence structures, more conceptual levels of English, idioms and figurative expressions, and aspects of American culture. This course prepares students to take TOEFL and other college entrance examinations.

**EQUIVALENCY SCORES* OF STUDENTS IN ADULT PROGRAM ESL – Revised March 1978**

(See APPENDIX B for Acronyms)

| LEVEL | ON ADULT ESL TESTS | | | | ON COLLEGE FOREIGN STUDENT TESTS | | | | | ON NATIVE SPEAKER TEST |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | IOI (50 item) | IOI (30 item) | STEL (50 item) | EPT (50 item) | TOEFL | MTELP | ELI Aural Str. | CELT List. Str. | | RFU |
| | (raw scores T=100) | (raw scores T=60) | (raw scores T=50) | (raw scores T=50) | | (equated scores) | | (percent scores) | | (grades) |
| | | | Beg. 1 & 2 | A/B | | | | | | |
| 100 | 0–24 | | 0–19 (0–38%) | 0–19 (0–38%) | Below 350 (nil) | | | | | |
| 200 | 25–39 | | 20–29 (40–58%) | 20–29 (40–58%) | | | | | | |
| 300 | 40–59 | 20–29 (33–48%) | 30–37 (60–74%) | 30–37 (60–74%) | | | | | | 2.9 |
| | | | over 37 and Int 1 & 2 | | Below 425 (Elem.) | | | | | |
| | | | 0–29 (0–58%) | | | | | | | |
| | | | | over 37 and G/H | | | | | | |
| 400 | 60–74 | 30–39 (50–65%) | 30–37 (60–74%) | 0–19 (0–38%) | | | | 41 | 40 | 3.5 |
| | | | over 37 and Adv 1 & 2 | | | | | | | |
| 500 | 75–100 | 40–60 (67–100%) | 0–19 (0–38%) | 20–29 (40–58%) | Below 500 (Int.) | | | 48 | 46 | |
| 600 | | | 20–40 (40–80%) | 30–50 (60–100%) | | 54 | 59 64 | 53 | 56 | 7.0 |
| 700 | | | | | | 64 | 67 76 | 63 | 64 | |
| 800 | | | | | | 73 | 76 82 | | | |

*Scores are for the beginning of each semester or learning period.

## APPENDIX B

### TEST ACRONYMS

*ALCPT* (American Language Course Placement Tests). 1975. Defense Language Institute. English Language Center, Lackland AFB. Texas. Levels 300-700. 120 items.

*CELT* (A Comprehensive English Language Test for Speakers of English as a Second Language). 1971. David P. Harris and Leslie A. Palmer. McGraw-Hill. Levels 400-700. Listening: 50 items; Structure: 75 items.

*DTESL* (Diagnostic Test for Students of English as a Second Language). 1953. A.L. Davis. McGraw-Hill. Levels 200-400. 150 items.

*ELI* (English Achievement Series for the English Language Institute). 1963. Paul W. Pillsbury, Randolph Thrasher and John Upshur. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan. Levels 500-800.

*ELSA* (English Language Skills Assessment). 1980. Donna Ilyin, Lynn Levy, Lauri Fried-Lee, Cecelia Doherty. Rowley, Massachusetts. Newbury House Publishers. Levels 100-800. Each test (BC, BN, IC, IN, AN): 25 items.

*EPT* (English-Second-Language Placement Tests). 1971. Donna Ilyin, Jeanette Best, and Virginia Biagi. Levels 100-600. Each test (A, B, C, D, G, H): 50 items. Free copies from Counseling Office, Alemany Community College Center, 750 Eddy Street, San Francisco, California 94109.

*IOI* (Ilyin Oral Interview). 1976. Donna Ilyin. Newbury House Publishers. Levels 100-500. 30 or 50 items on either the Bill or Tom Form.

*LCGT* (Listening Comprehension Group Tests). 1981. Donna Ilyin. Newbury House Publishers. Two separate tests, each with two forms, Bill and Tom:

*LCPT* (Listening Comprehension Picture Test). Levels 100-400. 33 items.

*LCWT* (Listening Comprehension Written Test). Levels 300-500. 30 items.

*MTELP* (Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency). 1961-64. John Upshur, Leslie Palmer and David Harris. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, English Language Institute. Levels 600-800. Each form: 100 items.

*NCT* (New Cloze Test). 1981. Kay K. Hisama. Athena Language Research Institute, Carbondale, Illinois. Levels 400-800. 50 items.

*RFU* (Reading for Understanding). 1969. Thelma Gwin. Science Research Associates. Levels 300-600.

*STEL* (Structure Tests, English Language). 1976. Jeanette Best and Donna Ilyin. Newbury House Publishers. Levels 100-700. Each form (Beginning 1 and 2, Intermediate 1 and 2, Advanced 1 and 2): 50 items.

*TOEFL* (Test of English as a Foreign Language). Princeton: College Entrance Examination Board and Educational Testing Service.

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| 1 2 | | 1 2 | | 1 2 | | 1 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☐☐ | Pre-schoolers | ☐☐ | Sr. High School | ☐☐ | Commercial Language School | ☐☐ | Exchange Program |
| ☐☐ | Elementary School | ☐☐ | College/University | ☐☐ | Company Program | ☐☐ | Private Classes |
| ☐☐ | Jr. High School | ☐☐ | Prep School/Juku | ☐☐ | Gov't./Research Institute | ☐☐ | Other |

| 1 2 | 1 2 | 1 2 | 1 2 | 1 2 | 1 2 | 1 2 | 1 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☐☐ English | ☐☐Japanese | ☐☐French | ☐☐German | ☐☐Spanish | ☐☐Chinese | ☐☐Korean | ☐☐Other |

# Bright Ideas

## Using Student-Generated Language Through Islamabad

*Robert Ruud*

Much can be said in support of the use of student-generated material in ESL classes. Community Language Learning (CLL) contends that students learn better when they have a vested interest in the language they are using. The techniques for using this type of material are, however, somewhat limited in number and also in applicability. For example, the CLL translation used with basic students is impossible in a program where the learner's native language is not used.

Another problem with this type of material is that it is often undirected, or lacks structural focus. The sheer variety of grammatical structures and concepts used or required in many techniques using student-generated material makes error correction difficult and sometimes gives the student the feeling that there is a lack of real purpose in the activity. Islamabad is one technique used in a CLL context which can be adapted for target-language-only situations and which can be modified to focus on specific conceptual or functional areas.

Islamabad is a technique developed by Earl Stevick (and described in *A Way and Ways,* pp. 138–143) wherein the student uses rods to depict a house, city, building, or other such setting with which only he/she is familiar. In the classic model, the students and teacher sit around a table and one student describes the setting to the teacher, putting the rods into place in coordination with the verbal description. The teacher participates in the conversation via the counseling response. Simply stated, a counseling response is a paraphrase or restatement of what has been said in order to clarify information and encourage the student. It adds no new information to the conversation. (For an in-depth description of

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the counseling response and its use with the Islamabad technique, see Curran, 1976.) The students not participating directly can also participate by asking questions for clarification. Often the students other than the direct participant are more keenly aware of the error correction taking place via the teacher's counseling response than is the participant. A sample discourse might go something like this:

Student: This is the street in front of my house. This is the sidewalk to my house. There is a garden here.
Teacher: There is a garden in front of your house?
Student: Yes.
Teacher: Between your house and the street?
Student: Yes.
Teacher: I see.
Student: And this is the door, the entry. Come in.
Teacher: Ah, so you come in here.

A way of extending the Islamabad format, one which I've found to have real potential for variation and interest, is to make the first task the same—a description of a setting—but the setting must be that of some memorable event in the student's past. The student then goes on to describe the event or sequence of events. For instance, the teacher might ask if someone has been in a minor car accident in which no one was killed. Someone usually has and volunteers to describe it. Other events can be a mountain climbing expedition, a hike, a trip around a city, etc. The student then describes the event from start to finish.

Student: I came from work and I was near my home. There was a car in front and a car behind, like this.
Teacher: And you were coming from work?
Student: Yes. And a signal was here . . . red . . . stop.
Teacher: So you stopped at the signal.
Student: The signal changed . . . green . . . I started out . . . but a man came here . . . but the light was red.
Teacher: He came out from this street? And the light was red?
Student: Yes, and we. . . .
Teacher: You collided?
Student: Yes.

The teacher must take care to participate with interest but without intrusion of his or her own judgments. For example,

special care must be taken with questions such as, "He came out from this street?" above. If the meaning does not reflect what the student had intended to say, such questions can impose the teacher's ideas on the student's story.

Now that a time element has been established in the dialogue, focus can be applied to problematic or new expressions of time (such as those expressing duration, point of time, sequence, or time relations) without the teacher taking over or separating the problems from the context in which the student has a vested interest. One way to do this is to establish the time that the events being described occurred, and how much time elapsed from the beginning to the end. The dialogue may then go something like this:

Teacher: What time was it when you left work?
Student: About 7:00.
Teacher: What time did the accident occur?
Student: About 7:10.
Teacher: So at the time of the accident you had been driving for. . . .
Student: Yes, I had been driving for about ten minutes.

The implied intent of these questions should be to clarify things for the teacher him/herself, and not to question the student's memory of detail. This can be made clear to the student through the way the question is asked, i.e., intonation, facial expression, etc.

Further focus can be gained by doing some analysis of what happened (cause/effect, conditional). For example: "Why do you suppose . . . ?" "What if the light hadn't changed just then? What would have happened?"

Following the description, the teacher or other students can try to retell the story or recall certain details. A time can be written on a card, and the event can be discussed in relation to it. Other students can then work in pairs to try to reconstruct the scene using rods or drawing a map on paper or the blackboard. The original discourse can be taped and errors can be analyzed, though this should be done with caution, for students may feel that they have been set up as a negative model. In my experience in Japan, the counseling response has been more effective when the students were told explicitly beforehand that I would be correcting their errors by restatement and paraphrase. General comprehension

questions can be taped or written to increase understanding, and yes/no questions can be used with lower-level students. In a very basic class, I did my own description/narration of a car accident in three different episodes for listening comprehension. I followed it up with students working in pairs to reconstruct the scene on tape and then listening to both our narrations in the language lab, where they would answer basic questions about the content and make questions of their own. Students then role-played characters from the story, and practiced such functions of language as seeking/reporting information, describing, agreeing/disagreeing, expressing cause/effect, making suppositions, and stating opinions, all in a realistic situation. I thought this way of working prepared the low students better for giving their own narrations.

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# Using Radio News for Developing Listening Comprehension

*Michael J. Kleindl*

The following procedure was developed to help lower-intermediate students learn to listen for the main idea. News stories from the radio were chosen because they were short (between twenty and thirty seconds), to the point, and interesting. In addition, support materials such as newspaper or magazine articles were easy to find. The exercise was done for a maximum of sixty minutes two or three times a week.

Every day I recorded the news from the radio and chose an interesting, unusual, or important news story. Sometimes it was necessary to rerecord the story with my own voice to obtain a good quality tape. The classroom procedure consisted of the following seven steps:

1. Prelistening discussion. (3–5 min.)
2. Listening with general focus questions. (8–10 min.)
3. Cloze exercise. (5–10 min.)
4. Going over the cloze and summarizing. (20–30 min.)
5. Playing the tape again. (1 min.)
6. Playing the changed tape (optional). (3–5 min.)
7. Going over the support material (if available).

First I would get the students to talk very generally about topics related to the news story. For example, for a story about the exchange of a captured spy, I would ask about the various ways countries obtain information about each other. Eventually, a student would mention "spy." We would then briefly talk about spies. Any vocabulary in the story which I felt might have been difficult was explained. However, vocabulary that might have given the main idea away was not explained. Those words would be discussed later. The purpose of this prelistening discussion was to get the students thinking about a topic closely related to the actual news story. Some stories needed very little prelistening.

After playing the tape, the first question I asked was always, "What is this about?" Each student would remember one or two

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words, or sometimes a phrase. I would try to get them to piece the words together like a puzzle to discover the main idea of what they had heard. Usually after hearing the tape twice and discussing it, they could understand the general meaning. I would then ask another focus question, usually a Wh-question, and play the tape again. The tape was played a maximum of three times. By then, the students knew the general idea but not all the details of the story.

A transcript of the news story with some key words clozed out was then given to the students. The missing words were listed below the transcipt with two distractors included to hinder the use of the process of elimination.

> Sources in West Germany report the start of an *elaborate* East-West spy swap. The sources say a Communist agent whose *unmasking* forced *Chancellor* Willy Brandt to resign in *1974* was taken into *Communist* East Germany *today*. In *exchange* East Germany is expected to release a group of *imprisoned* West German agents and allow up to 3,000 *relatives* of former *defectors* to *enter* the West.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1974 | Communist | defectors |
| exchange | elaborate | enter |
| Chancellor | unmasking | today |
| imprisoned | relatives | communism |
| prisoners | | |

The students were not allowed to listen to the tape while they completed the cloze. I tried to cloze out words which would make it necessary for students to understand the meaning of the story in order to fill the blanks correctly. While students were working, I would circulate and look at each student's paper. No correction was done, but I would sometimes ask a student to check a word again. Sometimes the cloze was given as a group problem with a chairman presiding over the meeting. The cloze was also given as a pairwork activity with one student having only the clozed text and the other student having only the missing words. A time limit was given according to the difficulty of the activity and the tape.

Next, each student was asked to read a sentence from the transcript and explain his answer, i.e., why he chose that word

to fill the blank. He was then asked to paraphrase the sentence. Each sentence was handled this way. After all answers had been read and all sentences paraphrased, one student was asked to summarize the entire article.

This was the stage where we talked about the story in depth. The details of the story were discussed and any vocabulary questions were answered. I tried not to focus on grammar questions, but did, of course, answer them. The students were then very familiar with the story.

Then students listened to the tape again to reinforce what they had learned. They could follow along with their transcripts if they wished. Any final questions were also answered.

The students were then asked to put the transcripts away and listen to the tape for the last time. I would then play a tape in which some words and/or the meaning had been changed. Compare the above cloze exercise with the following transcript:

> Sources in West Germany report the *failure* of an elaborate East-West spy swap. The sources say the Communist agent whose unmasking forced Chancellor Willy Brandt to resign in 1974 was *not* taken into Communist East Germany today. In exchange East Germany *was* expected to release a group of imprisoned West German agents and allow up to 3,000 relatives of former defectors to enter the West.

After playing the tape I would ask if the story was the same. Usually the students would notice the change and they would be able to explain the difference. We would then discuss the changes and the new meaning.

It was usually possible to find the same news story in the newspaper or a news magazine. The next day the students were given a copy of the article as follow-up. They were surprised that they could read and understand the general meaning of the article. This impressed them because most thought that news magazines or newspapers were too difficult to understand.

I considered the level of difficulty when picking news stories. At first the tapes were very short and simple, but as the students improved, the tapes became more complex. The students really liked working with these tapes. They enjoyed working with current material that covered a wide variety of topics. The students were also encouraged to tape English news broadcasts on their own and try to find the related news stories in the newspapers.

# Book Reviews

*ESL OPERATIONS: TECHNIQUES FOR LEARNING WHILE DOING.* Gayle Nelson and Thomas Winters. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House Publishers, Inc., 1980, pp. 90.

*Operation* is defined by the authors as "a procedure for doing something using a natural sequence of events." Using *ESL Operations,* students work with realia and move through a short series of commands arranged in eight steps, each of no more than eight words in length. There are six categories with between four and eleven operations in each, for a total of forty-one exercises. The categories include: "Classroom Activities" (e.g., "Using a Dictionary"), "Household Activities" (e.g., "Setting an Alarm Clock"), "Games and Exercises" (e.g., "Playing Dice"), "Food and Recipes" (e.g., "Making a Cup of Coffee"), "Communication" (e.g., "Using a Pay Telephone"), and "Miscellany" (e.g., "Writing a Check"). Each category is internally ordered to proceed from less to more difficult. Each operation follows the same format: title, materials needed (e.g., "a needle, some thread, some buttons"), key words, the operation itself, grammar notes, follow-up activities. In addition, many of the exercises have line drawings which illustrate what is happening, sometimes step by step.

The nine pages of front material are a model of clarity and precision. Here, the authors show that operations can be used effectively with any level of student for work on such diverse areas as verb tenses, cross-cultural understanding, and specific survival needs. The front material also contains detailed models for working with the exercises in three ways, each of which is progressively more student-centered. In addition, there are suggestions for varying the approach. For example: the teacher could dictate the sentence as a first step; more advanced students could create their own operations; the steps of the operations could be shuffled and revised as in a strip story; the operations could be mimed instead of acted out with realia, etc. The book ends with a useful index of key words and grammar notes.

The pedagogical assumptions of *ESL Operations* are supported by recent research. Gouin noticed that the concreteness of working

with objects and movement aids the language learner in "transforming perceptions into conceptions" (Diller, 1978: 58). Asher's research shows that the use of the imperative coupled with physical action dramatically increases motivation and retention (1977). It has also been shown that students will learn a foreign language more quickly and remember it more easily if they are presented with concepts naturally ordered in a series (Diller). In addition, studies in short term memory demonstrate that short commands are the most effective. "We should not expect students to chunk more than eight words, on the average" (Winitz, 1973, refers to Miller, 1956). Finally, by using operations, the teacher is able to withdraw from participation early in the lesson. Therefore, students are able to perform and practice by themselves. "The ideal (study unit) is a group of two or three, at the same level of competence, studying together independently of the instructor" (Ferguson, 1980).

*ESL Operations* has one or two drawbacks worth noting. Even a cursory glance at the exercise titles reveals that this is to some extent an America-oriented ESL book, i.e., one for students who are already in or soon going to be in the United States. For example, using Western Union for sending a telegram, filling out a form to enter an American university, and writing checks are distinctly American activities. Another difficulty in the use of this text lies in preparing materials for a large class, but this problem is easily remedied by resorting to mime, as the authors suggest. In fact, mime can often be more gripping than the use of real objects, since there is more creative freedom.

This is a slim volume which the authors recommend not as a main text, but as a supplement to the regular curriculum. It can be used even if the teacher has the only copy, although it is inexpensive enough (¥1290) that students might want to have their own copies. It provides material for listening comprehension and intensive pair practice in speaking and can be dipped into selectively to be used as time allows. As the authors modestly suggest, *ESL Operations* should be viewed as a "guide" to be adapted to the needs of the individual class.

*Tom Pendergast*

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*FROM SENTENCE TO PARAGRAPH.* Robert G. Bander. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980, pp. 248.

According to its preface, *From Sentence to Paragraph* is a workbook designed to help students master the English paragraph. The book provides ample exercises dealing with the well-known rubrics of the topic sentence, the controlling idea, unity, and coherence. In addition, it includes sentence-level work focussing on cohesive devices such as transitions, subordinations, and parallel structure.

Each chapter of the book includes clear introductory explanations with examples illustrating the particular principle discussed. There is also a pre-test and a post-test for each chapter, one which can be used for diagnostic purposes, the other which can be used to determine a student's control of the material. In addition, each chapter includes a "Test Yourself" exercise which allows students the opportunity to evaluate themselves halfway through the chapter. Finally, there are four appendices containing a glossary, additional composition topics, forms for writing a business letter, and a section on phrasal verbs.

Part one, the lesser portion of the book, concentrates on sentence-level aspects of composing. In the chapter on transitions, for example, students are led from identifying transitions to supplying them in cloze-type exercises to finally providing them in paragraphs which lack connective devices. Similarly, the chapters on subordination and parallelism begin with exercises in which sentences must somehow be revised and end with directions to compose original sentences reflecting mastery of the particular skills taught.

In part two, the focus is on the paragraph. Each chapter introduces an important composing skill and presents many opportunities for practice. For example, in the chapter on topic sentences, students are provided with ten paragraphs within which they must locate the topic sentence, ten sets of sentences which they must unscramble to find the topic sentence, and other successively less controlled follow-up activities culminating with directions to write a "short, original paragraph beginning with a topic sentence" (p. 118). Likewise, the chapter on controlling ideas presents students with a set of activities which range from determining the controlling ideas of given sentences to revising weak topic

sentences to finally composing a paragraph beginning with a topic sentence that has a controlling idea. The remaining chapters on unity and coherence follow the same pattern, each beginning with a set of manipulative activities with the purpose of helping students write unified, coherent paragraphs.

The major strength of the book lies not only in the number of activities students can work through but also in the variety of topics covered in the various chapters. It is reassuring that this text, like most recent pre-composition books, includes content that is likely to be of interest to students.

However, there are some major flaws underlying the assumptions upon which this book is based. Each chapter anticipates that a student's mastery of identification and manipulation exercises will lead to the ability to compose original sentences and paragraphs. Scrambling exercises, to take an example, can be very helpful in pointing out the importance of sequencing one's ideas properly. But we have learned enough about the composing process to know that unscrambling a set of sentences is very different from composing a "paragraph on any subject as an example of coherence" (p. 190). Those rarely considered aspects of composing that are most important, such as the process itself, are either left unmentioned or are summarized in the explanations preceding the chapters on the paragraph. All experienced writing teachers know that it is not enough to merely describe the importance of pre-writing. Similarly, while the last chapter provides students with paragraphs representing different rhetorical models, these models and the cursory discussion which precedes them fall far short of the type of practice the students need in order to master the different organizational modes (see Shaughnessy, 1977: 257–74).

The same criticism can be made about the chapters on the sentence. For example, the explanatory material in the chapter on subordination presents an overwhelming amount of material within three to four pages. By the end of the chapter students are expected to expand sentences with participial phrases, adverb clauses, prepositional phrases, appositives, and adjective clauses. Sentence-expanding à la Christensen's "Generative Rhetoric" (1963: 155–161) can be valuable, but students must be given the opportunity to differentiate these various expansions. The chapter on transitions, like that on subordination, also has some unreal-

istic expectations. Its lists of transitions, like those presented in many other composition texts, fail to take into account the complexity of the skill involved. Different transitions have different grammatical functions (coordinating conjunctions vs. subordinating conjunctions vs. conjunctive adverbs), yet they are presented here as if they were interchangeable. Furthermore, certain transitional expressions can function in situations that are totally opposite, while others have more than one function (Dubin and Olshtan, 1980: 362). Thus, students need to be given ample opportunity not only to differentiate these expressions but also to study different contexts in which these expressions are used. It is only by studying these connections in context that their appropriateness can be understood (Borkin, 1978; Raimes, 1979).

In addition to these drawbacks, there are some minor ones. I didn't always agree with the answers provided in the back of the book. As a matter of fact, I have noted at least two inaccuracies in the answers given. Moreover, the logical relationships between sentences weren't always clear, so that sequencing them in the correct order was sometimes frustrating. I also have some problems differentiating some of the activities in the chapter on the topic sentence from those in the chapter on coherence since in each case the exercises are ones of determining the correct order of sentences.

Despite these criticisms, I believe this book can have a place in any composition course. There are numerous exercises, thus saving the teacher the time and energy often expended in trying to find similar exercises in other texts. There are short, simply written paragraphs, many of which can be referred to over and over again every time a new organizational principle has been introduced. For this reason I would suggest alternating between chapters in part one and part two rather than going through the book from cover to cover. By alternating, the student can review paragraphs already discussed but which now can be seen in the light of a new organizational feature. There are fine explanations, if the explanations are used as a review of extensive practice students have already had. Thus, if one chooses to adopt this book, it should be supplemented with other sentence-level and paragraph-level practice if students can truly be expected to make the transition from sentence to paragraph.

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*JAPALISH REVIEW.* John Pereira, ed. No. 1, 1981. Kyoto: Seika College, pp. 40.

The first issue of *Japalish Review* was published sometime in 1981 (there is no date on the copy). The purpose of the review, according to the editors, is "in providing Japanese writers of English an outlet for their writings." They believe that in establishing English as a second language (as opposed to a foreign language) in Japan, the written word should take priority over the spoken. Contributors must be Japanese and must write in English.

The articles and stories are printed exactly as they were submitted, except for minor typographical changes. The review contains no editorial comments on the articles or on the authors, in order that readers' impressions not be colored by authors' reputations. I was bothered at first by not having the names of some of the authors, but perhaps this format could encourage a diversity of authorship; the opportunity of writing anonymously might be appealing to those who justifiably feel that one need not be held accountable for personal feelings expressed articulately. *Japalish Review* can be a place where Japanese people can use their second language in a more meaningful way than stopping some stranger in the subway.

This first issue contains: an interview with Hiroaki Kosaka, Director of Matsushita's Overseas Training Center, in which he discusses the importance of English skills in training for international work, the problem of East-West miscommunication, the development of Japan's own English, and the philosopy behind Matsushita's training program; a "review of the Japanese experience in America and the literature arising from it" ("Issei, Nisei, Sansei"); a short but perceptive observation of Singaporean English by a Japanese teacher of English ("Another English"); a tale of drinking in Kyoto which deals with a trusting though street-wise American's encounter with a native of dubious integrity ("Joe"); a thoughtful comment on the generation gap, self-delusion, and "uniqueness" in Japan ("Who am I? Where am I?"); a story set in the U.S. concerned with a young woman whose divorced father is trying to get back into her life ("Familiar Ghosts"); a proposal for creating an English sentence dictionary with contextual definitions; plus several other stories and poems.

The percentage of America-related topics is quite high, although the stories focus not on America itself but on the difficulty of the Japanese in becoming international and in understanding and growing from cross-cultural experiences. The present predominantly bilateral nature of Japan's "internationalization" is cause for concern both in Japan and abroad, and it is to be hoped that future issues of *Japalish Review* may contain more articles (along the lines of "Another English") concerned with Japan's Asian neighbors.

The editors of *Japalish Review* believe that "for a language to be vital it must be aggressive, in the sense that it must communicate the thoughts and ideas of the person using it." The institution of a second language necessitates some shaping of it to fit its new speakers, with the dual purpose of making the language more accessible to those speakers and getting the speakers more personally invested in the language. The current concern over just who the English language belongs to, and over the culture-bound nature of many classes, programs, and textbooks, has had the effect of making a second language's variations on its parent generally more acceptable, if not actually encouraged. This is not to say that we cannot maintain standards of quality based on communicative capacity. It just means that "our" language is not ours to keep, and the Japanese can use it in a way that expresses ideas and perceptions which may be foreign to us as Americans, Britons, Australians, or Indians. Since the relationship between language and perception of the world differs from culture to culture, the language itself may change to accomodate it. The extent to which such variation is "acceptable" must be judged not only in relation to the expectations and standards of native English speakers, but also in terms of the variety's ability to achieve precise communication on an international scale. Idiosyncracies in language variety may very well identify a speaker as a member of a given community without preventing him or her from being understood by other speakers of the language outside of that community.

The editors recognize, however, that there are some obstacles confronting *Japalish Review* in its broader purpose of working to establish English as a second language which were not present in some of the other countries where this has already been or is being done. The most obvious of these is that there is no real need for the Japanese to communicate with each other in English.

Linguistic diversity has necessitated the use of English as a common means of communication in India, parts of Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific, for example. No such barrier exists in Japan. Japan's real need for English lies in its need to internationalize. Internationalization for Japan implies learning English or other languages and learning others' ways of living and communicating—but it also involves teaching others about Japan. This is where *Japalish Review*'s stories can play a part.

*Japalish Review* is something for Japanese to read to stay in touch with how others are speaking English "Japanesely," and for non-Japanese to read to find out about a society which is just finding its feet with its international language; to understand more not only about how we differ, but about how we are the same. *Japalish Review* is a positive move toward making this understanding a two-way affair.

*Robert Ruud*

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*MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENT CULTURES.* Reiko Naotsuka, Nancy Sakamoto, et al. Tokyo: Taishukan Publishing Co., 1981, pp. 205.
*JAPANESE AND THE JAPANESE: LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CHANGE.* Herbert Passin. Tokyo: Kinseido Ltd., 1980, pp. 154.

usus efficacissimus rerum omnium magister.[1]

Two recent books demonstrate the pitfalls and pleasures of research on cross-cultural subjects. With the best intentions, statistical surveys can often do no more than prove the obvious. But a well organized presentation gives us a clearer picture of the subject. Such is the service rendered by *Mutual Understanding of Different Cultures* (a translation of *Obeijin-ga Chinmoku Suru Toki*) by the Committee on Intercultural Communication Project, led by Reiko Naotsuka. A discussion gives pleasure if it stimulates the imagination and the intelligence. Herbert Passin has ably performed this task in his *Japanese and the Japanese.*

*Mutual Understanding* details the results of a symposium and a survey. Reactions were solicited to various representative Japanese *aisatsu* (routine polite expressions) as well as selected sociolinguistic behaviors. *Aisatsu* considered include expressions of humility, indirect complaints, indirect refusals, personal questions, and the suppression of personal opinions.

Of the survey's sampling techniques, some complaint should be made in the following areas: its size (only 154 respondents total); its representative balance of national and cultural groups (46% are native English speakers); age (a mere 14% are over forty years of age); length of stay in Japan (51% less than two years); and status (students and teachers comprise 81% of the sample). The sample can be said to have statistical validity only if the foreigners in Japan can be fairly represented by a group of young, English-speaking academics who have not been in Japan long enough to learn the country or its customs. For my part, I think not.

These considerations aside, what emerges from the sample is a picture of the readiness of the respondents to make moral judgments concerning the prevalent sociolinguistic behavior (customs) of the Japanese. In general, Westerners displayed this readiness to a greater extent than Asians. Western reaction to face-to-face

[1] Custom is the best master of all things (Pliny, *Natural History,* XXXVI, 2).

encounters with what they simply fail to understand seems to be a cauldron in which prejudice is formed from a mixture of anger and frustration.

The selection of quoted responses runs the gamut from understanding to ignorance to outrage, and displays all the usual criticisms of Japanese custom. The value of *Mutual Understanding* for many readers may be in showing us a picture of ourselves. For who has not shared the feelings of the British woman who responded thusly to the Japanese habit of indirect expression: "Nobody's feelings are hurt if the answer is no. It's all hypocrisy." Perhaps she fails to see that her condemnation hurts others' feelings and does nothing to help the situation. It is valuable to see to what extent our own reactions are predictable, and, hopefully, correctable.

Among the authors' conclusions is a short essay on the different time sense of Japanese and Westerners. I wish that more had been said on this subject as I found it personally fascinating.

Those in Japan or planning a stay of any length on business or pleasure will be rewarded by paying careful attention to the message of *Mutual Understanding.* When crossing cultural boundaries, patience is essential. Indeed, it is only the foolish who now overlook the wisdom implicit in the common sense saying, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do."

Herbert Passin, in *Japanese and the Japanese,* amuses and instructs by tendering examples of the rapid change occurring in the Japanese language. But he goes much further than the typical essayist of manners and mores. In fact, he strikes an epochal note which is, to say the least, controversial. Previous scholars noted that "ordinary modern prose has scarcely anything Japanese about it save for a few particles and the structure of the sentence. Most of the vocabulary [is] Chinese." Passin goes on to observe:

> The same things . . . is happening today with English. [It] is in process of being completely absorbed and, just as happened to Chinese in the past, its entire vocabulary is becoming available for use in Japanese. (63)

Is this true? And if so, why? Absorption of language differs according to culture and, Passin argues, Japanese is highly permeable. There are five steps in the process. First, "words are taken

whole and used passively;" secondly, they acquire shades of meaning unintended in the original. The next step is abbreviation; then follows combination with Japanese words. The final step occurs "when people are no longer aware that a word is not native" (70).

For those of us living in Japan, the sometimes excruciating and oft-times side-splitting usages of English only bear out Passin's thesis. Although some commentators would have this trend indicative of a native Japanese species *of* English, this author is more inclined to view Japlish, Janglish and other such creations as attempts to define the absorption of English into Japanese. While educated Japanese make intense efforts to overcome their formal schooling and to speak English as English speakers speak it, advertisers, T-shirt manufacturers, musicians, magazine editors, and other exponents of popular culture cut and tailor English to the expectations and fancies of their audiences—not to mention their own commercial needs—as well as to the demands of the assimilation process outlined by Passin. It is possible that all this constitutes an enrichment of Japanese. But in those cases where perfectly servicable Japanese words already exist, one can only wonder. In fairness, it should be stressed that many new words in Japanese are related, as Passin states, to changing social mores and to new forms of thinking that are not capable of being properly expressed in the "old" Japanese.

Passin devotes the bulk of his work to these trends, including the growing egalitarianism of Japanese society, changes in family life, increasing individualism, the language of love, and so on. His prose is stylish and urbane, even-tempered even in discussions of comparative profanity and sex. This book is not a dry academic tome but a lively, humorous argument, illuminated by anecdotes and jokes. Passin's appreciation for Japanese culture is evident. (The respondents to the survey in *Mutual Understanding* could learn much from his attitude.)

*William Gatton*

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William Gatton is currently an instructor at the Language Institute of Japan. He is the author of a set of children's English study materials forthcoming from Kodansha in June 1982.

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# Announcements

**ELS SEMINAR FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS.** July 11-31, 1982; Berkeley, California. A three-week seminar designed to familiarize teachers with the latest developments in their professional field and help to improve their instructional skills. Additional information may be obtained by contacting ELS Special Programs, 5761 Buckingham Parkway, Culver City, California 90230, U.S.A.

**STANFORD INSTITUTE FOR INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION.** July 22-August 6, 1982. Three training sessions varying in duration will be held on the Stanford University Campus to present workshops to examine cross-cultural training in a variety of professions. The core training session (Session II, July 25-30) will offer intensive training programs in 1) Teaching Intercultural Communication, 2) Counseling Across Cultures, 3) Developing Multicultural Education, 4) Programming International Education, 5) Training in Transnational Business, 6) Developing Global Perspectives, K-12, 7) Training in ESL and VESL, and 8) Managing Binational Organizations: Japan and the U.S. The Advanced Program (Session III, August 1-6) will be primarily for participants who are well-versed and experienced in the field of Intercultural Communication. The special two-day training session (Session I, July 22-23) is designed for participants interested in one of two foci: 1) The Role of Gender in Communication Training, and 2) Working with Indochinese Communities. Internships will be offered to qualified people interested in a full two-week program (July 17-30). For further information, contact the SIIC at P.O. Box A-D, Stanford, California 94305, U.S.A. or call (415) 497-1897. Deadline for registration is June 18, 1982. Enrollment is limited.

**INDIVIDUALIZED LANGUAGE TEACHING THROUGH MICROCOMPUTER-ASSISTED INSTRUCTION. The American Language Academy CAI Seminars.** July 6-10, 1982, Washington, D.C., and August 10-14, 1982, Ashland, Oregon. Both intensive five-day Seminars will provide the theoretical background and hands on experience necessary to enable participants to make practical use of microcomputer-assisted language instruction. The curriculum will cover such areas as the effectiveness of CAI in teaching individual language skills, designing CAI educational programs, finding and evaluating packaged software, and buying a microcomputer system for CAI. For further information, write CAI Seminars, American Language Academy, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. 20064, U.S.A.

**JALT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE/TEACHING.** October 9-11, 1982. Call for Papers. The Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT), an affiliate of TESOL, will sponsor this conference, to be held at Tezukayama Gakuin University in Osaka. The theme of the conference is "Perspectives on Learning." JALT welcomes papers, demonstrations, and

workshops concerned with teaching and learning a foreign language. The following information is necessary:

1) Two copies of your 200 word typewritten abstract, one with your name and contact address ON and one with your name OFF. The purpose or central idea of the proposal should be clearly stated within the text of the abstract. Commercial presentations should be clearly indicated. Immediately following the abstract, indicate the primary audience/s for whom the presentation is intended. Also, list any equipment that you will need for your presentation.
2) One copy of a 25-50 word bio-data statement.

Both items should be sent to Triny Yates-Knepp, Program Coordinator, Hiyoshidai, 5-6-11, Takatsuki, Osaka 569, Japan, before June 15, 1982.

**HUMOROUS-METAPHOR CONFERENCE AT ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY.** March 31-April 2, 1983. The second semi-annual conference on linguistic humor will be held at the Phoenix Hilton Hotel. The theme of the conference is "Far-Fetched Figures: The Humor of Linguistic Deviance." The conference will be sponsored by the Western Humor and Irony Membership (WHIM). Proposals dealing with any aspect of humorous metaphor are now being accepted by Don L.F. Nilsen, English Department, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona 85287, U.S.A.

**INTERNATIONAL LEXICOGRAPHY CONFERENCE AT EXETER.** September 9-12, 1983. Preliminary registrations are invited for an international conference on all aspects of lexicography, to take place at the University of Exeter. There will be some keynote lectures on the major general issues in dictionary-making, but the emphasis will be on more specialized topics, discussed in section meetings, on the subjects of: (a) The Historical Dictionary; (b) The Bilingual Dictionary; (c) The Learner's Dictionary; (d) Terminology Standardization; and (e) Computer-Aided Lexicography. For more information, write to: Dr. R.R.K. Hartmann, The Language Centre, University of Exeter, Exeter EX4 4QH, Devon, United Kingdom.

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