Identity and Perceptions of the Target Culture

Second language learning requires progressive changes in thinking, speaking, and behaving. This process will necessarily include some degree of identification with the target culture, if minimal success is desired. Two aspects, Japan's social roles, and the negative perceptions of Westerners were seen as heavy inhibitors of proper identification.

Experience with American Black university students acquiring a standard grammar and dialect of English was shared. Those students using non-standard English experienced psychological stress upon being required to assume the "oppressor's language". Lack of achievement was associated with unfavorable attitudes towards the majority culture in many cases.

Developing Cross-Cultural Attitudes

In attempts to influence the attitudes of EFL students towards Levels III and IV (believability), cognitive and effective activities were demonstrated as conducive to the outcome goals, as well as, creating psychological security. Such activities could be integrated as one unit, but most effectively used as an "orientation program" to language and cultural study.

The presenter would like to correspond with anyone sharing similar interests. Please write to:

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THE SILENT WAY AND LARGE UNIVERSITY LEVEL CLASSES

Mr. Arnold gave a sort of reverse presentation. Since he realized his was one of the very last group of them, he gave his conclusions at the very beginning so that those who would like to attend one of the other excellent presentations could have a last chance at the conference offerings without missing his key points. That left about ten people who wanted to hear more of the details of his conclusions.
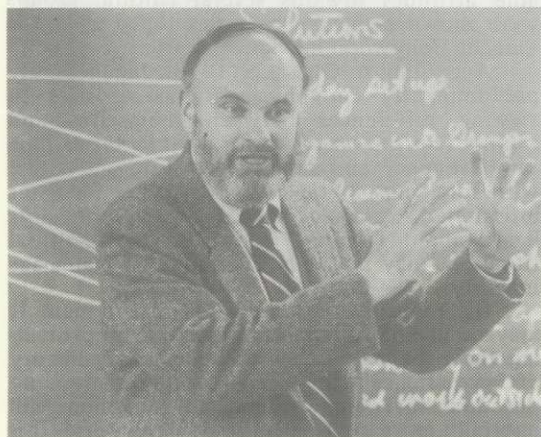
Frederick C. Arnold

He began his main talk remarking about the awarenesses he had gotten from the just-ending conference and moved into defining the spirit of the Silent Way as being the way of Socrates — the Socratic Method of leading or guiding but not giving answers directly. The heart of his talk discussed his view of the main problems of working in English Conversation in Japanese universities and his solutions to them. He ended his talk by suggesting various things the audience might want to discuss in the remaining twenty minutes.

His ordering of the problems according to difficulty drew the most interest. On a large blackboard he listed his nine problems on one side and his seven solutions on the other side. Since a number of solutions attacked more than one problem at a time, the logic of the imbalance was not violated.

His list of problems according to difficulty were: 1. very poor student motivation, 2. their prior exposure to English, 3. their minimal contact with his classes due to long holidays and breaks, 4. overcrowded classes, 5. the poor physical condition of the classrooms and noise outside them, 6. school reluctance to spend money for materials and facilities that really count, 7. the high degree of near-sightedness and poor eyesight which made the rods and charts hard to see, 8. the lack of a Silent Way textbook, and 9. the difficulty of forcing awareness among more than a handful of the class at one time. It was interesting to note that the last three became problems because he chose to use the Silent Way.

His seven solutions which applied to a number of problems were: 1. clearly defining the entire course to the students in the very first class, 2. arranging all students into groups of four to seven, 3. changing all lesson plans into educational games, 4. using wireless microphones to amplify student voices, 5. picking a flexible approach like the Silent Way, 6. enlarging the Silent Way instruments through various methods, and 7. writing a Silent Way textbook for use in his classes.

The time spent in his presentation seemed to meet the needs of all those who attended. He remarked that he would be happy to discuss with anyone the ways he is continuing to improve his classes. Of special note is the fact that he works with over 600 students, six days a week and is forced to be innovative in order not to be overwhelmed by the sheer weight of his teaching challenges.

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WHAT IS DISCOURSE ANALYSIS?

Discourse analysis is a holistic description of language. It describes more than the linguistic code, attempting to account for the psycho-social factors that influence the way language is used in an extended text, oral or written. Discourse analysis deals with language in context. An utterance is analyzed in relation to other

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utterances; and a sentence is analyzed in relation to other sentences, underlining the idea that language is "discourse", not a linear sequence of discrete items.

Discourse analysis is not new. In her presentation, Virginia LoCastro pointed out that Firth was describing language in its social and inter-personal contexts back in 1935, but discourse analysis did not develop at that time. The structuralists, influenced by Bloomfield, focused on the linguistic code and tried to describe language in discrete, observable units; context (and meaning) were ignored. Perhaps it was not until the limitations of the work of Chomsky and the generative grammarians were recognized that scholars began to look seriously at the landscape of language.

If language in context is to be studied, a host of procedural problems arise. One main focus of discourse analysis has been the development of a methodology. Several models of discourse analysis have been developed. Some of these models include the speech act model, the expansion model, and the problem-solving model (Cicourel, 1980). In this presentation, LoCastro introduced us to speech acts, perhaps the most widely used type of analysis. Jack Richards (1980) states that "Speech acts can be described as the things we actually do when we speak." Here is an example of a speech act analysis:

Five stages in the buying-selling process
1. salutation
2. enquiry as to the object of sale
3. investigation of the object of sale
4. bargaining
5. conclusion

Example of a shop transaction

	STAGES
Buyer: Have you a bed to sell?	2
Seller: I've got one but it's rather expensive.	2
Buyer: Let me have a look at it then.	2
Seller: Certainly. If you want it for yourself, I will make you a reduction.	4
Buyer: How much is it?	4
Seller: $4	4
Buyer: What's your last price?	4
Seller: Believe me if it were anyone but you I'd ask him five.	4
Buyer: I'll make a firm offer of $3.50	4
Seller: Impossible, let it stay where it is.	4

Buyer: Listen. I'll come this afternoon, pay you $3.70 and take it.   4
(Buyer crosses threshold of shop on his way out.)
Seller: It still wants some repairs.   5

(From Mitchell, T.F. 1957. *The language of buying and selling in Cyrenaica*, in **Hesperis** 44, 31-71. Quoted in Coulthard, 1977, pages 5-6.)

Finding the rules that underlie discourse is one of the primary tasks of discourse analysis research. Human interaction is complex and unpredictable, yet there seem to be ground rules which people follow. Much of the research has been on classroom interaction patterns and conversations. The study of conversation, or conversational analysis, tries to observe such problems as turn-taking, the length of each person's utterance, or devices used to keep the conversation moving.

Some of the rules that underlie discourse can be observed through the devices that make discourse comprehensible or hold language together. Transition words, pronouns, and redundancy, for example, provide coherence in speech and cohesion in writing. It is these devices that many times become the link between the context and the linguistic code and provide an idea of the communicative strategy used by the speaker-writer.

In terms of practical application, Discourse Analysis can perhaps provide the language teacher with a wider perspective on language and information on how people interact through language. This could have an important impact on what we teach as communication skills. Discourse Analysis could also provide information on the kind of language that is actually used, so that our language for instruction can be more authentic and appropriate to a given context. Furthermore, by understanding the cohesive devices in discourse, we might be able to be more resourceful in helping our students develop conscious strategies to use to express themselves.

The one hour was too short to do justice to all aspects of Discourse Analysis. But those who attended were introduced to a significant movement in applied linguistics which may in fact affect our approach to language and the materials we use to teach it.

Cicourel, Aaron V. 1980. *Three Models of Discourse Analysis: The Role of Social Structure*. **Discourse Processes**. 3, 2, (101-131).
Richards, Jack C. 1980. *Conversation*. **TESOL Quarterly**. 14, 4, (413-432).

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EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN CHINA'S MIDDLE SCHOOL ENGLISH

Since 1974 an experiment on teaching English in the first year of the five-year program at East China Normal University's Second Middle School has been carried out. The five-year period was divided into three distinct stages:

1. **Listening and speaking followed by reading and writing (two years):**