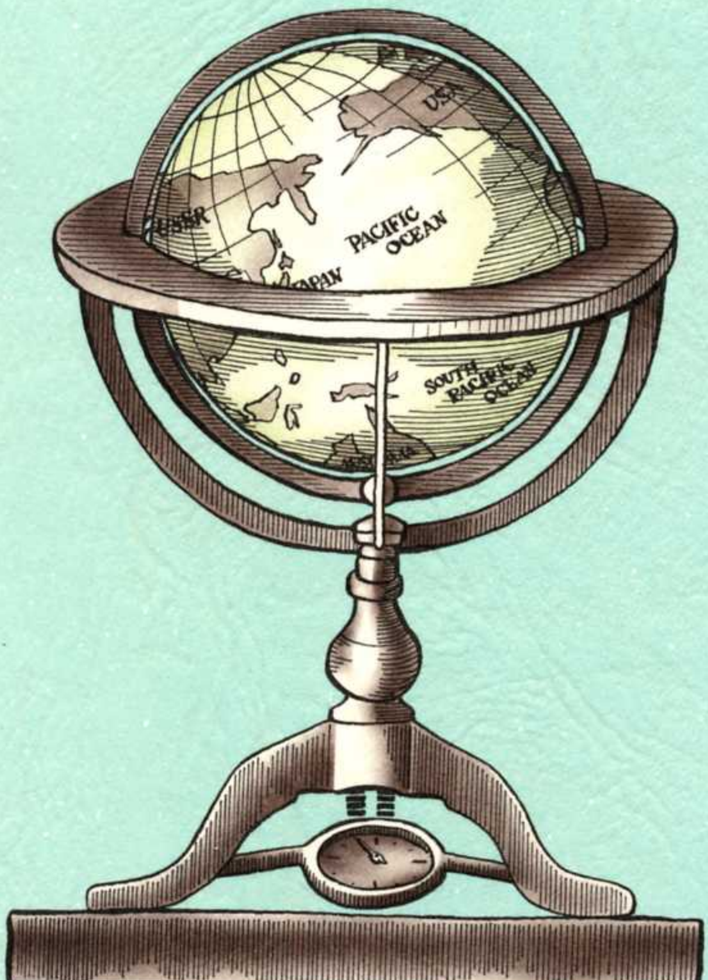
CROSS 言語 CURRENTS

COMMUNICATION/LANGUAGE/CROSS-CULTURAL SKILLS



THE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE OF JAPAN

CROSS CURRENTS

Communication/Language /Cross-cultural Skills

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ABOUT *CROSS CURRENTS*

Cross Currents is published with the intention of contributing to an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas within the areas of communication and language skills acquisition and cross-cultural training and learning. Although a large proportion of the articles deal with these areas as they relate to Japan and Japanese students, we are also concerned with teaching methodologies, techniques, and general issues which are multicultural rather than culture specific.

Articles submitted for consideration should be typed, double-spaced with references cited in parenthesis in the text by the author's last name, date and page numbers. Footnotes on substansive matters should be typed at the bottom of the page where the footnote appears. Please include a bibliography, a short precis of the article and a short biographical sketch.

Please direct all correspondence to:

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Cross Currents
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Summaries of the Articles (in Japanese)

Expanding the Use of Picture Squares in the Classroom

Ruth Sasaki

ストーリー・スクェアーズ

この論文では、英会話の指導に絵図の描かれたチャート“ストーリー・スクェアーズ”を用いるという具体的かつ実践的な一連の指導方法が述べられています。この“ストーリー・スクェアーズ”には基礎的な英語で表現することのできるいくつかの絵図が描かれていて、発音や時制の比較対照等が総合的に指導できるよう工夫がなされています。その他この“ストーリー・スクェアーズ”の成り立ちや応用方法についても言及されています。

A Problem Solving Role Play for Businessmen

Michael N.Joy

ビジネスマンのための問題解決劇（ロール・プレイ）

この論文に記述されたロール・プレイをまとめる際基本的に意図されたことは、元来の言語学的効果をねらった役割劇ではなく、問題解決のための戦略指導とその評価を主たる目的としたある種の体験的状況のモデルを設定するということでした。これにより、相互作用とコミュニケーションについて学んでいるという状態から、相互作用とコミュニケーションを通して学ぶという方向へ発想の転換を試みたのです。

ロール・プレイは学習者達が学んできたことを示すための場ではなく問題解決を行っていく過程の中で彼等自身のあり方について考えさせる一つの体験的手段であるといえます。

Facilitating Language Acquistion Through Small Group Process

Raymond Bud Zeuschner

小グループ理論による語学習得

ここでは、第二言語の指導を行う際に切りはなすことのできない2つの要素「学ぶことと恐れをとりのぞくこと」について小グループ指導という観点からいくつかの方法が探索されています。小グループの活動がそれぞれ適切であるかどうかを測る方法としてここでは、次の3つの基準があげられています。すなわち、課題によって要求されてくるもの、学生の備えている能力、およびプロセスです。又クラスで行なえる口頭練習の方法として、インタビュー形式とブレーンストーミング形式の2つについて実例をあげて説明しています。

The Application of Values Clarification to Teaching English in Japan: Two Experiences

Dana K.Lowis

価値観解明法の適用：日本での二つの経験

ここでは価値観解明法（Values Clarification）を適用して日本人に英語を教えた二つの経験がのべられています。一つはカードを使って学習者に意見を述べさせる方法、もう一つは音楽を使って感情や反応を表現させる方法です。筆者はこの中で、コミュニケーションと相互理解に重点を置く英語指導の最終ゴールは、英語をコミュニケーションのメディアとして又意見を交換したり感情を表現する“道具”として学習者がそれを自由に使いこなせるようにすることだと述べています。

Rapid Reading and Rapid Writing

Deborah B. Matreyek

ラピッド・リーディングとラピッド・ライティング

日本人は英語を読んだり書いたりする際、母国語へ翻訳してしまう傾向がありますが、ラピッド・リーディングとラピッド・ライティングはこうした傾向を軽減するために開発された手法で学習者に一定量の課題をあたえそれを一定時間内にやり終えるよう時間制限をあたえるという方法です。基本的にはまずリーディングを行わせ次に書かれてある内容についての質疑応答を行い、最後にライティングを行わせます。これをやると約１ヶ月後には学習者の読解力は確実に向上し、一定時間内に書くことのできる量も増加することが明らかにされています。この技法は、学習者の“翻訳”を止めるのに大いに効果的であるだけでなく、討論能力と作文力の向上にも役立つと述べています。

E.T.T.: Working with the Absurd

Alison Devine

英語指導劇

ＥＦＬ（外国語としての英語）分野における新しい手法の一つに演劇の使用があります。この論文はロンドンの**English Teaching Theatre**というグループを観察し彼らとのインタビューを基に書かれたものです。このグループは外国の学生に文法を教えるのにコミカルな寸劇を使ったり歌を使ったりして型にはまらない興味深い方法で指導しています。

筆者はこのアプローチが外国語の教師だけでなく普通の学課の教師にとっても大きな可能性を有するものであると考え、また語学教育において新しい教育観をなすものとしてとらえています。

Concerning Communicative Competence

Walter A. Matreyek

伝達能力（Communicative Competence）

最近Communicative Competenceということばが第二言語の学習と訓練課程の目標として浮かび上がってきています。このCommunicative Competenceという術語には多くの定義がなされていますがきびしく分析すればそれらの多くは曖昧なものであったり、狭義なとらえ方しかしていなかったり、あるいは実用上適用し難いものだったりします。

この論文ではCommunicative Competenceが従来のものよりも具体的、包括的で実用上にも適用できる定義でとらえられています。この新しい定義は、第二言語の教師に彼らの意図する目標を明瞭に詳細に描き出し、またCommunicative Competenceの開発に使える教室での活動についての示唆を与えてくれます。

An Attributional Approach to Culture Learning: The Culture Assimilator

Rosita D. Albert and John Adlamopoulos

文化を学習する上での帰図的なアプローチ：文化を同化する方法（Culture Assimilator）

アトリビューション・トレーニングとは、個人個人が異なった対人間の立場を説明するとき、自分自身の文化的な素地からではなく、別の文化すなわち別の言語背景を持った民族集団の成員の立場に立った物の見方をして説明できるようにすることをねらいとしています。ここでは、Culture Assimilatorの開発の陰に行なわれた研究についてご紹介し、Culture Assimilatorの創作に使われた方法、でき上がったプログラムの見本、およびそれらを使ってみた結果とその評価について述べています。

翻訳　奈須野万里

From The Editor

The publication of this issue of *Cross Currents* comes a little more than five years after the first appearance of the journal in 1972. While there is nothing magical about a half decade, it does in this case coincide with a change in the editorship. Although it has been our policy to put the contents of the journal in the forefront and to screen the editorial work with the editorial "we" over the signature of *Cross Currents*, I would like to take a few pages of the journal to bring out from behind that screen some of the ideas and persons who have propelled the journal to this point.

There are literally scores of people who have given their time and resources to *Cross Currents*, but if I were to name just one person without whose assistance the journal would not have continued, I would have to mention a woman best known to our readers under her maiden name – Toneko Kimura. Thoroughly bi-lingual and bi-cultural, Tone not only relentlessly pursued her many acquaintances here and abroad for material for the early issues of the journal, but also herself wrote a major article for every issue in which she was co-editor. Drawing from the wealth of her own experiences and her hard-won academic tools, she produced enlightening and practical works of great clarity and usefulness. One measure of the crucial nature of her service to the journal is the fact that after she left for a new career, there occurred an unfortunate and overly-long gap in the publishing history of the journal.

Obviously, I cannot go on at such length about everyone who has worked with the journal, but two more persons deserve at least brief mention. The first, Gwen Thurston Joy, was appointed to the editorial board early this year, but previous to that she worked unofficially and in many capacities. A competent typist, a cheerful proof reader, an occasional contributor, the doer of a myriad details – Gwen has been a mainstay in keeping the work moving forward. Secondly, serving a too-brief tenure as a co-editor, there was Fritzi Graham. Not only did she juggle a busy teaching schedule and the heavy responsibilities of caring for a young child, but she was also invaluable in getting the previous issue of *Cross Currents* to the press.

As for all the others, many of their names can be found in the tables of contents in our back issues. The contributions that others made are perhaps known only to me and themselves. To all of them the journal owes its existence and a large measure of gratitude.

Occasionally through the years as an editor of *Cross Currents*, some people have been kind enough to wonder why I have done it. Like many other part time journalists, I have found it personally satisfying to trade off hours of hard work for the chance to see the first copy of a new issue off the press and realize that once more, diverse persons and ideas have found their way into print and into readers' hands and I was in some way helpful in that process.

In addition to that, there is another element that is somewhat deeper. This is best summarized for me by a quotation that I have kept pinned to the wall for many years:

> I hold every man a debtor to his profession; from the which, as men, of course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavor themselves by way of amends to be a help and an ornament thereunto.
>
> Francis Bacon
> Preface to *Maxims of the Law*

While it would be immodest to claim that *Cross Currents* has achieved the status of an ornament to the profession, it has always worked toward being a help. I have always felt that a journal that is indeed a "help" is one that will, on the one hand, mirror the needs and self conceptions of the profession and, on the other, shape and give direction to the profession by exploring, bending and extending its boundaries.

The question of what profession it is that we have been trying to mirror and shape has been the subject of hours of conversation and thinking on the part of those concerned with it. At its most basic and clearest level, it can be said that the journal's concern is language teaching and the profession is made up of language teachers. However, we all know that the profession is more than that.

One step that the journal has made in the direction of defining the scope of the profession, I believe, is the concern that it has shown for the language learner as well as the teacher. For the rest of it, perhaps it can be briefly intimated by the following pattern practice:

We have been concerned with the:

learner
teacher

holder
transmitter
defender
changer
channel
facilitator
clash
of values
cultures

counsellor
client

teacher
learner

as

a self actuating learner
teacher

an underdeveloped
overworked
resource

responsible for one's own learning
teaching

a(n) responsible
irresponsible
careful
careless
concerned
effective
bumbling
frightened
fearless
communicative,
etc.
PERSON

I believe that as the journal has moved into such areas, it has helped to give shape and definition to the profession we seek to ornament. However, we cannot neglect the mirror, for a journal that moves too far beyond its audience loses its ability to reflect on the field. Yet again, a mirror tilted just so, can peer around the corner and show us the territory ahead.

As for the territory ahead, who knows what promises and problems it brings to us in the profession. I myself look forward to what is coming and hope to be active in it, but find that it is time for me to lay down the tools in this particular forum.

The physical achievements in the past five years have not been spectacular – six slim volumes, a little less than 700 pages, a little over fifty articles, a small (but growing!) circulation. But the personal and professional rewards have been invaluable . . . many ideas discovered, many friendships developed, a commonality in struggle, a sense of achievement and ornamentation in the profession.

My thanks to everyone who has made this possible. My best wishes go to those who will now carry the work into the future.

Michael N. Joy
Cross Currents

Expanding the Use of Picture Squares in the Classroom*

Ruth Sasaki

In this article I hope to present a set of specific and practical ideas for teaching centered around the use of charts of 'squares' of pictures which represent ideas that can be expressed in basic English. The climax of the article, and of the concept itself (in an evolutionary sense) is the Story Square, a system of pictures tied together by a plot and presented to the class as a puzzle. The Story Square is an idea that has been developed at the Language Institute of Japan by Lance Knowles and myself during the past year, and used in the classroom with considerable success. The squares included in this article are only examples, and they will hopefully be of assistance to those teachers who would like to create their own.

I would like to begin by tracing the development of the Story Square. The first primitive picture squares were inspired by a print-out describing a verbal problem-solving approach used by Alexander Lipson at Harvard University. One component of this approach was the Lipson Square; by replacing words and phrases

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with representative symbols, Lipson could 'point out' ideas that could be expressed in grammatical English. By building on this vocabulary of symbols, he could present the class with a plot of extreme intricacy. Step two of the method (step one being the presentation of the plot) involved asking questions about the plot. Total concentration on the part of the students was demanded by the complexity of the plot.

Lipson would not have recognized his inspiration in my first primitive picture squares. The idea of the symbols appealed to me immensely, to the extent that the idea of plot was temporarily overlooked. Pictures had a way of removing both the written word and me as the teacher as the focus of the students' attention. I would like to go into some detail here about the various mutations that evolved from the original idea; namely, Pronunciation Squares, Squares for the Contrasting of Tenses, and Squares for Specific Devious Purposes, all of which are extremely useful and interesting in and of themselves, but which I consider to be stages in the evolution of the Story Square.

SQUARES FOR PRONUNCIATION

These can be used to help drill students' ability to both aurally distinguish and orally produce sounds which are often confused.

The following square is drawn on the board:

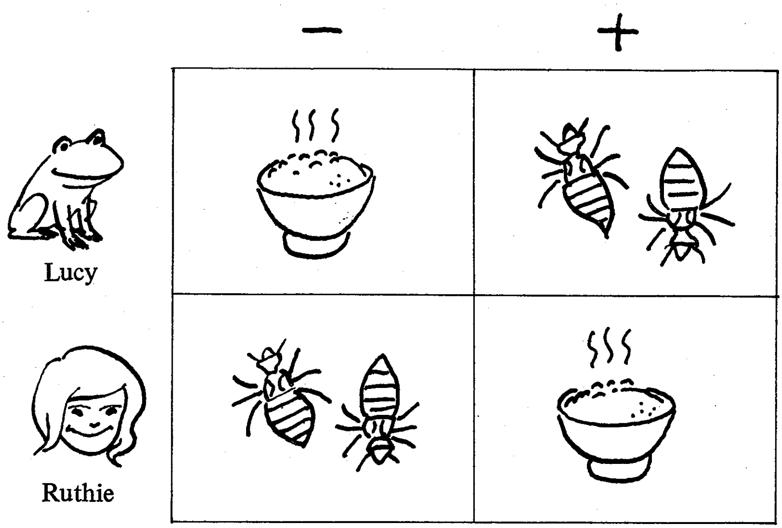


Figure 1 rice/lice

First, the characters are introduced. The teacher points to the frog, saying, "This is Lucy," then to the girl, saying, "This is Ruthie." Then, pointing to each square in turn, the teacher introduces the basic sentences orally:

1. Lucy doesn't like rice.
2. Lucy likes lice.
3. Ruthie doesn't like lice.
4. Ruthie likes rice.

Now the teacher may ask questions, e.g., "Does Lucy like rice?", calling on the students to answer ("No, she doesn't.") When they understand the process, the teacher can have the students ask the questions. Some teachers write cue words or symbols on the board, especially for lower classes. (E.g., the question words, "?" for making a question from a statement, "-?" for a negative question).

The following are possibilities for drill:

1. Making questions from statements:
   Does Ruthie like lice? No, she doesn't.
2. Asking negative questions:
   Doesn't Lucy like rice? No, she doesn't.
3. Asking tag questions:
   Ruthie likes lice, doesn't she? No, she doesn't.
   Lucy doesn't like rice, does she? No, she doesn't.
4. Asking questions using question words:
   What does Lucy like? She likes lice.
   What doesn't Lucy like? She doesn't like rice.
   Who likes rice? Ruthie does.
   Who doesn't like lice? Ruthie doesn't.

The sentences are short and simple, so fluency should be stressed. The square can be preceded by work with minimal pairs, during which the students can practice distinguishing sounds aurally, then producing them; in this case, the square acts as a sort of test of how much they have benefitted from the preceding lesson. Some teachers prefer to reverse the process, hitting them with the square first, then turning to minimal pair drill if/when the square work reveals students' inadequacies. The square thus provides a meaningful context for the minimal pair drill, as the drill gives them intensive work in a problem area revealed to them by the square. They can then wind up the lesson by returning to the square.

The following is a square for the pronunciation of "bath" and "bus", which often sound identical when uttered by Japanese students.

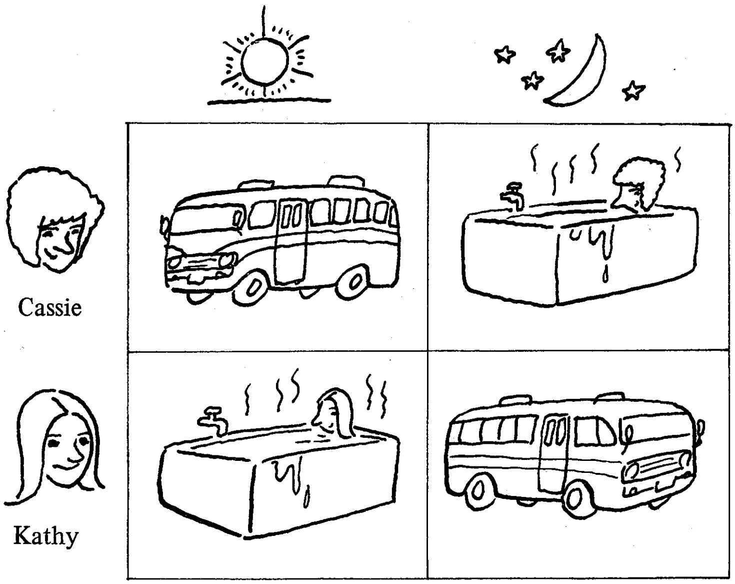


Figure 2 bath/bus

Basic sentences:
Cassie takes a bus in the morning.
Cassie takes a bath in the evening.
Kathy takes a bath in the morning.
Kathy takes a bus in the evening.

Pronunciation Squares have been made for work with b/v (He wears his best on Saturday/He wears his vest on Sunday), i/I (She threw a peach/She threw a pitch), h/f (He was hired by IBM/He was fired by Fujitsu), and for many other sounds which are often confused by students. Squares can be made up to meet any contingency, and students usually find them to be very entertaining as well as useful. Students become aware of careless pronunciation as they discover that incorrect pronunciation impedes communication.

SQUARES FOR THE CONTRASTING OF TENSES

The square below was devised for the purpose of contrasting the present perfect, the simple past, and the "going to" forms of verbs.

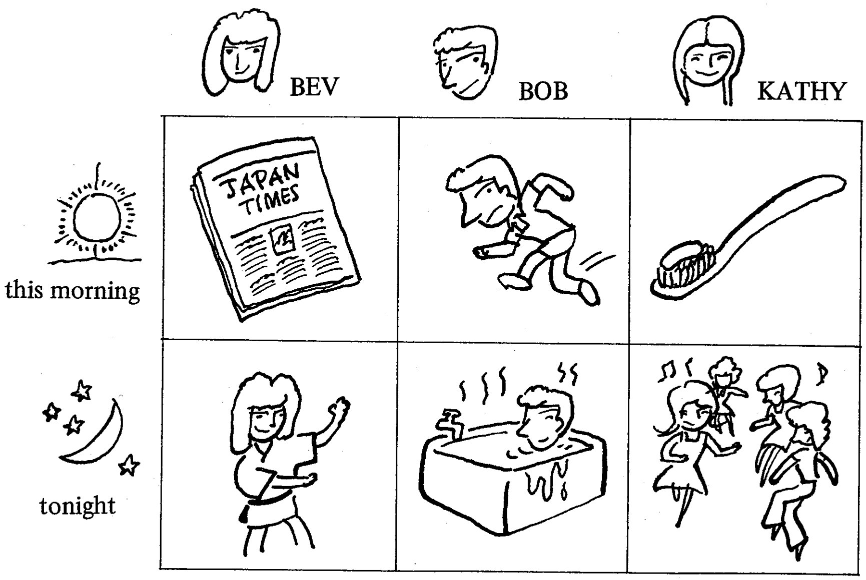


Figure 3

Again, the square is drawn on the board and the basic sentences are introduced orally.

Basic sentences:

This morning, Bev read the newspaper.
Tonight she's going to practice karate.
This morning, Bob went jogging.
Tonight he's going to take a bath.
This morning Kathy brushed her teeth.
Tonight she's going to go to a party.

With lower classes, it's a good idea to spend some time drilling the basic sentences by asking questions, e.g., "What's Kathy going to do tonight?", or by pointing to a square and having a student ask a question corresponding to that square. With higher classes this step can be skipped and the drill can proceed directly to the present perfect. It might go something like this:

Has Bev read the paper yet?

Yes, she has.

When did she read it?

This morning.

Has Bob taken a bath yet?

No, he hasn't.

When's he going to take one?

Tonight.

After these forms have been mastered by the class, the square can be embellished to include the present continuous, present perfect continuous, and prepositions of time, by adding a "now" row of pictures and times[1], in the following way:

Bev is watching television.

Bob is eating dinner.

Kathy is taking a nap.

Now the drill can be expanded to include the questions:

Has Kathy taken a nap yet?

She's taking one now.

How long has she been sleeping?

She's been sleeping since 6:00.

(If it is now 8:00 in the class):

She's been sleeping for two hours.

When did she start taking a nap?

She started taking a nap at 6:00/two hours ago.

When's Bev going to practice karate?

She's going to practice karate at 8:30/in half an hour.

---

[1] This particular square was designed for an English class that met in the evenings from 7 to 8:30, in an attempt to assign real meaning to differences in English verb forms. A student must remember what time it is at the moment he is sitting in class answering, and the answers depend on the actual time; therefore answers will change as time passes, lending a real, dynamic nature to the drill.

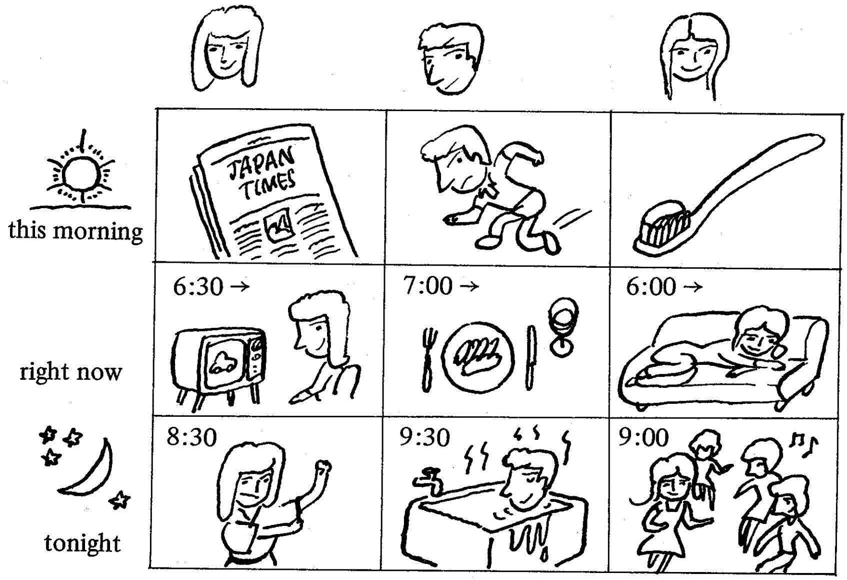
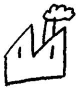


Figure 3a

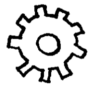
SQUARES FOR SPECIFIC DEVIOUS PURPOSES

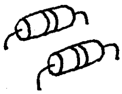
We have seen how these picture squares can be tailored to deal with specific pronunciation problems as well as general tense confusion. They can also be designed around any purpose, no matter how specific, a teacher might want to deal with. For example, at LIOJ many of our students are businessmen. We often come across Japanese students who confuse the various forms of the word "produce." They say "prodúct," when they mean "pro-dúce" "production" when they mean "pŕo-duct," and so on. Michael Joy, a teacher here, has designed a square to deal with just that problem.

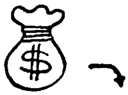
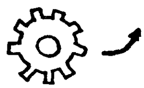
Symbols: T = Tom, H = Harry,

 = factory  = at home,

 = day,  = night

 = to sell,  = to produce

 = electronic products,  = próduce

 = sales have decreased/  = production has increased

Presentation:

1. This is Tom, and this is Harry:

   T H

   Q: Who's this?

2. Tom works at the factory. Harry works at home.

   T H

   Q: Who/where/while? (Where is T working while H is working at home?)

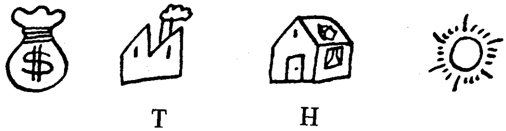
3. During the day . . .

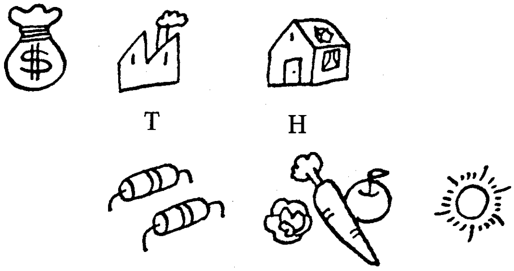
   T H

   Q: who/what/when/where/while

4. Sells . . .



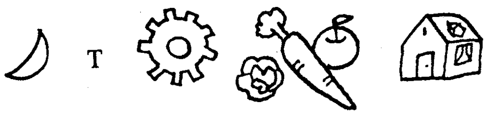
5. electronic products/ próduce

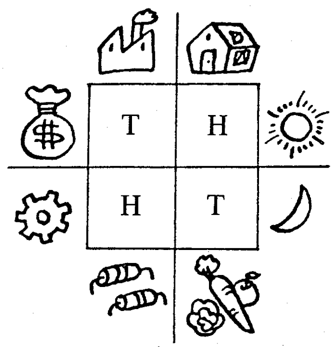


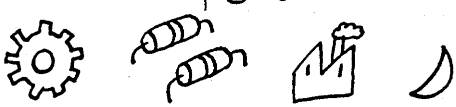
Q: What does T/H sell during the day at home/at the factory? Where?

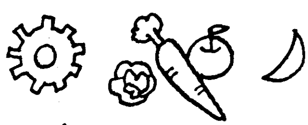
6. At night/ to produce

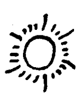
a. At night Harry produces electronic products at the factory.



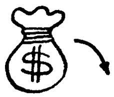
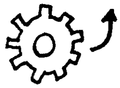


Q: Who  ?

(More complex): Who  that H 

 ?

7. Production/sales

 = sales have { declined / decreased / been reduced / fallen }  = production has { increased / gone up }

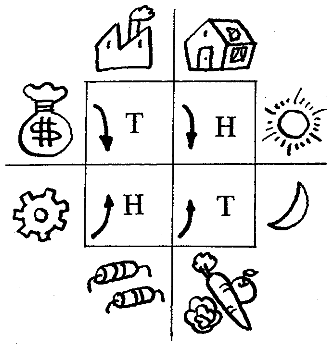


Figure 4

THE STORY SQUARE

All of the squares discussed so far could be used only once and for a limited period of time in the classroom. The one-shot nature of these squares seems to be suited to the ones designed to tackle pronunciation problems or specific problems in word usage. However, for more general purposes, the squares as laid out and used began to seem grossly inadequate. For example, with any of the squares for the contrasting of tenses, only a very limited number of concepts can be dealt with. The square is essentially no different from a wall chart, or other information presented pictorially, and its function is limited to the drilling of certain patterns. There is nothing to engage the students' interest other than the grammar itself, which is not always, as far as motivations go, compelling enough.

Seeking something more comprehensive that could be used over a longer period of time, Lance Knowles, my teaching partner, decided to somehow relate all the pictures in a square to each other by imposing a plot of some sort. So we tried it on the following square, which was originally designed for the purpose of contrasting the simple past, present habitual, and present continuous tenses [see Figure 5 Ru-Lou Square].

Basic sentences:
Ru usually drinks Budweiser Beer.
Yesterday she drank two bottles of California wine and a martini.
Right now she's drinking orange juice.
Patty usually studies at the University of California.
Yesterday she was kidnapped by radicals.
Right now she's robbing a bank.
Lou usually drives a taxi in San Francisco.
Yesterday he drove some passengers from San Francisco to Los Angeles.
Now he's taking a vacation in Palm Springs.

The square in its original state presented certain chronological information about three seemingly unrelated characters. From this, we created the following plot:

Ru and Patty are both students of U.C. Berkeley, but they don't know each other. They both live in Berkeley. Ru is Lou's girlfriend, but they have a very unstable relationship. Yesterday Patty was kidnapped by radicals,. who are planning to demand a ransom from her rich father. The radicals and Patty escaped to Los Angeles by engaging Lou's taxi in San Francisco. Lou didn't realize who his passengers were. After being paid a huge fare in L.A., Lou decided on the spur of the moment to take a vacation in nearby Palm Springs. He telephoned Ru to tell her of his plans. Ru was very depressed when she heard that Lou was going to take a vacation without her, so she drank too much. Now she's drinking orange juice because she has a hangover from drinking too much yesterday. The bank that Patty is robbing is in Los Angeles. It is not clear whether Patty is being forced to rob the bank or acting of her own accord.

Lance then came up with the idea of presenting the square as a puzzle, giving the class only the information provided in the original basic sentences, and having them elicit the story by asking the

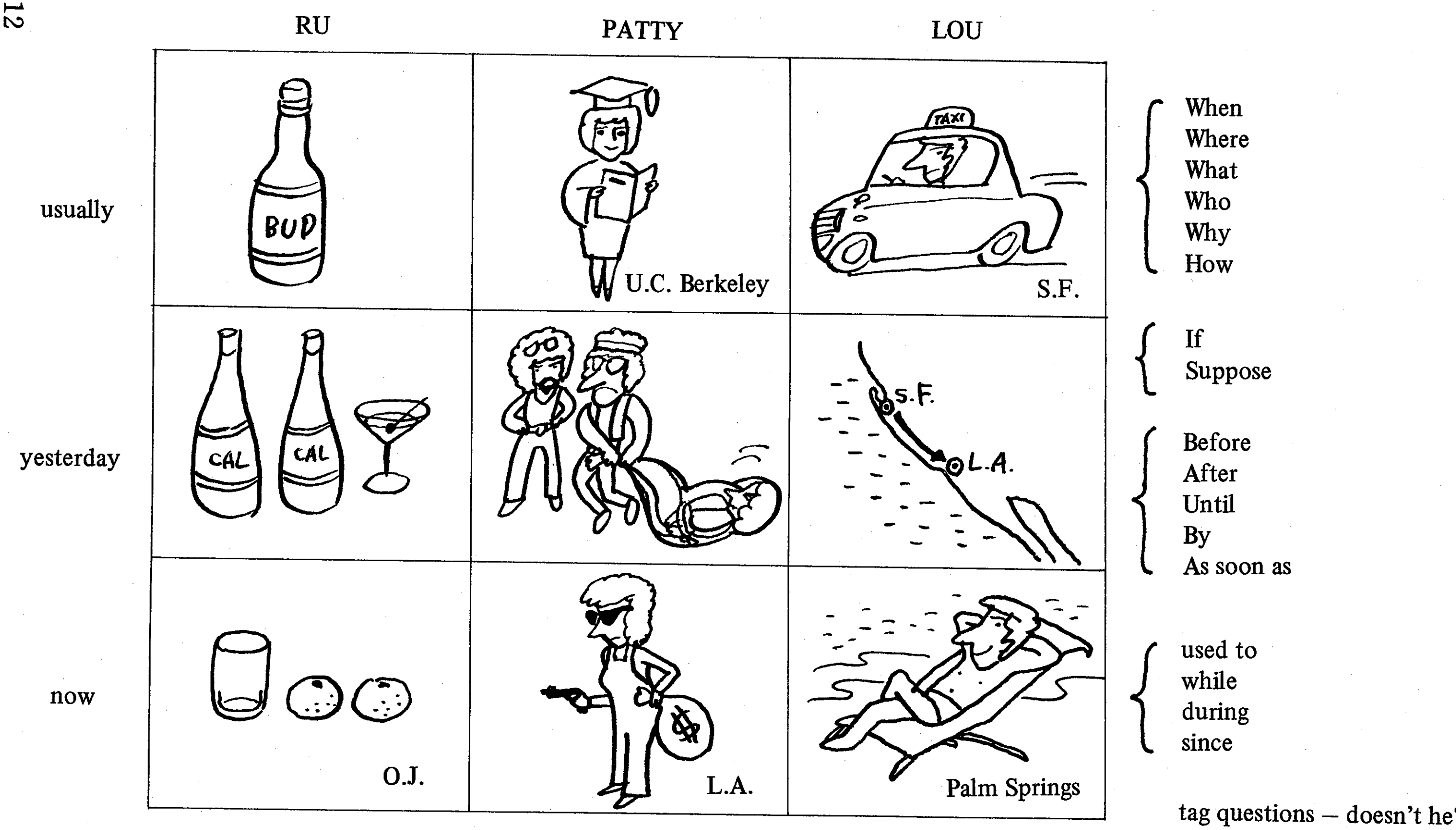


Figure 5 Ru-Lou Square

teacher yes-no questions; and thus the Story Square was born. Since that time, the presentation of the Story Square has evolved into three phases: 1) Discovering the story, 2) Asking simple questions based on the square, for fluency, and 3) Using the square to deal with more complex structures.

PHASE I

Since it will be used every day, the square is drawn on the flip-side of the blackboard, in order to save the trouble of having to redraw it every day. It can also be drawn on large posterboard or paper.

The basic sentences are introduced orally to the class. Again, with a lower class, it might be a good idea to spend some time reviewing the basic sentences, having them ask and answer simple "what" and "who" questions on the information given. Then when the class understands the basic information, they should be told that there is a story connecting Ru, Patty and Lou, and that they must find out what the story is by asking the teacher questions that can be answered with a "Yes" or "No". Typical first questions are: "Does Patty know Ru?" "Are Patty and Lou married?" "Does Ru live in San Francisco?" If a question is asked the answer to which is not provided by the plot or irrelevant, the teacher can answer, "I don't know." An example of that kind of question would be: "Does Lou like beer?"

Students will invariably make mistakes in phrasing their questions, and those mistakes are the core of the lesson. Classes soon come to learn that the more they attempt, the more mistakes they make, and the more they learn. Students usually find that they can communicate better if they concentrate on asking simple questions, rather than monstrous concoctions that cannot be untangled or deciphered by class or teacher. As their confidence with basic sentences increases, they attempt more difficult ones.

Teachers should insist on accuracy, the extent depending on the level of the class. In an advanced class, a question such as "Did Patty ride on Lou's taxi?" should be answered truthfully (no), but the teacher should caution the class to be very careful that the question they are asking is indeed the question they are intending to ask. The difference of a word can change the meaning of a question entirely, thereby causing confusion and leading the class onto the wrong track. Patty rode in Lou's taxi, not on it. Misunderstandings of this sort should be dealt with immediately.

When grammatical errors are made, e.g., "Does Ru living in Berkeley?", the teacher should indicate that something is wrong and encourage the class to examine and resubmit it. The whole class is thus involved in the process of generating correct English sentences for the purpose of obtaining much-desired information, in short, communication. Often the meaning of a question can be understood despite mistakes in grammar. In that case, it is encouraging to the student if the teacher indicates that the meaning is understood, nevertheless, try again.

If a mistake cannot be corrected by the class, the teacher can go into it immediately or make a note of it and deal with it later in depth. Global errors which impede communication should by all means be dealt with; minor errors which do not interfere with meaning can be overlooked or quickly corrected in a lower level class.

It is an important part of the process to stop every so often and have the students summarize everything they have managed to find out. Communication among the students is vital; if they aren't listening to each other, different students will keep asking the same questions and it will take them longer to figure out the story. If it becomes apparent that the students as a group are operating under a certain misapprehension, the teacher should intervene by challenging it and having the students ask questions to straighten it out.

PHASE II

Phase II consists of fluency drills based on the story. By now, we assume that the class understands the story one hundred percent. Any class member, if called upon, could relate the story in its entirety.

The students take turns asking each other questions, beginning with the question words. We focus first on one word, sometimes spending as much as twenty minutes on "What" questions, for example. As students continue to ask "What" questions, the easiest ones are quickly dispensed with, and the questions become more difficult. (The first question might be "What is Patty doing?" After twenty minutes someone might think to ask, "What do the radicals want from Patty's father?").

The students must always answer truthfully. If they don't know an answer or the information is not provided, they should qualify their answer ("I'm not exactly sure, but . . .") and guess. It's important that the questions and answers not deviate from the facts of the story, as this acts as a check on the meaning of questions and answers. This is not a test of imagination, but of expressing what they know, with accuracy and speed. This point should be stressed to the class. Correction is handled as described in Phase I.

PHASE III

Phase III is an extension of Phase II, but at a more difficult level. Here we use the square to deal with words or structures that the students may have trouble understanding. Now that the list of question words has been covered in Phase II, we can continue down the line to words like "before", "after", etc. Even advanced students will sometimes try asking a question like: "What did Patty do before she is robbing a bank?" If they notice that this sentence doesn't sound quite right, they might try: "What did Patty do before she robbed the bank?" But Patty is robbing the bank now. Another student might be able to supply the word "started", to help the student express his meaning: "What did Patty do before she started robbing the bank?"

A teacher might make a rule that the students must ask questions without using any names. This gets the class into relative clauses, with questions like: "What did the woman who usually drinks beer do yesterday?" Or, ask the students to make questions using two question words, e.g., "what" and "when": "What was Ru doing when Lou phoned her?"

Another illustration of how the square can be used is in dealing with the unreal[2]. I have often found that students have been taught

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[2] second and third conditionals

to deal with expressing unreal situations by memorizing formulas (second conditional, third conditional) rather than by understanding the meaning needing to be expressed by them. For example, one student had memorized the formula: "If I had gotten up earlier, I would've had time to eat breakfast." I had trouble convincing her that the following sentence is legitimate English: "If I had gotten up earlier, I wouldn't be starving now."

The advantage of using the Story Square to deal with such structures is obvious. The story is clearly understood by all. Formulas fall by the wayside as connections are made between events happening at all points in time.

Looking at the square, the teacher can present certain real information in terms of the facts of the story, e.g.: "Ru's drinking orange juice because she has a hangover," and then challenge the class to speculate about what might (not) have happened or might (not) be happening in different circumstances. The response being elicited in this case is: "If Ru didn't have a hangover, she wouldn't be drinking orange juice." or "If Ru didn't have a hangover, she'd probably be drinking beer." How do we know? Because the story tells us that Ru usually drinks beer.

Further examples of real-to-unreal transformations:

Lou doesn't love Ru, so he's taking a vacation without her.

If he loved her, he wouldn't be taking a vacation without her.

Patty was kidnapped, so she didn't go to class.

If she hadn't been kidnapped, she would've gone to class.

Patty's father is rich, so she was kidnapped.

If her father weren't rich, she wouldn't have been kidnapped.

Patty was kidnapped, so she's not studying at U.C.

If Patty hadn't been kidnapped, she'd be studying at U.C.

Lou is taking a vacation in Palm Springs, so he isn't with Ru.

If he weren't taking a vacation in Palm Springs, he'd probably be with Ru.

A student trying to manipulate formulas is going to get all fouled up. But as long as s/he concentrates on the meaning, s/he can work it out. Once the formation of such sentences is understood, the class can work on fluency.

The Story Square has been used for three or four hours a week during a four-week term. Phase I usually takes a class two hours or so, depending on level, and we usually spread this time out over two days. Normally (in Phases II and III), we limit each period of use to forty minutes to an hour, but in Phase I, the class is generally so enthusiastic that they don't want to stop. Even quiet classes have been known to resort to shoving and pushing in order to make themselves heard over one another, in the process of discovering the story. Classes may balk at the beginning of Phase II when they think the fun is over and the drilling begins, but usually the discovery of their linguistic limitations makes them appreciate the square as familiar territory on which they can practice new skills.

For lower classes, the plot can be streamlined to include only the essentials. Drills must be chosen to meet the students' needs. Lower classes will probably not deal with the unreal, but will have plenty to do with question words, words dealing with time relationships, simple gambits (e.g., "Do you know where Patty lives?"), etc.

For higher classes, the story can be embellished as much as one desires. For example, the plot can be expanded to include such details as the fact that Patty used to be a high school student; Ru used to drink Sapporo Beer before the yen increased in value and Sapporo became more expensive than Budweiser; Lou used to be a bus driver, up until five years ago. By the time he changed jobs he'd already met Ru. Now he's dissatisfied with his relationship, and while he's in Palm Springs he's going to look around for another woman.

The main thing to keep in mind when creating a Story Square is to keep the basic plot as simple as possible. From a basic plot, details and embellishments can be added depending on the level of the class. Students must be able to make the connections by asking yes-no questions[3]. The following is a square that has proved to be successful with an advanced class [see Figure 6 Bay Area Blues Square].

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[3] For example, I am now working on a square called "Murder on the Amtrak Express," based on an Agatha Christie mystery of a similar title. I gave it a trial run on a group of teachers, and they gave up after an hour of mounting frustration. Obviously, it will have to go through several stages of simplification before it can be used in the classroom.

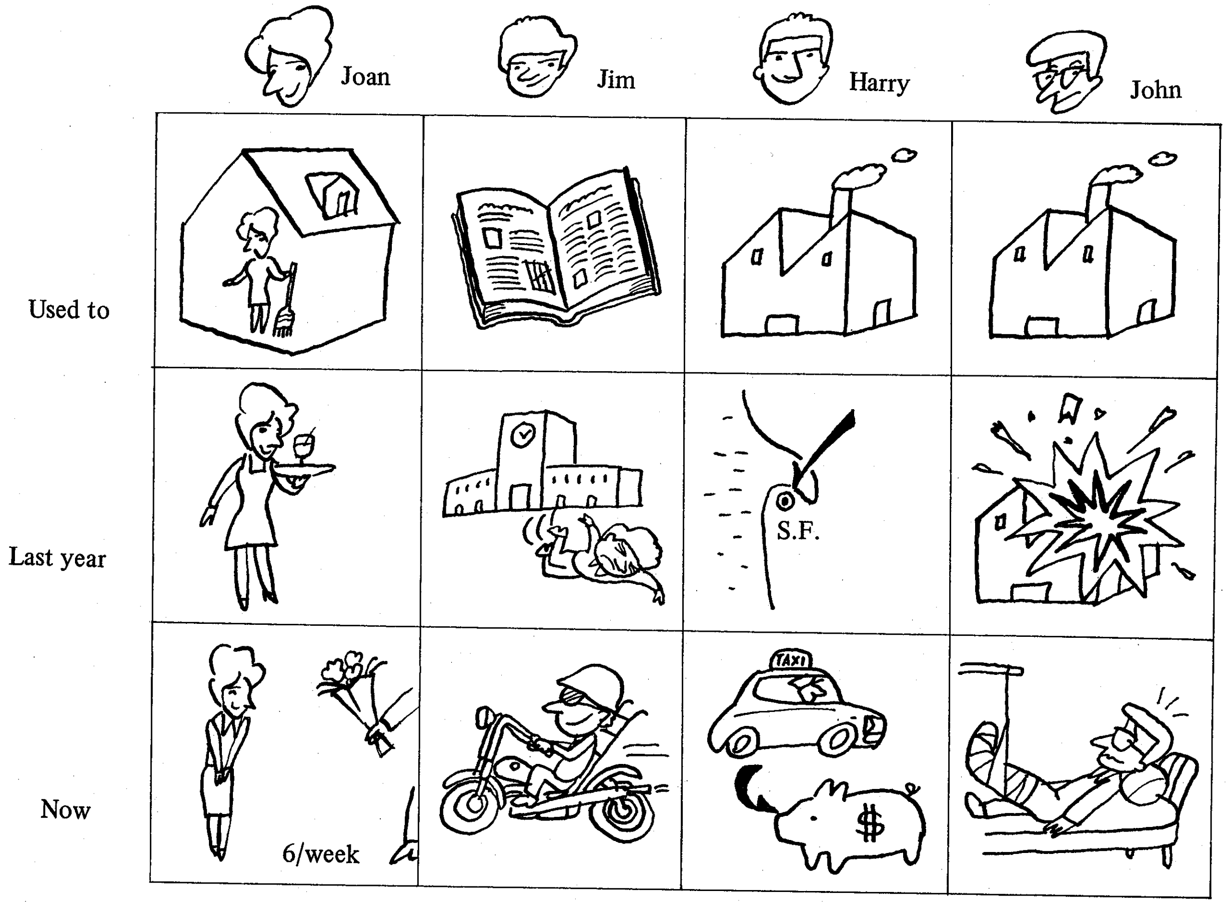

Figure 6 Bay Area Blues Square

Basic sentences:
Joan used to be a housewife.
Last year she got a job as a cocktail waitress.
Now she's working six nights a week and has a new boyfriend.
Jim used to be a high school student.
Last year he dropped out of school.
Now he's a member of a motorcycle gang.
Harry used to work at a factory in Oakland.
Last year he moved to San Francisco.
Now he drives a taxi in S.F. and is saving his money.
John used to work at a factory.
Last year he was injured in an explosion at the factory.
Now he's in the hospital.

The story: Joan and John are married. Jim is their son. They live in Oakland, and the factory that John works at is also in Oakland. Harry used to work at the same factory. Harry and John were only casual acquaintances, but through John, Harry met Joan, and they began seeing each other behind John's back. Last year, Harry decided to take direct action and caused an explosion at the factory which injured John seriously. John is now in an Oakland hospital.

Harry was fired for negligence, and no one realized that his action had been deliberate. He moved to San Francisco after being fired and got a job as a taxi driver. He began to date Joan more openly, and he's trying to save his money so that he can convince her to divorce John and marry him.

When John was injured and couldn't work, Joan got a job as a cocktail waitress. Jimmy, without the benefit of parental guidance, and also troubled by his mother's affair, went astray, dropping out of school and joining a motorcycle gang.

This square, as well as being linguistically full of possibilities, contains a wealth of cultural information that can lead to questions or discussions, e.g., about divorce, child-raising, disability policies of American versus Japanese companies, etc. Teachers can design story squares to raise discussion on specific topics; squares can be based on true events in history. I can envision Story Squares about Watergate, I can see squares based on American foreign policy, works of literature, movies. The possibilities are endless.

The Story Squares have been found to be an interesting and effective way of probing students' linguistic limitations, and helping them to expand the range of what they can express. Instead of being fed patterns of the teacher's choosing, students use what language they have to push at the borders of their knowledge, to express what they want to communicate. Correct English comes as a solution to a problem they have tried to solve themselves. Students come to view mistakes as interesting problems in communication from which they can learn; tension about making mistakes usually disappears after the first lesson with the Story Square. This problem-solving atmosphere usually facilitates group cohesiveness and group communication, and as the teacher can be as picky as s/he chooses, no student will be above the process of correction. The result is a sort of cooperative learning situation, in which students help each other by monitoring each others' English.

The goal of the Story Square is to help enhance students' cooperative learning skills, to help them master basic grammar, and to improve their fluency. All of this is essential not only if they plan to work or study abroad, where they will constantly find themselves in the position of having to 'solve' various problems as they encounter an innumerable range of situations, but for anyone who will be using a foreign language as a means of communication.

A Problem Solving Role Play for Businessmen*

Michael N. Joy

INTRODUCTION

The basic intent behind creating the role play described in this article was to produce an experimental model of a situation that would have as its primary aim the testing and teaching of problem-solving strategies as opposed to those role plays that have primarily linguistic considerations as a center. In addition, we were attempting to produce a situation with a very specific group in mind – Japanese businessmen who were students of EFL.

A detailed look at some of the specific factors taken into consideration in setting up the role play will immediately follow this introduction. However, it would be well to point out that a basic underlying consideration was that we would be attempting to move the students from a point where they were learning *about* communication and interaction, to a point where they were

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learning *through* such interaction. The role play was not to be a place where they showed that they had learned something, but a vehicle that would teach them about themselves in a problem solving situation.

SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

In thinking through the process of setting up the role play the following considerations were taken into account.

(1) The student would play himself.

This may seem to be a rather elementary decision, but for our purposes it was rather important. To look at it in another way, we were *not* asking the students to be Mr. John Smith of Topeka and to act out Mr. Smith's cultural assumptions. Neither were we asking these businessmen and engineers to be doctors, waiters or teachers. This is not to say that such role plays have no value. On the contrary, acting out another personality or profession can provide a buffer – inserting a sense of novelty, humor and a lack of self-responsibility into the role play.

In our situation, we did not want the students to have that buffer. We wanted them to see themselves as themselves in the communication situation and to have a sense of self-responsibility for what happened in the situation.

(2) There would be several unexpected developments in the role play.

In many role playing situations, the players will simply go through a series of pairs of in-put/response. For example, the waiter will ask what kind of soup the customer wants and the customer will choose from three kinds and give a preference. Then the waiter will ask about salads and dressings . . . etc. This style of set in-put/response can be very worthwhile as a method for practicing what has been learned in the classroom and it does have some sense of realism to it in that there are many ritualized dialogical situations that occur in this very same manner in the real world.

However, what this style does not do is to prepare the student for a sullen, harried waiter or a waitress who speaks almost no English herself because she is a recent immigrant to the United States. What you have in this style is an ambulatory language laboratory drill. Now, of course, there are understandable limits to how many varied and weird experiences you can ask students to handle. You certainly cannot train someone to meet exactly every possible contingency. What can be done is to bring home the fact that life does not flow as smoothly as illustrated in textbooks and that the students have both the need and the native ability to meet the unexpected as well as deal with the expected.

The unexpected elements that the students would have to face in the present role play were two. First, whereas they had worked with their regular teachers and classmates in role plays before, this time they would be working with a relative stranger. Second, they would be meeting unexpected resistance to their attempts to get their task accomplished.

(3) Linguistic material taught in the classroom would be integral to the role play.

This is the position from which most role play exercises start and it does have an important function in that it provides for a way of testing whether or not target material taught in the classroom is indeed being transferred from classroom use into general use.

In the role play under discussion, although the structures and vocabulary that were taught in the classroom were integral to the problem, they were not sufficient in and of themselves to resolve the problem. The material was adequate and accurate for describing the nature of the problem they faced, but would not necessarily lead to resolution of the situation. The students themselves had to add to their classroom knowledge and go an extra step on their own.

(4) There would be a specific, readily-identifiable problem to be solved.

The nature of the problems to be solved would be concrete, with clear resolution possible in a relatively short time. In other words, we were not asking the students to solve the trade balance problems that exist between the U.S. and Japan. Such a role play does have some good features in that such global issues are a good way to stretch students' imaginations and guide them toward thinking and speaking beyond personal issues. However, since such global problems are so multi-faceted and complex that they do not lend themselves to clearly identifiable resolution, they are not particularly good themes for problem solving.

(5) The problem to be solved would be relatively realistic and applicable to the students' experience and life situation.

This consideration is closely linked to consideration (1) mentioned above. Not only would they play businessmen, but they would also be dealing with a situation that could conceivably arise in a business situation. Again, the intent was not to try to prepare them for every possible specific contingency that they might face in their lives, but to give them a situation as realistic as possible in which to try out their skills in problem solving.

(6) The role play would have a time limit.

In this role play, the players were given five minutes to resolve the problem. A small kitchen timer was in the room and set when the student entered to begin the role play. There were two reasons for this. The first was to foster a sense of urgency and to force the student to get through the situation as directly as possible. Second, it was kind of a safety valve for the student who got in over his head and was in a hopeless muddle.

In actual practice during the role play, if a student seemed to be getting close to a resolution of the problem, we stopped the timer and allowed him to finish up even though he would be going over the limit. However, for two students, it was very clear that they did not have the problem in hand and that no amount of grace period would get them off the hook and we let the timer run its course.

(7) The role play would be one-to-one rather than a group exercise.

Whereas previously, the students had done two group role plays with each of them taking the identity of some person within a

Western company, this role play would be a new experience. Each of them was thrown back directly on his own resources rather than depending on group effort to get through their difficulties. In this way, we thought that we could more easily and clearly spot-light individual problem-solving techniques and that individuals could more clearly observe how they performed as individuals in that situation. Also, by reviewing the videotape of the exercise as a whole class, the students had a chance to learn from each other as they observed others approaching similar problems.

(8) The role play would be recorded on a video tape system for review by the class and the teacher.

In general, we believed that every role play should be taped. This is of great benefit to the teacher in that the action in a role play is usually so complex that a single teacher taking notes cannot cover all of the important points for discussion and critique. In addition, a taped record will allow for later review and correction in the context of the situation without the teacher having to interrupt the flow of the role play when it is under way. Finally, a recording presents an objective record for the student to review his own performance. It has been our frequent experience that the student involved in a role play is in the midst of such a difficult and complex situation that he has no clear memory of what was said and when. In the ritualized dialogs mentioned under point (2) above, this is not such a problem in that the matrix for the problem is rather well known by the students. However, in the present problem-solving style of role play the action is much more complex and intense.

THE STUDENTS

The target group for this role play experiment was a group of six businessmen. They ranged in age from 25 to 43 and had come from all over Japan and from different industries. Most of them could expect or had received assignments to work abroad. Two of them had rather extensive experience abroad while the others had not been outside of the country. For lack of an objective, universally accepted ability scale, we could say that the individuals ranged from lower intermediate to upper intermediate in English proficiency. They were participants in a businessmen's course at the Language Institute of Japan (LIOJ) which placed them in an intensive month-long residential program in which English only was used. The role play was done in the third week of their residence.

CLASSROOM PREPARATION

During 40–50 minute periods once a day for five days, the class was given a series of situation/response drills on business letters. The drills were not terribly difficult and were intended to teach the class the basic parts of a business letter, the names of those parts, the arrangement of the parts, the basic form of a letter and the difference between block and indented style. They were also taught when the various salutations should be used and the meaning of reference initials.

For all of the students, at least 80–90% of the technical, business letter vocabulary was new. At the end of the five days, each student could correctly identify the different parts with some ease and could talk about where those parts should be placed in the letter.

This group had done two group role plays in the previous weeks so that they were familiar with the style of the "Statement of the Problem" they were given:

Role Play: Getting a Letter Retyped

Statement of the Problem:

You are reviewing some letters before signing them. You discover that a very important letter has some errors. You have to get the letter retyped immediately so that it can be mailed and arrive at its destination in time. It is 4:25 and the secretaries stop work at 4:30. You have 5 minutes to: (1) explain the errors and (2) convince the secretary to retype the letter.

Your secretaries are all members of Clerical Workers' Union Local 189 and their contracts are very clear about overtime. Quitting time is 4:30 exactly and no secretary can be forced to work overtime if she doesn't want to. The secretary may or may not want to retype the letter. You should be prepared to convince her to do it.

You have only five minutes! This role play will be timed.

Following a discussion of the statement of the problem, the students were given business letters that had some fairly obvious errors in them. We did not work on how to describe the errors in that they were already prepared for that. There was a short discussion on ways they could think of to convince a secretary to do something and the options they came up with ranged through logic, inducement, bribery and threats. The teacher then assumed the role of the secretary and with one of the more fluent students and went through a brief exchange as a skeletal model for the situation they were likely to face.

THE PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENT

On the day of the role play, three rooms were used. The students were gathered in one room before the role play and were given the order in which they were to appear.

In the second room, the stage for the role play, there were three people: the "secretary" and two of the class' regular teachers – one as observer and the other as camera operator. The secretary was a woman not well known by the students. They had met her casually in the school social life, but had not had extensive contact with her.

After the role play the student was asked to go to a third room and work on a homework assignment until all of the role plays were over. This shifting of rooms was planned to ensure that the element of surprise for each individual would not be lessened by being tipped off to the situation by those who had done the role play.

THE SECRETARY'S ROLE

The woman playing the part of the secretary had done a stint as a secretary-receptionist for a small company in the United States and so was able to bring a welcome note of realism to her part in the situation. In addition, she was a valuable resource in the post-role play discussion with the students and was able to give a realistic assessment of the interaction of secretaries and businessmen from her experience.

In the pre-role playing planning session, the teachers involved decided that there would be a series of barriers for the players to get past.

The first barrier was a physical one. The secretary would be seated with her back to the door where the businessmen would enter and she would be typing furiously. The men would have to interrupt her work and give her their problem.

The second barrier was an attempt to put the blame for the errors and the responsibility for retyping the letter on the shoulders of a person who was not present. On the letters that the businessmen were given were the reference initials "mr". The present secretary claimed that these showed that the letter had been typed by Mary Rawlins. Mary was sick that day, she would explain and taking the letter from the businessman, she placed it on Mary's desk, promising that Mary would be in tomorrow and would take care of it then. The businessman would have to regain the letter – only to run into another problem.

The third barrier was some problem that the secretary faced that would prevent her from staying late – e.g., she had to get some money from the bank before it closed, or she couldn't miss her ride home, etc. The unsuccessful participants could not get past this barrier. Those who did understand and resolve whatever problem the secretary had, felt great relief and immediately began to leave the room, but were stopped for one last round – the secretary would ask them where she should take the letter after it had been retyped.

In the end, two of the men clearly failed in the assignment while the other four managed to get the letter retyped. However, in reviewing the situation with one of the successful players, it turned out that he thought that the agreement had been that the secretary would receive overtime pay whereas it was clear on the tape that the secretary had requested permission to come in late the next morning. The businessman had gotten so confused in the situation that he had given up and simply said yes to everything without really understanding what he had agreed to.

In the following pages, transcripts of two of the role plays – one successful and the other unsuccessful – are presented. The grammar and the structures that the students used are presented verbatim without trying to correct mistakes. The conversations have been otherwise, somewhat edited to save space.

Role Play #1: An unsuccessful attempt

Businessman: Hi, may I?

Secretary: Sure.

B: Uhh . . . How are you?

S: Fine, but I'm very busy. I've only got five minutes and I have to finish this letter.

B. I see, I see, I see . . . uh, but I found this letter . . . this letter has two errors.

S: Let me see . . . Oh, that's Mary Rawlins' letter . . . "mr" that's Mary's letter. She typed it . . . So, if you want to leave it on her desk, she'll be back tomorrow . . . OK? (She attempts to put it on Mary's desk)

B: But uh, no, no, no . . . but date line . . . do you know date line? Date line is above inside address.

S: That really doesn't matter.

B: Uh, huh . . . and this letterhead, letterhead . . . very important error. Very important error. (He shows her the letter.)

S: Oh, it's upside down! Mary makes that kind of mistake sometimes. I'll put it on her desk and she'll do it the first thing in the morning.

B: No, no, no, no but, this letter is very important. If we uh mail by six today, our company has much damage.

S: I'm very sorry, but I must get this one out also. And I stop work in three minutes. And I have to leave on time because I have got to go to the bank. The bank closes at five.

B: I'm thinking, I'm thinking that you are a very capable secretary and you are a very responsible secretary. I'm thinking.

S: Oh, thank you very much, but really, I have to go to the bank before 5:00. I don't have any cash.

B: Uh?

S: I don't have enough *cash* to pay for my bus home. So I have to walk to the bank first.

B: But, uh . . . if, if our company has much damage, our sales will decrease.

S: Not from one letter!

B: If our company's sales decrease, your salary and my salary both will decrease . . . Our sales, our sales will related to all members . . . all members . . . of course you . . . our salaries will go down.

S: But I have to go to the bank before I can go home. I can't take the bus without money.

B: What is you typing?

S: This is a letter for the president.

B: President? No, you are my secretary.

S: Not your personal secretary. We do work for all of the men in the office. So, I have to finish this, go to the bank and then I can take my bus home . . . So, I can't work late, because I have no money for the bus.

B: No money?

S: For the bus. When you get on a bus, you can't write a check . . . no credit cards. So I have to go to the bank to get some cash, some coins.

B: Oh, but . . . if you/we mail by six today, our president . . . if we don't mail this letter, our president will be very angry.

S: Can you type?

B: No, no uh no, . . . uh do you have children?

S: No, no, no– . . . what does *that* have to do with being a secretary? . . . no relation to that.
(Timer rings.)

B: If your salary is decreased perhaps it's very suffering . . .

ANALYSIS OF THE UNSUCCESSFUL ROLE PLAY

As far as use of the business letter vocabulary that he learned in the classroom, the student was able to identify the errors and point out where they were in the letter. However, in the lines of persuasion he took, he was rather repetitious: (1) the letter is important, (2) the errors are important, (3) the company will lose money, (4) salaries will decrease (fat chance of that with the unions, etc.!) (5) the president of the company will be angry. The student did try one line of flattery and appealed to her sense of responsibility. However, it should be obvious that the student is basically running on only one line of thought – THE COMPANY. He expects the secretary to have the same attitude that Japanese workers have of loyalty and self-sacrifice for the good of all.

However, in this over-all strategy and way of thinking, the student completely missed the fact that there was a human and individual problem that he could have solved on a personal level. The student was so wrapped up in getting his message across that he couldn't hear what the secretary was trying to get across.

Certainly, part of the student's problems arise from linguistic inadequacies. For example, he probably does not understand the word "cash." However, it would appear in this role play that he tried to overcome, or simply block out those problems by applying a cultural assumption – that an appeal to the collective welfare of the organization will override any personal problem and that the force of such an appeal will be so strong that it will erase the necessity for solving the linguistic issues. The fact is that for the Western secretary such an argument carries relatively little weight because she does not have imbued in her any such notion of a deep personal responsibility for the good of the company. The appeal is misplaced. The student was pleading on the loftiest grounds where as the secretary was working on the problem of a few cents to take the bus home.

Role Play #2: A successful attempt

B: Excuse me, may I interrupt you for a while?
S: Yes, if it's very short. I'm trying to finish this.
B: I just found out some errors in this type, original?
S: What kind of errors?
B: Uh, may I explain you . . . this dateline should be put on here, above the inside address and this letterhead . . . should be upset, top . . .
S: Right, of course.
B: . . . and the closing, complimentary close should be transferred to this latter part.
S: That's okay, but this is definitely wrong. Who did that? . . . Ah, that's Mary Rawlins' letter . . . see her initials? So, Mary will be back tomorrow. She was sick today. I'll leave it on her typewriter and she can do it for you tomorrow morning.
B: But, uh, in this letter we have lots of sales. This letter should be hurried over to our customer's within tomorrow afternoon.
S: OK, she'll do it first thing tomorrow morning then.
B: "Morning then?"
S: She'll do it first thing tomorrow morning.
B: Is it possible to send this letter to customer if we send tomorrow morning? I beg you pardon to retype within this afternoon.
S: I'm very sorry, but I finish work in five minutes and I have to finish this letter before I go.
B: But, is very important.
S: Very important? But, uh, see the problem is that I have to go to the bank today, because I don't have any money to take the bus home. So if I don't get to the bank before five, I can't get home.
B: Think about how much amount of sales we are now losing . . .
S: But, I want to go home tonight!

B: Uhhh, is impossible for you to decide whether you work for overtime? I'll request your manager to stay for half an hour tonight.

S: But it would take me only five minutes to do this. Would you put in half an hour anyway?

B: Yes, I'll speak to Mr. So-and-so.

S: That's good, but the problem is that I don't have any money to get home on the bus today and overtime doesn't come until my next paycheck.

B: Then, I'll lend you for a while some money.

S: You will? OK, then I'll retype it for you then. Where will you be?

B: I'll be? . . . now, just now?

S: Yes, when I finish the letter, where will you be?

B: I'll going to wait for you, wait in my room.

S: In your office?

B: Yes.

S: OK, I'll bring it to you in just a moment and thank you for lending me the money.

ANALYSIS OF THE SUCCESSFUL ROLE PLAY

A comparison of these two transcripts will show that though the second student suffered from jumbled syntax, misused vocabulary and other grammatical problems, he did have a linguistic advantage over the previous student. However, in addition to that advantage, he also exercised a perceptual advantage as well.

The second student started on about the same tack as the first student and began by pointing out the error. Meeting resistance he began on the themes of lost sales and the importance of the letter. Meeting further resistance, but still not catching the secretary's problem, he offered the inducement of overtime. This is a good ploy even though it is misplaced. The student has changed his basic tactics and is no longer speaking in general terms of the company welfare, but in terms of more immediate and personal benefit to the secretary. He is treating the secretary as an individual. The secretary does take advantage of the offer and manages to squeeze it for all it's worth. Then, finally, with one more effort on the part of the secretary the basic personal problem is perceived and solved. The secretary gets bus fare and overtime, while the businessman gets his letter retyped.

The other four role plays followed pretty much along the same lines as those reproduced above, so there is no need to treat them in detail at this time.

REVIEW AND SUPPLEMENTARY WORK WITH THE VIDEO TAPE

As mentioned above, the doing of the role play itself was considered to be the main learning experience for the students. However, in addition to that, we have found out that judicious use of the video tape of that experience is a good way for the students to organize and clarify what was learned[1].

The review session had two main goals – affirmation of good communication strategies and good linguistic usage, and, examination and correction of poor strategies and usage. However, since an absolutely thorough going over of every small error that has been made can be a devastating experience for a student (more so especially when the errors can be so clearly seen on the video tape), only two or three of the most important errors were chosen for correction in class for each individual.

In addition, errors that were common for everyone in the class were also selected. For example, when the secretary started to take the letter and put it on Mary Rawlins' desk, most of the students made a wild lunge to get it back, usually sputtering "No, no, no . . ." or something of that sort. When it was clear that everyone was having trouble with this, there was a short discussion on what they could have said to get the letter back in their possession more gracefully and the best of their ideas, for example,"Excuse me but,

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[1] Video tape holds quite a lot of promise in working in EFL, but it is a rather complex tool that needs careful thought before it can be used most effectively. That, however, is the subject, hopefully for a later article. For a general introduction, see Joseph Chevarley's article "An Overview of Videotape Use in the Language Classroom," *Cross Currents*, Autumn, 1976 pp. 97-109.

I'd rather keep that" or "I'm sorry, but I'll need that" were drilled. Then there was a mini-role play where the teacher took various possessions off the student's desk, which they then had to retrieve verbally and gracefully.

In doing correction of individual problems, an attempt was made in each case to have the student correct himself. In this situation the relevant segment of the tape was played at first with just the comment from the teacher that there was a mistake embedded somewhere and the student told to listen to himself and try to identify it and give the correct utterance. Some of these were quite simple, for example, the student who declared that the secretary was a ". . . very good typewriter," corrected the last word to "typist" and was able to explain the difference between the two terms to the rest of the class.

If at first the student did not catch the error, the segment was replayed several times. If that was unsuccessful, the mistake was further isolated by playing only the mistake or by the teacher repeating the student's utterance with emphasis on the error, etc. If the student still couldn't get himself out of the tangle, the other students were called upon to offer peer correction. Usually, one or more of the students was able to put together a correct or more appropriate response. Very rarely did the students, either individually or collectively, lack the resources to correct themselves. If the students faltered, teacher correction was provided and usually the particular point in question was drilled quickly and practiced.

By relying heavily on self and peer correction in conjunction with review of the video tape, we were attempting to push the students further and further along toward capitalizing on what they had learned in the role play itself and benefitting from observing how others had handled the situation.

As a conclusion to the whole exercise, there was a rather free discussion of some of the cultural aspects of the experience. While cultural clashes do not lend themselves to analysis and solution as easily as grammatical problems, the students were able to come to the conclusion that there was a difference in attitudes and that they could not always depend on appeals concerning the welfare of the company to override personal problems.

In addition to this, there was one very clear cultural clash that the video camera caught perfectly. One of the students, apparently trying to be as strong-willed and in-charge as possible, came through the door saying rather loudly, "Hey!" in a threatening monotone. He could not see the secretary's face, but what the camera caught could most charitably be called a "glare."

During the review of the video tape it was clear to everyone that the student was doing a direct translation from the abrupt Japanese masculine command form, *oi*! The Japanese expression is commonly used in the context of some urgent request from a superior to an inferior and would have been appropriate in a Japanese situation. However, in English and in a Western situation, such a flat and abrupt utterance has a somewhat threatening aura to it[2]. It was that threat that the secretary responded to facially and, perhaps as a result, the student got very little assistance from her.

CONCLUSION

The above mentioned linguistic and cross-cultural problems are not unique to this role play but are the kinds of things that would most likely arise in many language learning situations. However, in reviewing all of the role plays with the students, one fundamental and clear point in the communication strategy emerged.It sounds so very simple that one is tempted to put it in its simplest and crudest form, "Shut up and Listen!"

In the case of the unsuccessful participant in the transcript role play #1 above, we can see that while he did make some attempt to understand what the secretary was saying, he gave up too soon and fell back on the attack by theatening her livelihood or bringing in

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[2] This expression when translated directly into English is, of itself, threatening enough to put off someone with no knowledge of Japanese. However, in this case, the "secretary" also happened to be fluent in Japanese as her second language. The reaction of such persons can be even more radical since they understand the implication (superior to inferior) in the speaker's native language. This can be illustrated by relating that the author happened by chance to overhear the Western wife of a Japanese explaining to another Western woman married to a Japanese, "Of course I don't speak Japanese at home. Because, if I did, then he would be yelling *Oi* and I'm not having *anyone* yelling *Oi* at me!"

the authority of the president or insisting on the importance of the matter. A second unsuccessful participant's main tactic was to insist that he did understand the secretary's position by saying, "I see, I see, I understand, but . . ." and then physically throw himself across the secretary's desk and plead in the most heart-rendering manner for the secretary to recognize his plight and the importance of the letter. In reality, this person did not catch the secretary's predicament and during the review session stated that he gathered that she wanted to leave work in time in order to go to a party.

The third unsuccessful participant, the one who yelled "Hey" on the way in, came on as a tough guy, bristling with insistence. However, withering under the barrage from the secretary, as mentioned previously, he gave up all attempts to understand what was happening and discovered that saying yes to everything got him off the hook and out of the room.

In terms of absorbing the pre-role play classroom material, the three persons noted above were successful in identifying and describing their problems by using the vocabulary and structures they had learned in class. However, it became apparent that all of them had committed themselves to only one side of the communication situation: describing their problems and backing their demands with various appeals or threats. They were unprepared to explore or really seek clarification of the origin of the secretary's resistance.

The successful role players all began at the same starting place as the unsuccessful. They began by describing as clearly as possible the nature of their problem and used many of the same devices mentioned above (importance of the letter, appeals to company loyalty, threats from authorities, etc.). However, in each case there came a point when they perceived that there was a different problem being uncovered and they discontinued this line of communication and by questioning or asking for more explanation from the secretary were able to get to the source of her resistance.

The techniques that each used were somewhat different – repeating an unfamiliar word with rising inflection to indicate that they did not understand that word, asking the secretary to repeat or rephrase what was said, repeating their understanding of what she said, etc. Such efforts at understanding were pointed out by the teacher in the review session and the most appropriate of them were practiced by the whole class.

As important as these individual techniques are, it should be emphasized that they were accompanied, or perhaps initiated, by a crucial cultural and attitudinal shift on the part of the students. Instead of continuing to speak from a position of male authority, or speaking for the welfare of the company as a whole, they shifted to a point where they began speaking with, and most importantly, listening to a person. By stopping the barrage of threats or pleas, these people provided the valuable commodities of silence[3] and space for the secretary to establish her position as a person. In short, they shut up and listened.

POSTSCRIPT

Based on the results of this experiment and with some minor adjustments, this role play has since been used with several other groups of businessmen with similar results. As a result, it was felt that the eight structural considerations listed at the beginning of this paper were valid and did bring about the kind of learning experience we were seeking to create. By personalizing, restricting and intensifying the situation, we were able to provide a very clear forum for the students to act through and learn about themselves in the communication process.

The major problem that emerged in this experiment and in later uses of the role play was how to deal with the student who felt badly about "failing" the exercise. It should be apparent in the foregoing pages of this paper that the target of this exercise is what the student can learn from the communication process itself. For students, however, winning or losing are the most important things. Especially for the student who lacks self-confidence in the language, "losing" (i.e., not getting the letter retyped) may threaten to

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[3] The value of silence in communication and language was recently pointed out to me by Paul G. LaForge of Nanzan Junior College in Nagoya in a personal conversation and through his kind permission to read a pre-publication manuscript on that subject.

override what can be learned from the experience itself.

The chance of failure can be reduced for groups at a lower linguistic level in several different ways. For example, the time limit can be eliminated. Or, on the secretary's side, her input can be made simpler and clearer or limited to using only those structures that the students have a good command of. Or the whole focus of the action can be changed, for example, by having the secretary show willingness to retype the letter if the businessman will explain exactly what he wants done in the clearest way possible. In that situation, there should emerge a test of the student's descriptive abilities for which he should be better prepared through the pre-role play classroom work.

However, for intermediate and more advanced groups, such modifications may rob the experience of a lot of its learning potential for the students by eliminating a lot of the challenge. In most cases, such potential probably outweighs the risk of failure on the part of individual students. But to make such risk worthwhile, the teacher must make a conscious effort to build a supportive atmosphere that will point the learners beyond the immediate issues of success or failure and toward a better understanding of themselves as communicative, problem-solving persons.

Facilitating Language Acquisition Through Small Group Process*

Raymond Bud Zeuschner

The use of oral exercises in teaching second languages is one of the more popular means of getting students to practice what they have learned. Indeed, we all learned our mother language orally before we ever considered its grammar in formal terms. Teachers use oral assignments to give students an experience in encoding their thoughts in the new language. A few examples of speaking assignments which may be done in class are short speeches, reading or reciting literature, or engaging in a debate. This paper will present several ways which oral work may be done in class in the form of small group activities.

It is the thesis of this paper that small group processes can be easily adapted to the teaching of a second language, and in many respects, may facilitate language acquisition better than more conventional methods which entail focusing on the individual student as the producer of language. This paper will first discuss some of the background theory of small group communication and

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relate that theory to the teaching process. Second, it will compare that theory with the individual speaking and debate methods sometimes used in classroom instruction. Next, criteria for the success of group processes are presented. Finally, a section describing specific techniques which may be adapted to the language instruction classroom are given.

For many years, researchers in the small group process area have investigated group learning versus individual learning. The field of small group communication largely grew out of the interest scholars had in determining the best classroom environment. Some of the earliest scientific studies in the field of communication focused on the classroom setting (Wrightstone, 1932). After forty-five years of investigation, researchers are nearly unanimous in their support for the small group as a learning environment of great productivity. Shaw (1976) summarizes, "The results of studies of individual versus group learning are remarkably consistent in showing that groups learn faster than individuals, both in natural situations and in contrived situations" (p. 65).

Not only do groups, in general, learn faster, but small group activities have been used in the teaching of a second language (La Forge, 1976) with reported success. Small group activities have several advantages, especially for the classroom situation and for the instruction of a second language. These will be noted in the next section.

Small group based instruction may be preferable to individual speaking because of psychological factors involved when attempting to speak in a second language. La Forge (1976) points out the complex relationship between the ability to speak and the speaker's emotional situation. Primarily, the fear of making a mistake or appearing to lack knowledge or ability is heightened when one person faces many. Add to this "many" a teacher sitting and listening attentively for errors, and fear will be compounded. It is of interest, but perhaps no surprise, that a recently published survey of people in the United States indicates that fear of speaking in public is their greatest fear, ahead of death, disease or natural calamity (Wallace, Wallechinsky, & Wallace, 1977). Reticence in individual or public speaking is not limited to people in the United States. A recent study (Ishii & Klopf, 1977) indicates that this reticence is even greater among Japanese people, even when speaking Japanese. It is obvious, then, that any attempt to gain oral practice in a classroom setting will meet with tremendous obstacles if the situation calls for the student to stand, alone, in front of the class and speak. It is bound to create emotional trauma, and the ensuing problems of psychological avoidance, and actually cause the students' anxieties to push them into many more errors than they make on written forms.

A turn to the small group situation may give teachers of second languages new strategies for increasing the oral competency of their students and in overcoming the reticence to speak. Small group theory provides a psychological rationale as to why this method may work. It may be called the "diffusion of responsibility" or "risky-shift" phenomena (Wallach, *et. al.,* 1962). Simply put, people in small groups take more risks than people acting alone. A student is not "on-the-spot" in a small group setting (unless there is direct supervision or observation from outside). With the emotional pressures alleviated, the student may relax and let his competency work for him. If small group exercises were used which did not focus the attention of the teacher or class upon a single student at a time, the student would be encouraged to use oral skills with less fear involved. If it is true that less fear generates better spoken communication, the students will be able to experience success and gain confidence. We have seen the example in our classes of the student who stands in front of the class and makes errors, only to become more fearful the next time he is called upon. In contrast, scientific inquiry in the small group process shows that a successful experience is followed by selection of a more difficult task or challenge (Shaw, p. 306). The small group enhances the chance for success, and success is followed by the group moving on to a more difficult task.

Now that the usefulness of small group process for language acquisition can be seen, we need to move to some practical suggestions. In doing so, we must answer the question, what kinds of small group processes should be used? In order to select the small group exercises with the greatest probability for success, three criteria should be considered.

These criteria may insure productivity success if followed in choosing small group activities for the classroom. Steiner (1972) listed them as task demands, resources, and process. Basically, task demands ask us to look at the requirements or goals of the group project or game. A teacher in the language instruction situation must be certain that the requirements and goals of the task are appropriate and clear to the students. Time considerations may be important to the selection of a game or activity. The second consideration, resources, refers to the abilities, knowledge, and skills which the participants have. Thus, any activity must be chosen for the level of the students. Complex tasks for beginning students would subvert the goal of increasing their confidence. The final consideration is the process itself. Is the activity truly a group function? Is it one in which each individual has opportunity to relate to the group? Is it one which requires all to participate? Or is it a situation where one large audience has been merely replaced by a smaller one in an individual speaking situation? By paying careful attention to these criteria, a teacher may then choose or devise games and activities which will provide a small group experience for students. There are two specific types of activities which meet these criteria and which may be readily adapted to language classrooms. They are divided into interview Assignments and Brainstorming Activities.

In many communication-oriented classrooms, often the first assignment is a short speech of self-introduction. La Forge (1976) modified this assignment to include an element of small group process. He had Japanese students discuss, in Japanese, each other's short speech. Perhaps the interview technique could be more useful for the encoding in English (or whatever language is under study). This assignment pairs off students, and asks each person to interview the other member of the dyad. They are to ask for the relevant, interesting information about the other person, and to prepare to introduce that person to the class. A brief outline may be permitted, but a written prepared speech should be avoided in order to have the student begin to think in the new language. The students then take turns introducing their partners to the class, rather than themselves. Modesty or shyness which may cause many of our students to be self-effacing about their lives can be avoided. Much of the emotional pressure is also alleviated because the students are talking about someone else, thus they are not the exclusive focus of the class. This activity is not totally a small group game because it still has the "individual speaking" element during final presentation. But the interview segment of 10 or 15 minutes without any teacher observation may allow the students to review their new language encoding, as opposed to allowing them to encode in the native language, then presenting in the new language.

A second type of Interview Assignment called the Job Interview has many practical benefits. In this activity, the class is divided into small groups of five or six persons each. They then are required to form "mock corporations" or businesses and to create positions for themselves in this business. They spend about one hour writing two job descriptions for which this company is hiring people. It is suggested that these jobs be "entry level" jobs – the type young people coming out of school might be interested in having. At the end of the hour, these jobs are described to the entire class. Students then go home and pick two or three jobs they will apply for, and they create short job resumes to fit. The next session of the class, one half of the companies hold job interviews, while those students in the second half go around as job applicants. The next day the order is reversed, and a third or fourth session may be added rotating the groups so all students may apply for all jobs they wish. All the company descriptions, resumes and interviews are conducted in the new language, with the business group of five or six acting as an interview team. Thus, students are asked to formulate and respond to questions on a specific prearranged set of materials (the company descriptions and the applicants' resumes), but the actual questions, answers and discussions are as spontaneous as possible. Incentive to do well can be provided by having a final day devoted to a group presentation or panel discussion of five or ten minutes from each business where they can announce the names of the persons they "hired" for the jobs. Students getting hired might be given special recognition (point credit, or some other reward). Through the inclusion of "role-playing," pressure is again lifted off the individual student, and an atmosphere of serious concentration can be blended with an enjoyable activity. The skills in language development would be most important, and perhaps the students could be encouraged to write job descriptions accordingly. For example, one of the companies might be the "Hakata Doll Company" seeking to hire a sales representative to open its San Francisco store. Thus, facility in English would be a primary evaluative consideration. An alternative to the job interview could be a college entrance or graduate school administration board interviewing students for advanced status or admission to a program. Not only would language development be enhanced in a realistic, oral setting, but the interview process itself may help students in later, real situations.

A second group of activities has been labeled "Brainstorming" in small group study. In these activities, small groups of four to six persons are formed and given a question which requires a large number of answers. (How many different uses can there be for a paper box? How many ways can a brick be used?) The emphasis is upon the number of responses generated by a group, not necessarily the quality. In fact, for brainstorming to succeed, the participants must avoid evaluation of the suggestions, and concentrate on creating more ideas. The groups can be put into a sort of "contest" to make the incentive high, with the highest scoring group getting some reward. A recording secretary should be selected by each group and a set time for generating ideas should be announced, five minutes often being used. At the end of the initial five minutes, the groups announce the total number of responses they have generated. A second part of this procedure may then be held, having each group go back over the suggestions and evaluating them, and announcing to the class their five or ten favorite ones. Brainstorming should put the emphasis on speed, which is an excellent way to get students thinking in the new language. With the clock ticking away, and a contest atmosphere, they will experience pressure to avoid the "thinking in one language, translating, receiving, translating" procedure. Brainstorming is an excellent way to build vocabulary, and can also add enjoyment to the classroom. Without a teacher peering over their shoulders, students in the brainstorming groups might feel comfortable relating just to each other, with judgment suspended and speed important.

The small group techniques of Interviewing and Brainstorming are not the only ways in which small group processes can be incorporated into language acquisition, but they are easy to do, and accomplish the major purpose of breaking down the speaker/audience syndrome which so often results in increased tension and anxiety, and accompanying increases in errors. These techniques might be especially useful at the beginning of the term when students may be experiencing their greatest reticence to speak in the new language. After confidence and ease of thinking in the new language increase, the teacher may wish to add some individual speaking experiences.

This paper explores ways in which small group theory about learning and anxiety reduction might be incorporated into the teaching of a second language. It offers an alternative to exercises which place group attention on an individual speaker, which may in fact further inhibit students from speaking in the new language. Criteria for the selection of small group activities and two types of small group activities have been provided as additional tools for language teachers to use to allow their students to develop oral language ability through the non-threatening nature of a small group.

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The Application of Values Clarification to Teaching English in Japan: Two Experiences*

Dana K. Lewis

SOME BACKGROUND: PERSONAL BUT PERTINENT

I first taught English in Japan over nine years ago with no other qualifications than my Caucasian face, a smile, an appearance of relative literacy and fluency in my own tongue, and most of all the fact that my services were free. As a volunteer, teaching English then was a means to meet people, learn about Japan, and possibly help others learn about my culture. Since then I have taught professionally (i.e., for remuneration) in everything from kindergarten to university ESS groups. Until quite recently, however, my teaching method was a combination of trial and error, ESL reading, and observation.

In all honesty, I never felt any enormous inner satisfaction during

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that entire nine years. In spite of appearances of "good teaching", or "success", I still felt that for one or two successful students there remained so many more who were chained inside themselves by social conditions, conditioning, and an often stifling educational system. I felt that so often as a teacher, teacher's trainer, or manager I failed to open the door wide enough to help even 25% of a group into the world of communication in a second or foreign language.

My exposure to Values Clarification (ValClar) has changed my attitude drastically. I have realized that the source of that personal dissatisfaction was often myself – *I* was a value; my very self-concept, value orientation, and perspectives in the classroom centered everything around the *teaching* process, *my* performance as instructor, and *my* approach to discipline and error correction. My unexamined assumed value, if spoken, might have gone like this, "I am teacher – you are student; I model – you repeat; I correct – you pronounce; I point – you answer; I inspire – you aspire." The result of this mentality, though well intentioned, was that too much of the students' energies went into reacting to me as a value[1], with the remaining energies channeled into actually using and learning English.

In a rather sudden and drastic way a simple demonstration[2] of ValClar in an EFL situation showed me I had been wrong. It explained to me all the previous silent faces, flustered school girls, the hesitancy, muttering, and blank stares. By setting myself up subconsciously as a value, I had consequently so often almost forced a reaction by the students. Often the reaction was mild fear, anxiety, loss of confidence, fear of peer opinion, or concentration on the social ramifications of classroom activity – *not* on English. Therefore, by making myself the center of focus, and also a kind of value, I realized that I had so often wrought an effect opposite to that which I had intended.

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[1] Namely; Teacher, Foreigner, American, "Sensei" – in all its connotations, Male, Senior, etc.

[2] At a meeting of the Kansai Association of Language Teachers (KALT).

If this sounds like a confession, perhaps that is because it is, for the ValClar approach to TEFL in Japan requires a good look at oneself, one's own values – not necessarily at techniques per se, but at oneself as a person. ValClar requires the teacher to ask questions like: "Where is the mental center of my classes, is it my lesson plans, technique, drill competence, lesson content, or is it the students in the class?" or, "Am I sensitive to the cultural values that students bring into the class with them? Am I using them, fighting them, or ignoring them?"

ValClar is more than a method, it's a mentality. The teacher may still drill, use standard materials and texts in addition to ValClar games and strategies, but once the issue of values is more in the forefront of teacher and student's awareness, all the techniques become somehow more effective, alive, and useful.

In response to the article in the preceding issue of *Cross Currents* (Taylor, Vol. IV, No. 1) I offer these accounts of my experiences using ValClar methods. Since the methods as applied to TEFL are still in their infancy I present this to the community of teachers in Japan for proper dissection, discussion, reflections, or use. I invite all teachers and students of EFL in Japan to take a good hard look at ValClar, to ask themselves some questions, to reexamine this whole issue of values in EFL situations.

OBJECTIVE, FORM, AND TERMS

The primary objective of this paper is to share my experiences in applying ValClar to TEFL in Japan. Two experiences will be used. The first occurred at the Junior College level, the second at a seminar group of Japanese adults who had lived and/or studied abroad, and who were experiencing "reentry" difficulties. With both experiences I will use the following format: 1) Description of Event, a. setting, b. activities, 2) Immediate Post Analysis, and 3) Resultant Personal Observations and Reflections. The paper will conclude with a few general suggestions, and a list of suggested reading.

In addition to the definition of the term "value" offered in the previous issues of *Cross Currents* (Taylor, Vol. IV, No. 1, p. 130) as, "... beliefs, opinions, and preferences", I would like to include the following appraisal: A value is that which motivates one personally and internally[3]; a value is a center of a particular part of a person's life from which decisions are made, action is taken, and from which much behavior originates[4]; likewise, a value is something outside an individual which the person holds as somewhat sacred, and which influences, shapes, and directs personal behavior[5]. Applied to the language learning situation, a value then can be whatever serves to motivate learning, or whatever within the student is touched to promote learning; conversely, it can be used also to hinder or stop learning completely.

In the positive sense, ValClar in EFL situations in Japan means an approach whereby the motivations of the students are considered, and things that concern them personally are integrated into the language use and learning situations. Instead of centering classes on the values of a teacher, method, or text, the teacher tries to help students use and explore their own values while using the target language.

In more practical terms, ValClar is an attempt to get students' focus away from the teacher as teacher, away from themselves as learner and "producer" ("... here I am in English class, I gotta produce, I gotta speak correctly, not make any mistakes ... I'm scared!", and into a frame of mind and mood where they as a *person*[6] react and interact – in English. Particularly in Japan, where production of quantitative knowledge by the student is the mainstay of the education system, a method whereby students are eased away from an exclusively "production" mode into a "being me"[7] mode in English is very much needed.

In the experiences which are described below I found over-

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[3] Example: "I believe that as a male I should be self-disciplined, non-expressive of my feelings, and that I am superior to females."

[4] Example: "I am a student. I listen to teachers, take notes, study, produce assigned materials in tests, and do term papers. Periodically, I exhibit apparent anti-social behavior."

[5] Example: "Professor T is my 'sensei'. I think that all that he says and does is just tremendous, he can do no wrong. I would like to follow in his footsteps."

whelming evidence that ValClar approaches enabled even some of the most anxious, inward, and unsure students to attempt to use what English they had already "learned" in "x" number of months or years of standard "grammar-reading-translation" English. By using "values-awareness" activities, and by touching students in areas in which they were personally concerned, many of them were enabled to get past that distinctly Japanese barrier of shyness or silence in foreign language use and learning situations.

First Experience: An English Camp

1. Description of Events

a. Setting: A two day English camp for the English Department students of a Women's Junior College in Kansai. The student participants were all first year students, and recent high school graduates; the events described occurred during an hour and a half period. The group consisted of 19 persons. The scheduled purpose of the period in the scenario was, "self introduction and light conversation about hobbies and interests."

I had never met with the students, but I had as an assistant a regular woman teacher of English at the college who was very experienced, and who appeared popular among the students. Also, many students still did not know each other.

Prior to the participant's arrival I arranged the lounge chairs in an oval, since the shape and size of the lounge precluded my preferred circular seating arrangement.

b. Activity: As each person entered I greeted her using only English, and gave each a card (8cm x 13cm, standard index card thickness), and a large-tipped marking pen (for better visibility). I gave no explanations until all were present. After everyone was

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[6] I use the term "person" here with a guarded awareness of the difference in connotations placed by Americans and Japanese respectively. In the present context I infer the concept of person as it is applied first in Japan. How the Japanese student of English goes from the more "social self" expression of person found in Japanese society to the more argumentative, individualistic self of the West is a difficult matter, which deserves to be developed in a separate paper.

[7] Footnote 6 applies here also.

seated, grouped naturally according to friends or cliques, I arbitrarily asked some people to move so that all were seated next to persons they did not know (or know well).

I then asked them to fill out the front of the card (see figure 1), using these instructions:

1) Write the name you want to be called here today. (I then explained by saying my full name, then my surname, then, my given name. Next, I pointed to my given name which I had printed on a sample card.)
2) Write three good words about yourself.
3) Write something you do well.
4) If you could be anything, what would you be?
5) Write the name of a person, real or not, alive or not, famous or not, with whom you would like to spend a day.
6) Write your hometown.

KIND CONSIDERATE FRIENDLY		PLAY PING PONG
	DANA LOS ANGELES	
WRITER		MOMECHAN

Figure 1.

They were given time to make each entry as given. All instructions were in English, with explanations by reference to the sample card and extended examples. Only item 5 required translation. Also, in having them write the entries on their cards I emphasized that spelling was not important, and not to worry about it here.

On the other side of the card (see figure 2), I asked everyone to draw a circle and divide it into four parts, and to then write four words describing how they felt at the moment.

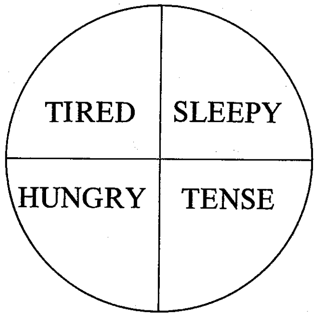

Figure 2.

I asked everyone to hold her card so that the front was visible to all, and to look at the other cards around them. This was in silence, and lasted one to two minutes. Next, I asked for four volunteers to be subgroup leaders. Predictably, no one responded. Therefore, in order to arbitrarily choose four leaders I used my card as the focus of attention, and tried to find four persons who had adjectives the same or similar to those on my card. As each leader was chosen I gave her a set of colored tags, a different color for each subgroup. Their task was to pick five persons (one group of four), giving each a colored tag. Since this group was especially shy I decided to assign a criterion to the leaders. Again by looking at others' cards they were to choose persons for their respective subgroup based upon information written on the card. Each subgroup leader was assigned one category of information from the card, and then to pick group members with the same or similar information within the category.

At this point the other teacher and I withdrew, allowing them to complete the task without assistance or direction. It took almost five minutes. When the groups were formed and all were seated in smaller circles of four or five, I gave the following instructions: "I would like each of you to tell each other about yourself, using the information on the card, or anything at all."

As each group completed this I gave the next instruction, "Ask any member of the group a question about what's on her card." It was at this point that the surprises (to me at least) came – for no more instructions were necessary, and most groups continued in lively discussion, asking each other more and more questions.

Ten minutes prior to the close of the period I reassembled everyone into the larger group. I asked them to turn over their cards and look again at the circle. I then asked these questions: "How do you feel now? If you have had any changes from your original feelings, please change them on the card. How many had changes? How many feelings changed? Who would like to share these changes?" To the last question only 2 chose to share specific changes with the larger group. After listening to or checking visually the changes of those willing to tell or show, the class was concluded with a brief explanation of what I had been trying to do, namely, to give them a chance to use the English they already know. There were no questions, and the class terminated on schedule.

2. Immediate Post-Analysis

When the students first came in and were given the cards and pens they seemed tense and were very quiet. When separated from friends, there was some nervous laughter and apparent apprehension. Even while filling out the cards, there was still tension and silence evident. This was an exceptionally shy class.

The choice of subgroup leaders was mildly threatening to all, but by immediately giving them a task the threat was reduced and their attention drawn to the accomplishment of the task itself. Also, having colored tags to use in the grouping process added a tangible element, and served as another kind of support in a new and unknown type of activity.

The casual withdrawal of myself and the Japanese teacher, plus the activity of self-organizing and group forming relaxed everyone considerably. Their attention was drawn naturally from me as teacher, themselves as students, to the process of infragroup interaction, all in English.

The subgroup activities were most interesting, even a bit exciting. With the "support" of the cards four out of the five groups functioned in English without assistance or prodding. In five minutes the four groups were all enthusiastically chatting away. The fifth and more silent group was the odd group of four, and I needed to give them specific instructions at each lull in the conversation.

The other four groups did not confine themselves to the information on the cards, but expanded the topic range.

I did not join any groups, but went around from one to the other as an observer. Two of the groups barely noticed my presence; one seemed to talk more when I wasn't noticeably watching, and the fourth of the talkative groups asked my opinion on a subject.

The specific results of the subgroup activities were as follows:

1) Participants who had entered as tense and reticent as any group I'd ever seen were talking spontaneously in English. The level of enthusiasm was high.
2) Four out of five groups functioned independently in English once instructions were given and understood.
3) Seven of the nineteen students changed more than one feeling on the card.
4) Five students had single changes.
5) Only two had no changes, the rest did not choose to disclose their feelings.
6) Almost all participants relaxed and attempted some use of English by the end of the gathering.
7) Of course, the level of English used was generally far from polished, and replete with grammatical problems; but the important thing was that people were talking *at all.*

3. Personal Observations and Reflections

In the time I've been teaching in Japan this was the first time that this particular age group had responded so enthusiastically and so quickly to an EFL situation.

More particularly, in my experience as a male teacher in Japan I have found groups of girls or young women expecially difficult to elicit responses from in class until the students know the teacher better. This fact made the reaction of the students to each other – only in English – quite remarkable.

Despite my enthusiasm, however, I realize that the method used in this instance was good for a one-time activity, and not for a normal, routine learning situation. It appears, though, that with adaptation for regular classroom use, the cards have great potential as a means of focusing the students' attention not so much on their own responsibility to perform, but on the communication process itself, their interests and values, and each other.

Second Experience: An Adult "Reentry" Discussion Group

1. Description of Events

a. Setting

The second application of ValClar was in a quite different context. Participants were all in their early twenties, and had had at least a year of study abroad. Two had lived in the U.S., one in England. The explicit purpose of the group was "discussion and improvement of conversational ability." Previously, discussion had frequently returned to the topic of "preentry" into Japanese society after having lived in and adjusted to another culture. On this day, the group consisted of three adult participants and myself. All present were able to express themselves well in English, but not with enough polish to be considered "fluent." Location was the living room of my residence in Kansai. Time was two hours and fifteen minutes.

b. Activity

After five minutes or so of casual talk over coffee we began by using the cards as in the previous experience. Items on the cards were the same except "hometown" was omitted, and "favorite drink" was exchanged for item 4. I gave the following directions: "Tell us something about yourself." After each (including myself) had done so, I said, "Now each of you please say something about the other." We then briefly exchanged opinions about the various entries on our cards. This took approximately 20 minutes.

Urging everyone to sit back and relax I gave these directions: "I'm going to play three musical selections. I would like you to close your eyes (if you wish) and listen to each. As you listen try to picture yourself in some situation or location." The selections were, 1) "Is Not All One," from *Zen Meditation Music,* koto, shakuhachi, and clarinet music, by Scott and Yamamoto (1:35); 2) First selection from "East Meets West" album, Ravi Shankar and Yehudi Menuhin, violin and sitar (2:00); and 3) ". . . And the Gods Made Love," Jimi Hendrix, progressive electronic "psychedelic" music

(1:30).

After all three selections were played I asked each person to describe what they thought of as they listened to each piece. When each had done so I gave this direction, "Please describe the group's reactions to each selection." I did not elaborate on what I meant, but merely repeated the instruction to assure comprehension of the words themselves. They completed these instructions, and then the last portion of the gathering was spent discussing the reactions to the music, the use of the cards, and the use of musical selections as tools in language learning/usage situations.

2. Immediate Post-Analysis

The use of the card in the beginning served as an effective "relaxer" and "warmer-upper." The three pieces were chosen because they went from the most familiar culturally, to a type of music that was slightly familiar, but with somewhat of an alien feeling, and lastly to a selection that was more "sound effects" than music by conventional standards. The last selection was chosen also because it was a product of a sub-culture within the United States – making it a truly remote and alien piece.

The responses went correspondingly from clear, similar imaginings for the first piece (". . . ancient Japan, tea ceremony . . ."; "Edo period . . . tea ceremony . . ."; ". . . ancient Japan . . . typical Japanese house . . . tea ceremony . . ."), to slightly dissimilar imaginings with the second selection (". . . China . . ."; ". . . a poetic view . . . near the coast . . . pine trees and sunset . . ."; ". . . Spain, under a balcony . . . someone is playing a violin . . ."), and lastly the imaginings being unclear and all different in the third selection (". . . I'm not sure . . . up in space, floating . . ."; ". . . in the water . . . lots of bubbles . . ."; ". . . a car accident, I'm fainting and unconscious . . .").

As the musical selections were less associated with known sounds, or were less similar to native or familiar music, the responses became more subjective and diverse. Expression of reactions by the participants also decreased in confidence and clarity. With the last, most alien piece of music, there was much hesitation and uncertainty in their choice of words.

The group's response to the direction, "Describe the group's reaction to each selection" was most significant in terms of cultural values. The participants, while using only English, responded by trying to seek a single consensus for each selection, though after the first selection there really was little basis for agreement. They took over five minutes to give a single group response to each selection. In the course of doing this, individuals altered their own previous individual responses slightly in order to reach a consensus. The obvious concern and seriousness in attempting to reach a consensus struck me as distinctively Japanese.

Furthermore, the male participant subtly but definitely was in the role of "leader," though it was not clear whether he assumed it, or it was given to him by the two women participants.

After the discussion was completed, I gave them a summary of my observations concerning what I thought had occurred, and then solicited their opinions. The remainder of the time was spent discussing these topics: 1) the consensus process among Japanese, 2) the use of music and other non-verbal stimuli as discussion aids, 3) self-disclosure of feelings as seen in the U.S. and Japan, and, 4) the male participant's "leadership" role, and, ". . . did he take it, or did we give it to him?"

3. Personal Observations and Reflections

In a much more direct fashion this exercise concerned itself with the values of the participants. When they sought a consensus naturally, to the extent of slightly changing prior individual responses, they were most definitely operating on familiar ground, responding in a way natural to them as Japanese. Though they were using a second language, their response to an intentionally neutral instruction was markedly Japanese. My intention had been merely to allow a representative within the group to recapitulate the various reactions. My secondary motive was to also see how much they listened to each other, and give them an opportunity to do infragroup organization in English.

When I observed them working very seriously at reaching a consensus (which I as an American saw as forced) I was surprised, and when I expressed my opinion that their reactions had been "very Japanese," they agreed, but also expressed great surprise. One of the women participants said she was "shocked," for she felt that when speaking English she "acted American."

This one meeting brought home to me vividly the great potential for "value-centered" EFL activities in Japan. If "consensus and group harmony" is a value in Japan, then the above experience was most definitely an application of Values Clarification to TEFL.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In no way do I consider these experiences and suggestions as conclusive or a final word on ValClar application to TEFL in Japan. I do see them as matters for consideration and discussion, and urge other teachers to take a serious look at ValClar.

Two experiences were included here because of the great differences between the two situations, and because the value issue is rather submerged in the first, but quite visible in the second. The two considered together give perhaps a better image of ValClar possibilities than either one might have if viewed separately.

In using these ValClar methods I saw things happening with the students – exciting things, things which made English for the students more than just an end in itself or another subject. Briefly, English became a medium of communication and not a puzzle; it was a tool to express feelings and share opinions, not a dry labyrinthe of grammar; it was also an experience which made them say to themselves, or at least feel (to borrow a phrase), "I'm OK, I *can* speak *some* English," not, "I'm *not* OK, I've been studying English now 'x' years, and *still* I can't speak it." Just helping students feel that it is *possible* to communicate in English, and just allowing them to express things they feel in a foreign language – if even just a little – will hopefully give them greater confidence through the more difficult and less interesting times in language learning.

By being aware of the students' values in a classroom, and by using these values, teachers of EFL can provide students with opportunities for reinforcement on the affective level, offering them more interesting ways to learn – and use what they learn.

I encourage everyone to reexamine their awareness of and sensitivity to cultural values in the classroom here in Japan. A new perspective in this area may be the catalyst which sets free some of that English which so many students in Japan have buried deeply within them. I also think it just might be enjoyable at the same time.

Suggested Reading

1. Barnlund, Dean C., *Public and Private Self in Japan and the United States*, Tokyo: Simul Press.
2. Goldstein, Bernice Z., and Kyoko Tamura, *Japan and America: A Comparative Study in Language and Culture*, Tokyo: Tuttle.
3. Raths, Louis E., Merrill Harmin, and Sydney B. Simon, *Values and Teaching: Working with Values in the Classroom*, Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co.
4. Simon, Sydney B., Leland W. Howe and Howard Kirschenbaum, *Values Clarification: A Handbook of Practical Strategies for Teachers and Students*, Hart Publishing Co.

Rapid Reading and Rapid Writing*

Deborah B. Matreyek

Rapid reading and rapid writing (RR&RW) is a technique that has been developed for ESL students, particularly Japanese ESL students, to help eliminate the step of translation while reading and writing. Although the name might bring to mind speed reading and/or a type of shorthand for writing, it is by no means related to these skills. The term "rapid" has become part of the name of this technique because it encourages an ESL student to read and write faster than s/he is accustomed to. This is done by limiting or controlling the amount of time s/he is allotted for completing a reading or writing task and including a question/answer period.

Japanese students have a tendency to read very methodically, word by word, in hopes of understanding it completely. This involves a large expenditure of time, an English-Japanese dictionary, and a lot of energy devoted to translating. As a result, they might

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understand every word, but they often cannot comprehend the main ideas of what they have read. It is also a painstaking process which means that few people read for pleasure. Furthermore, writing also becomes painful for very similar reasons. If writing requires a large portion of time devoted to translating words and phrases, consulting dictionaries, etc., then the main ideas and their development can be easily lost.

Consequently, the technique of rapid reading and rapid writing is specifically designed to help students overcome the step of translating as they read and write. By doing so, reading comprehension increases as does the quantity and quality of writing. The students are encouraged to read for the main ideas in a passage rather than to comprehend individual words. In addition, they are instructed to write primarily for quantity, not for perfectly, grammatically correct English sentences. The time limitation alone almost forces students to do this, if they want to complete the task.

The technique of RR&RW was originally created by Dr. Shigeo Imamura of Michigan State University. It was first used in 1961 to help Japanese university students studying in the United States. These students had difficulty fulfilling certain requirements because reading and writing took so long due to their tendency to translate. Therefore, the origin of the technique was based on a very practical problem that the students were facing. It should be noted that an underlying assumption is that the students already have background and experience with reading and writing in English. Japanese ESL students and others who may have studied English through a grammer-translation method, whether they are studying at an American university or not, continue to have this problem. Rapid reading and rapid writing can, therefore, be of great benefit as a classroom activity.

In this paper, I will describe the structure of a RR&RW class and what it involves for the teacher and the students. Subsequently, I will provide evidence of the technique's usefulness and success in relation to the goal of the technique. In this process, I also hope that it will become evident, that in addition to helping students to stop translating, that RR&RW can help in the development of related skills.

CLASS DESIGN

The design and development of materials for a RR&RW course is not a difficult process. Consistency in the design or structure of the course is crucial to the achievement of the goals of this technique. Adapted from Dr. Imamura's basic idea of a course, I have designed a structure for a course based on a forty-minute class period, four days a week for a month. This overall structure is as follows:

1. Reading: first 5–10 minutes
2. Question/answer period: 20–25 minutes
3. Writing: final 10 minutes

The consistency and timing of this structure are fundamental aspects of the technique. The class should be told when to begin reading and writing and when to stop, even if it is apparent that they haven't completed the task (which they rarely do during the writing period). Each of the three steps above should be followed each day. The time for reading and the question/answer period might vary some; however, the time allowed for writing should remain the same. The reasoning behind the allocations of time will be presented at a later point. As a side note, a watch is of utmost importance for the teacher, for obvious reasons.

Rapid reading: The selection of reading materials

Having considered the basic, overall structure of the course and each class, it's appropriate to examine each of the three steps of this technique. The most challenging aspect of RR&RW for the teacher is the selection of appropriate reading materials. Thus far, I have not developed a precise means for selecting the best possible readings for a given group of students. Nevertheless, there are several important factors that must be weighed carefully in the selection process. These factors are the following:

1. abilities and backgrounds of the students
2. level of difficulty of the passage
3. length of the passage
4. time allotted for reading
5. content of the passage.

All of these factors affect one another, especially numbers 1 through 4. Over the period of time that I have used this technique, I have developed standards for factors 2, 3, 4 which have evolved from what has worked successfully in the classroom. The students I have taught have been primarily Japanese businessmen and university students at an upper intermediate to advanced level of English proficiency. With these kinds of students in mind, the following is my set of standards for selecting reading materials based on the above factors:

2. There are several new vocabulary items and complex sentence structures involving many clauses.
3. The length of the reading is approximately 6–8 paragraphs of average length.
4. Approximately 5–8 minutes are allotted for reading.
5. Articles from *Time, Newsweek,* English newspapers and short American folktales have been used.

These standards are a reflection of my own teaching situation and the kind of students I teach. Consequently, different standards would naturally emerge in different teaching situations with students of different proficiency levels and backgrounds. Nevertheless, there are certain guidelines that remain the same to help achieve the goals of RR&RW. A reading should always be slightly difficult for the students. It should have new vocabulary items, and complex sentence structure, and students should never have enough time to read it carefully and/or meticulously. The reading should also be fairly short because students get frustrated and tire easily under the time pressure. When selecting reading material, however, the objective is to balance the level of difficulty, length and time with regard to the students' abilities. At times, this can be a complex task, but, with experience, standards in relation to a particular group of students will evolve.

Content, factor 5, while not the most salient factor, can affect the success of a class or the whole course. If the readings are of interest to the students, it becomes an added incentive to read faster and promotes a more interesting discussion afterwards in the question/answer period. Thus, it is important to know and try to match materials with the background and interests of your students.

Question/answer period

The question/answer period was designed as a time for discovery for both the teacher and the student. For the teacher, it is a means of determining the difficulty of the reading and a way of acquainting students with what is important to remember. A set of questions should be prepared about the reading. These should be progressive, beginning with the most general and gradually becoming more specific. Since one of the goals of RR&RW is to read for the main ideas, questions to elicit this information should be asked first. As the questioning progresses, the teacher can discover how difficult the reading was by the number of questions that are correctly answered. If students can only answer one or two questions, it was probably too difficult. On the other hand, if students remember every detail, it was either too easy or possibly too much time was given to read it.

For the student, the question/answer period is a time to recreate what was read. It is also a time for sharing information because one student usually does not remember and/or understand everything. As a result, the students are working together providing different bits of information about details of the reading. Every student should be able to answer the general questions the teacher asks, but the details are put together as a group. Many times students are surprised by what they have understood despite the difficulty and the limited time they had to read. The question/answer period is, therefore, a learning experience and time of discovery for both the students and the teacher.

A problem that can develop during the question/answer period is one of not having enough questions to complete the 20–25 minutes allotted during the class. This can happen for two reasons. Either the students cannot remember or do not understand very much, or the reading is so short that there are not anymore questions to be asked. This problem is not unusual and is bound to happen occasionally over a period of time. When faced with this situation, I have diverged from the reading itself and explored the topic area in a different way. I ask for their opinions and experiences related to the topic. This helps them relate what they have read to their own lives and can provide additional insight and understanding to the reading. Often students have sought my opinion and experiences and thus the question/answer period can develop into an interesting discussion. This can show the students the importance of improving their skills in reading and writing which is to understand and remember what they read for subsequent conversations, discussions, and writing. Consequently, a secondary outcome of this technique of RR&RW is the improvement of discussion skills. In conclusion, the question/answer period is a vital component of the whole technique. It not only reveals what the students have understood, but also prepares them for the final part of the class, writing.

Rapid writing

Rapid writing is designed to help students avoid translation when they write. As a result, students are instructed to write as much as possible in ten minutes. The teacher's primary concern is quantity not quality. If the students become overly concerned with spelling, sentence structure, or punctuation, then they will have a tendency to write slowly and translate as they write. Rapid writing is not composition and the students need to be so informed.

As a focus for rapid writing, the students are asked to write about some aspect of what they have read, expressing opinions or writing summaries. The decision about the kind of writing to be done depends somewhat on the reading. For example, if they read a newspaper article about euthanasia, they could express their personal opinions about the issue. However, if they read a short folktale, a summary of the story would be appropriate. It should be noted that if the students are asked to write their opinions, they should have discussed the issue briefly during the question/answer period. It has been my experience that students need some prior thought and discussion about a topic before they can write about it.

Although rapid writing is not composition, the writing done each day is corrected and given back to the students the following day. The corrections are not discussed in class but are provided as guides to the students for their own self improvement. I also encourage students to save their writing to note their own improvement during the course. The day-to-day consistency in time allotments becomes important in rapid writing because it facilitates the students' ability to witness progress over an extended period of time. It is also of interest to note that the quality of writing also improves although it is not a main goal. The students seem to make fewer mistakes and their writing seems to communicate more to the reader. In summary, rapid writing helps students stop translating when they write, thus the quantity of writing increases. In addition, as they translate less, their writing is easier to understand and has fewer mistakes.

Recommendations

With explanations of each phase of the RR&RW class having been provided, it is appropriate to return to a general overview of the whole course. In any course, the teacher should be aware of the experiences of the students and provide the proper atmosphere to achieve the objectives and goals of that particular course. The succeeding paragraphs discuss experiences that students seem to have in common and general suggestions to help create and maintain an atmosphere condusive to achieving the objectives of RR&RW.

The first session of the course is primarily devoted to an explanation of objectives. If the students have a clear understanding of the objectives, it becomes easier for them to work toward them. I also explain the daily format of the classes and what they are expected to do each day. This helps to clarify what is going to happen in class and also the role the teacher assumes. The teacher's role is not that of one who is concerned with the growth and development of new knowledge and skills. It is more similar to a remedial teacher who is concerned with developing already acquired skills. More specifically, a RR&RW teacher is not really teaching reading and writing but helping students to read and write more efficiently.

Encouragement and support of the students' efforts are an integral part of helping students to achieve the objectives of the course. Initially, students can become frustrated and discouraged very easily. They should be made aware that it will be difficult in the beginning. If the students are aware of the difficulty and understand the objectives of the course, they tend not to be as discouraged and are less apt to give up. Encouragement from the teacher should be consistent, pointing out success in every situation possible. This can be done on an individual basis and should also be done for the whole group.

A RR&RW class is very tightly structured. With careful planning and an awareness of the students' experiences, the objectives or goals of this technique can be achieved.

RESULTS

This particular technique is in its developmental stages with many aspects of it still in need of refinement. A formal analysis of the students' improvement has not been attempted as yet. Nevertheless, there is a great deal that can be said for its success and usefulness as a classroom activity. The following comments about its effectiveness are based on my observations and experience, reflections of students who have taken the course, and evaluations done through the Council of International Educational Exchange (CIEE) by Japanese teachers of English who have also experienced RR&RW as students.

After a period of a month, it is usually evident to the teacher that students are reading for ideas not words. They are not as easily frustrated or overwhelmed by new words and usually finish a passage in the allotted time. In addition, the students become able to answer a larger percentage of the questions asked about the reading. It would seem that as it becomes easier for them to grasp main ideas, they also seem better able to understand and remember details as they relate to the main ideas. The general mood of the group improves as well because they seem to enjoy reading more and do not find it as difficult.

The increase in the quantity of writing is a more tangible piece of evidence of improvement. Some students double the amount they are able to write in ten minutes. Although this is not always the case, a certain amount of progress is evident with every student. There is also a decrease in the number of mistakes, spelling and grammatical, and an increase in clarity.

This improvement in reading comprehension and the increase in the quantity written indicates that students are not translating as they engage in these tasks. The time pressure leaves little time to do so. Students must read quickly, then discuss the reading, and finally write quickly each day. If students meet this challenge and do not give up, they are able to reduce the amount of translating they do. In the year that I have used this technique, students almost always meet the challenge and by the end of a month have improved in the ways I've mentioned.

While the main objective of RR&RW is to stop translation, there are other beneficial outcomes of RR&RW which are important. Students begin to enjoy reading and writing in English and, if these tasks are part of their jobs, it is less of an ordeal and can be done more efficiently. Students can continue to improve their skills when the course has ended. The teacher can make suggestions about the choice of reading material and the student can work on his/her own. Other areas of improvement that I've discovered are an increase in vocabulary, better discussion skills and better quality in writing as mentioned before.

The students in addition to the teacher are able to note improvement and progress and realize the benefits of the course. The following are some of the comments I've received as part of a final day writing assignment:

> ". . . very effective, very efficient, and very helpful."
>
> "I've become a much more rapid reader."
>
> "I think that I can read English now rather quickly. . . . When I can not understand one or two words in a sentence, I can almost understand the meaning of the sentence."
>
> "When I come back to the office, I will be able to read and write more rapidly than I did."
>
> "I think I made a good deal of progress in English after taking this class, especially on writing."
>
> ". . . this practice seems so effective even for progressing conversation."

Rapid reading and rapid writing has been used in intensive English programs sponsored annually by CIEE for Japanese junior and senior high school English teachers in the United States. At the end of the 1976 program, CIEE did evaluations of their programs. RR&RW was reported to have been well received by the participants. This report quoted one teacher as saying,

> The activities in rapid reading and rapid writing were most helpful to think in English without translating. When I must read the article as rapidly as possible, I have no time to translate it into Japanese. I've got accustomed to get the main idea by reading roughly; now I am not too nervous when I meet words I don't know. When I must answer the questions about the main idea after reading the article very rapidly, I have not time to translate it into Japanese. When I must write a paragraph as soon as the topic is given, I have no time to translate it into Japanese. Reading and writing as rapidly as possible are very helpful to think in English.

The favorable response to RR&RW encouraged CIEE to recommend that it be part of this year's programs as well.

Rapid reading and rapid writing is one means of confronting and hopefully diminishing the tendency of students to translate into their native language. Numerous adaptations to the technique are possible and, given the uniqueness of each classroom situation, desirable. Basic principles underlying this classroom activity should, however always be kept in mind. It has been my intention here to present some of those principles in the context of a model of a RR&RW course which can be applied to the ESL/EFL classroom.

E.T.T.: Working With the Absurd*

Alison Devine

London – July, 1976

The people in the audience are students of English. Perhaps they have just come from several hours of classroom or LL drill. Perhaps they study only a few hours a week. Their teachers may have brought them here or the sign advertising English Teaching Theatre may have stimulated a sense of curiosity. They have no idea what to expect.

Five people explode onto the stage and burst into the audience manipulating music placards and food. A vaguely recognizable situation response drill follows:

"Would you like a nut?"
"Thanks, I don't mind if I do."
("Offer some to your friend: Would you like a nut?")
"Thanks . . ." ("Help him . . . I don't mind . . .")
"I don't mind if I do"
"There's a song about that . . ."

The cast runs back to the stage singing, leading the audience in a repetition of key social phrases of greeting, offering and thanks.

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A few moments later a superstar sketch casts the audience in another participatory role. No longer a group of ill-at-ease language learners, they are led by the actors into becoming actors themselves. As a crowd of fans, they are part of the context which justifies a ridiculous repetition of superlatives.

Is he good?

He's the best.

Is he rich?

He's the richest.

Is he smart?

He's the smartest.

Is he handsome?

He's the most handsome.

It is just this kind of list which lies flat and lifeless on the pages of most language textbooks. Yet here, given a context which the audience has delightedly chosen to believe (. . . the cast has put on gold sequinned jackets and is simultaneously imitating Elvis Presley and the Supremes . . .), its entertainment value gives it a meaning of its own.

Similarly, *Glitter Hair Cream,* a song by ETT member Ken Wilson on the record *Goodbye Rainbow* stresses the superlative in a parody of the too familiar world of advertising:

"Glitter will make you the best in the world at anything you choose.
You'll be the fastest racing driver
And you'll never lose."

In five minutes the audience has listened constantly to numerous repetitions of one language structure and they have not been bored (the Presley character strips slowly out of his sequinned jacket revealing the superman emblem on his chest. He flies out of the room. The audience applauds for more.)

Who are these people? The two troops of International House's English Teaching Theatre have in common their youth and their nationality (they are all British with one American exception). Their backgrounds are diverse. Some are professional actors with stage, radio and television experience. Some are experienced musicians in folk, classical, and rock and roll music. Some were originally teachers trained by and working at the London School which now sponsors the company. All of them can act, make music, and teach.

The sketches are worked out collectively, usually proposed by one person ("I've got a terribly funny bit for getting at third conditional") and shaped to fit the skill and inclinations of the performers involved. The groups tour Europe through the winter and have, through the last seven years, got as far afield as Portugal, Greece and Norway. In the summer, they develop the next year's show while doing a full season of London performances for visiting foreign students. The emphasis is on fun, games and music but a lot of language acquisition seems to go on as well.

The advantages of employing such high energy theatrical techniques in the field of language teaching are many. Obviously, any break in routine is likely to serve as an encouragement to active listening as is the "one liner", "punch line" nature of the material. It is significant that much of the humor is visual and that the verbal humor is often dependent on repetition. Thus, the line in *The Dentist,* "It's the first time he's ever been here," points at an absurd situation which is compounded by

"It's the first time I've ever taken out a tooth."

"It's the first time I've ever used an anaeshetic."

until by the end of the sketch the audience is anxiously predicting

"It's the first time I've ever seen a hypodermic needle."

The unavoidably repetitious nature of language learning is turned into its own humourous excuse and the exaggerated stress of comic melodrama makes the relationship between intonation and emotion very clear.

Few of the activities take place on stage for a passive audience. Some of the skits are games, with all the familiar trappings of afternoon T.V.: smarmy host, pretty girls, and tacky prizes. In *Don't Say No . . . or Yes,* students are directly taught a language strategy of English speaking cultures. The "contestant" is first offered alternative gambits to the abrupt sounds of "yes" and "no". The MC suggests "not really," "that's right," "not exactly", "I think so," "I do," and "unh, unh." and follows with direct questions which provide an immediate self evaluation situation.

"Are you English?"
"As a matter of fact, I'm not."
(Cheers, applause)
"Do you speak English perfectly?"
"Well not really."
(Delighted gasps and hurrahs. Confetti is thrown.)
"Do you like London?"
"Yes."
(boos, groans, a loud buzzer sounds. The contestant is led to his seat amidst consoling applause.)

Here what might be a tension-filled moment is transformed by its very unreality into a safe situation. The mock horror with which the actors respond to a blunt "yes" or "no" is, to be sure, an exaggeration of the vague uneasiness an Englishman might feel in an actual sitation, but exaggeration makes the point and the patently false and ridiculous situation (The Super Elvis of the previous sketch is now Guy Smiley) is a psychological shelter within which learning takes place.

The general psychological effects of this kind of entertainment are significant. Especially in Japan, where English is often taught as Americans have been taught Latin, the simple possibilities of laughing in English, along with the presence of living, breathing English-speaking humans having fun with what they are doing, could create a profound positive impression. Such a feeling might carry over in later learning situations.

The important cultural content of these skits manifests itself on two levels. A sketch about a train for example, communicates a lot of information about English trains, much of it nonverbally. There are compartments rather than doors at each end of the car. Coffee, sweets and newspapers are sold through the windows when the train stops at a station. If you travel in a first class compartment, you must buy a first class ticket. More important, however, is the unconsciously assimilated information about English body language and facial expressions, human relations and social realities. Thus, a woman psychiatrist in another sketch provides statements about occupational roles for women that, without being didactic, indicates a situation of which many students may not have been aware.

Teachers of a conventional language class may wish the resources of an ETT troupe were at hand and may feel hard pressed to transfer theatre techniques to their own curriculum. Yet, clearly, there are aspects of theatre, mime, games, role play, and songs which are applicable to almost any learning situation. A change of pace, especially in a review of something already repeated far too often but not yet learned, has a great value of its own. Furthermore, providing any kind of dramatic context for a conventional drill can give students a nonthreatening opportunity to experiment with learnt language and evaluate their skills. Humourous, dramatic situations are ideal for exaggerating stress and intonation patterns, and these can range from a hammed up version of a simple four line dialogue to the more complex sketches suggested in the ETT's book[1]. Songs too, provide a great opportunity for painless repetition practice of key phrases and structures.

From a more philosophical standpoint the techniques of the ETT point to an attempt to confront the inherent absurdity of most language learning situations. Many new language teaching techniques represent some kind of theoretical reaction to the "mimic and memorize" audio-lingual approach so popular in the post-war period. The dialogues printed in a conventional ESL textbook are not and cannot be real and living language. At best they are an imitation designed for purposes other than those they imply.

"Do you like apples?"
"Yes I do. Do you?"
"Yes, I do too."

These sentences are not used to obtain information about the gustatory inclinations of an acquaintance, *although they seem to be.* The real message is about structure of a present tense or intonation pattern in this kind of question and response. This falseness is insulting to the student at worst and at best merely boring and silly. It is, I believe, for this reason that in many modern classrooms we find students creating their own dialogues out of

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[1] *The English Teaching Theater.* London, BBC English by Radio and Television, 1974.

their own meaningful world or working within a strictly limited environment so that only that reality is part of the learning process. ETT suggests another possible response to this problem of meaninglessness and consequent irrelevance of classroom language. In their comic songs and sketches meaninglessness is exploited for its own sake for the humour-entertainment value and existential meaning inherent in absurdity.

Language in a textbook is inevitably absurd anyway. Taking advantage of that absurdity and pushing it to its extremes (Ionesco was a language teacher before he became a playwright) provides its own justification. "There is a pen on the table" and "There is a horse in the bathtub" keep the same structure and, taken out of context as they must be in a textbook, both sentences are absurd. It is the second sentence that will be remembered because it makes no attempt to reproduce reality[2].

Influenced perhaps as much by street theatre and off Broadway as by conventional teaching techniques, the ETT attempts to celebrate the foolish for its own sake, allowing language learners to participate freely in a stress free learning situation which, for all its foolishness, is a real and meaningful bit of their lives. We classroom teachers can take from this philosophy a feeling perhaps rather than specific techniques. A humanistic approach to learning demands a respect for the learner's own perspective of reality. Only a situation which touches on that reality is valid and not until the learner's world is entered can it be expanded. The realm of the absurd is free because it belongs to all of us. We choose to believe it and force meaning onto it through our own will. Language used in this way belongs inextricably to the user – it is never false, contrived or secondhand. Thus, the student begins to use his new language as a key – a sorting-out device for the tangle of non sense that surrounds us. This real language works and lives.

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[2] This example is from a delightful French textbook *En France Comme si Vous y Etiez* (Paris, Librairie Hachette, 1964) which pushes the humor inherent in a textbook's banal repetition to magnificent conclusions.

Concerning Communicative Competence*

Walter A. Matreyek

The term "communicative competence" has recently begun to appear more and more frequently in the second language literature as a desired goal of the language learning process and language training programs. It is reasonable to say that it emerged as a reaction to generations of second or foreign language learners who, despite many years of language study, were unable to use the language they "learned" to manage the situations they faced which involved communicating with other people through the language. As a result of experiencing, observing, or hearing reports of unsuccessful performances in such language use situations, many people have turned their attention to trying to specify what knowledge and capabilities the "communicatively competent" person possesses that enables him or her to successfully use language in the situations he/she faces. The problems of designing a program or course syllabus aiming towards the development of communicative competence without a clear definition of what it is has been discussed by Stratton (1977). Formulating a clear and practicably applicable definition of communicative competence is

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thus imperative if we are to hold communicative competence as a goal of the language learning/language teaching process.

DEFINITIONS OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Communicative competence has been defined in a number of ways. Rivers (1972, 1973) would seem to define it as "free, spontaneous expression" in the language. Jakobovits (1970) offers a similar conceptualization in saying that it is "... liberated expression and the practical use of a foreign language." Savignon (1972) defines it as "... the ability to function in a truly communicative setting – that is, in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total informational input, both linguistic and paralinguistic, of one or more interlocutors." Duque and Puhl (1975) define communicative competence as being "... the ability to derive desired outcomes from interaction with others, using the language or any other communicative codes." Rubin (1976) offers the following definition: "... the ability to interpret the full meaning of a message and the ability to properly formulate such messages."

A critical analysis of the definitions that have been offered for the term "communicative competence" (D. Matreyek, 1976) reveals two major problems. One problem is that they are often vague or narrow. It is possible to think of communicative acts or aspects of the communication process that seem not to be included in, or seem not to fit in, the definitions. For example, it is difficult to see how a pause, a silent gesture, the ability to extract intentions from what the other person says and doesn't say, or a knowledge of the patterns of thought underlying native-speaker use of the language (i.e., how they organize and sequence what they say) fit into the definitions reviewed above. If a definition is to be useful, it needs to be as specific and complete as possible. This is particularly important if the term being defined, as in the case of the term "communicative competence", is to be used as a guide to implementing an extensive, and oftentimes quite expensive, program of action.

A second problem arises out of the first. It is often difficult to practicably apply many of the definitions, either in the evaluation of an individual's degree of attainment of communicative competence or in relation to the design of activities that can be used in the language learning/teaching situation. If the language teacher is to plan a course of action for the development of communicative competence in the group of learners he/she is working with, then some way of assessing the present level of development of that competence and identifying undeveloped or problem areas is needed. In having such an assessment procedure, the teacher also has a statement of the end points of a program of action which can be used in the course planning process. If the definition cannot be practicably applied in such ways, then how is the teacher to know if the learners have attained the goal, what areas they may still have needs in, and what efforts he/she might make in working towards such a goal?

It would seem, then, that there is a need for a more specific and inclusive definition of communicative competence. Moreover, the supporting terms used in the definition need to be such that they can be further expanded and specified in order to be applicable in an evaluation and planning process. In this paper, an alternative definition of communicative competence will be suggested which will, it is hoped, make a few further steps toward specification, inclusiveness and applicability.

TOWARD AN ALTERNATE DEFINITION OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

One way to begin to arrive at an alternate definition of communicative competence is to focus on the concept of competence and what we mean when we say that so and so is a competent _______ (for example, doctor). I would suggest that we mean that he/she is a person with the knowledge and capabilities for effectively and successfully performing the necessary roles and associated tasks in the complex of situations he faces as a doctor. If he/she is able to do the things he is supposed to be able to do well, for example, check a patient's temperature, blood pressure, etc., in the roles of diagnostician, analyst, etc., in the situations of giving a routine medical examination, treating a burn victim, etc., then, he/she would be called competent. I would further suggest that we mean basically the same thing when we say that someone is a competent cook, salesman, entertainer, father, teacher, whatever. Thus, it appears that competence is related to the "possession" of the *knowledge* and *capabilities* for *effectively and successfully performing* the necessary *roles* and associated *tasks* in the complex of *situations* related to a particular *life position.*

Further, it is possible to expand the definition so as to specify just what competence entails for a particular life position. In doing so, it becomes possible to evaluate an individual's degree of attainment of such competence. The supporting terms of the above definition can be expanded through the following five-step procedure:

1) Specify the life position (for example, doctor)
2) Set up a grid as follows:

ROLES SITUATIONS TASKS KNOWLEDGE CAPABILITIES

3) Fill in the grid for each of the above categories
4) Set criteria for successful and effective performance in the fulfillment of roles and tasks for the various situations
5) Compare a particular individual's or group's performance to the criteria set for performance

If the individual scores highly in all of the above defined areas, that is to say, if he/she seems to have the knowledge and capabilities needed to perform the listed tasks in the related roles and situations, then he/she can be judged to be "competent", or be said to possess competence. However, if the individual scores generally low, or high in some areas and low in others, then he/she may be judged "incompetent", or lacking in competence, or developing in competence, or weak in some areas and strong in others.

Three things need to be noted in relation to the above suggested definition and five-step expansion and specification procedure:

a) It is through performance that competence manifests itself (leaving room for "mistakes" – unsystematic, temporary lapses in manifestation), and it is by experience with, observation of, or reports concerning performance that competence is judged. Most people, unless they are somehow specially qualified to do so, are not in a position to directly judge the knowledge and capabilities of another person, as those are invisible, mental phenomena. Rather, we usually infer an individual's knowledge and capabilities based on experience, observation, and/or report.

b) Evaluations of competence need to be made in reference to a particular life position. A general practicioner may not be able to perform a heart transplant, and should not be expected to unless he/she claims to be able to. If such a claim is made, then his/her competence can be assessed through the same five-step procedure.

c) The above five-step procedure provides us with a way of assessing competence, once criteria of effective and successful performance are set. It also provides us with a specific and complete picture of the goal or end state towards which an individual involved in acquiring or training other people to attain such competence can begin to plan a program of action. Thus, we have not only developed a means for assessing and identifying weak or problem areas of competence, but we have also acquired a tool which can be used in designing a program of experience, activities, tasks, etc., to help others in the development of these areas.

The concept of communicative competence can be considered in a similar fashion. We begin with the question of what we mean when we say that so and so is a competent________, in this case, communicator. I suggest that we mean that he/she is a person who possesses the *knowledge* and *capabilities* for *effectively and successfully performing* the necessary *communicative roles* and associated *tasks* in the complex of *situations* related to a particular *life position.* I further suggest that by going through the same five-step procedure described above, it is possible to create a grid that provides a specific and complete picture of communicative competence. Such a grid would be useful both in the evaluation of an individual's or group's attainment of communicative competence and in the planning of a program of action with the goal of developing the communicative competence of a particular group of learners.

Applying the five-step procedure to the concept of communicative competence, the first thing we must consider is how to specify the life position (step 1). It is arguable that communicative competence is in many ways different from an occupational competence. Performance of an occupation usually draws only upon one part of an individual's being, usually involves only a limited set of the universe of roles, situations, and tasks the individual needs to face and manage in everyday life. Communication, on the other hand, can involve one's whole being, depending upon the people the individual communicates with. Further, communication is involved in the entire universe of roles, situations, and tasks the individual needs to perform. Thus, in specifying the life position in relation to the concept of communicative competence, a life position needs to be specified which takes into account the fact that communication is involved in everything one does. One way to do this is to posit the existence of a "general communicator". This "general communicator" can be conceptualized as representing any given individual in any given role, situation, or task.

Once the life position has been specified, it is then necessary to set up and fill in the grid (steps 2 and 3). This can be done by listing the complex of roles, situations, and tasks such a general communicator needs to manage and perform and the knowledge and capabilities needed for doing so. We could identify such situations as talking to the boss, persuading the police officer not to give you a speeding ticket, etc., such roles as advocate, supplicant, etc., and such tasks as gaining acceptance of a new idea, getting him to understand the reason why he shouldn't . . ., etc. Completing the grid in such a way would be extremely time-consuming, however, and would probably end in a totally unmanageable number of entries for each of the various categories.

It is possible to take a different approach to the categories of roles and situations in order to simplify the process of completing the grid. This is the approach that is taken in the remainder of this paper, the results of which are presented in Table I.

As a first step, a limited number of "communication roles" are postulated. These are meant to represent the simplest ways of processing information, both receptively and productively. They are as follows:

a) Viewer
b) Actor
c) Listener
d) Speaker
e) Reader
f) Writer

These represent both non-linguistic (viewer, actor) and linguistic (listener, speaker, reader, writer) approaches to the processing of communication acts and events. Since listening, reading, and viewing are all related as receptive processes and speaking, writing, and acting are all related as productive processes, the above six categories can be somewhat simplified in the following way:

a) Listener-viewer
b) Speaker-actor
c) Reader-viewer
d) Writer-actor

These four categories can in turn be combined with each other in a number of ways as follows:

a) Listener-viewer
b) Speaker-actor
c) Reader-viewer
d) Writer-actor
e) Listener-viewer/Speaker-actor
f) Listener-viewer/Reader-viewer
g) Listener-viewer/Writer-actor
h) Speaker-actor/Reader-viewer
i) Speaker-actor/Writer-actor
j) Reader-viewer/Writer-actor
k) Listener-viewer/Speaker-actor/Reader-viewer
l) Listener-viewer/Speaker-actor/Writer-actor
m) Listener-viewer/Reader-viewer/Writer-actor
n) Speaker-actor/Reader-viewer/Writer-actor
o) Listener-viewer/Speaker-actor/Reader-viewer/Writer-actor

This list of communicative roles forms the basis of Column I in

Table I.

As a second step, it is possible to list situations in the life of a "general communicator" that represent such an individual's functioning or performing in a particular communicative role. For example, for the role of listener-viewer, it is possible to list the following communication situations:

ROLES	SITUATIONS
Listener-viewer	listening to radio watching tv, a movie listening to a speech, lecture, report, announcements being a spectator, eavesdropper listening to instructions

Related communication situations can be listed, in turn, for each of the communicative roles, as has been done in Column II of Table I. If this is done in sufficient detail, then we obtain a comprehensive list of the situations in which the ideally communicatively competent individual should be able to perform.

The next step is to identify the tasks associated with the performance of the above roles and associated situations. A list of tasks related to the role of listener-viewer and its associated situations would include the following:

ROLES	SITUATIONS	TASKS
Listener-viewer	listening to radio watching tv, a movie listening to a speech, lecture, report, announcements being a spectator, eavesdropper listening to instructions	a. get the topics, main ideas, supporting ideas, facts, details b. get the feelings, emotions, attitudes, values c. get the intentions, motives d. get the image, process, relationships e. get what is not said, implications f. use the above in subsequent action: e.g. conversation

This can be done in turn for each of the roles and combinations of roles, as has been done in Column III of Table I. If this is done in sufficient detail, then we obtain a list of the many tasks the ideally communicatively competent individual should be able to accomplish in the many communicative roles and communication situations he/she may have to perform in.

The final step in the completion of the grid is to attempt to specify the knowledge and capabilities underlying the performance of the tasks in the situations and roles the "general communicator" faces. Again in terms of the role of listener-viewer, a list of knowledge and capabilities might include the following:

KNOWLEDGE	CAPABILITIES
a) of the linguistic code: the sounds, intonation, stress patterns, grammar, vocabulary, idioms	a) process the linguistic code: perceive sounds, meaningful changes in intonation, stress, voice quality; interpret meanings of words, sentences perceive and interpret visual symbols
b) of the non-linguistic codes: gestures, facial expressions, posture, spatial arrangements, timing, silence, visual symbols of charts, graphs, pictures	b) process the non-linguistic codes: perceive meaningful gestures, facial expressions, postures, spatial arrangements, etc. perceive and interpret charts, graphs, pictures
c) of socio-cultural rules and forms: appropriate ways of behaving, addressing, greeting, asking/giving opinions, etc. in relation to particular people in particular situations: the ways in which particular situations manifest themselves and are managed	c) perceive and interpret appropriate behavior: ways of addressing, greeting, asking/giving opinion, etc.

KNOWLEDGE	CAPABILITIES
d) of rhetorical forms: ways of presenting, organizing, sequencing, introducing, concluding, qualifying, describing, explaining, arguing; of differences between oral and written forms of expression	d) process extended speech and action: perceive organization, sequencing, etc. of ideas, feelings, descriptions, explanations etc. in ways reflecting cultural patterns
e) of the communication process and problems that may occur: inattention, misunderstanding, non-comprehension	e) perceive problems that may occur in the communication process

In doing this for the other communicative roles, it soon becomes apparent that these knowledge and capabilities cut across all of them rather consistently. For this reason, Columns IV and V of Table I have been simplified by stating these knowledges and capabilities in more general terms as they apply to all communicative roles.

Table I thus represents an expansion and specification of the basic definition of communicative competence and presents a comprehensive picture of what the ideally communicatively competent individual should be able to do and the requisite knowledge and capabilities underlying his/her performance. Once criteria of effective and successful performance are established, it becomes possible to evaluate an individual's degree of possession of communicative competence, as well as to identify weak areas in need of further development. In setting such criteria, it is important to keep in mind that even native speakers of a language are usually not ideally communicatively competent. Consequently, perfection in the performance of such roles, situations, and tasks should not be expected of non-native speakers.

IMPLICATIONS

A number of important things come out of the definition of and procedure for specifying what constitutes communicative competence that have been developed in this paper. If communicative competence is to be a desired goal of second language learning process and programs, then it is signifcant that we have arrived at a clearer definition of what that goal is. Thus we have a better chance of attaining it. The grid developed in Table I offers a comprehensive statement of the performances and knowledge and capabilities underlying those performances toward which we are trying to encourage learner growth.

It is also possible to see how the previous definitions of communicative competence provided in the second language literature are related to this alternate definition. If the individual has the knowledge and capabilities to effectively and successfully perform in the roles, situations, and tasks listed in Table I, then he/she has probably achieved "spontaneous" or "liberated" expression in the use of the language. He/she has also probably acquired "the ability to function in a truly communicative setting", "the ability to derive desired outcomes from interaction with others", or "the ability to interpret the full meaning of a message and the ability to properly formulate such messages".

Second, it is possible to see that there are a number of other important kinds of knowledge and capabilities that need to be developed in the attainment of communicative competence besides those related to language. Although these have been recognized for a long time, presenting them along with linguistic factors in an overall comprehensive picture, as has been done in Table I, provides a unified perspective on them.

Third, a basis for the formal evaluation of communicative competence is also provided. By specifying the knowledge and capabilities the individual needs to possess, the roles and tasks he/she needs to perform, and the situations he/she needs to perform in, a major step has been taken in the development of a test or series of tests which can be used to assess the degree of possession of communicative competence of a particular individual or group.

In the future, further attention needs to be focused on the applicability of the conceptualization of communicative competence suggested herein. Table I, as it is now, is quite complex and difficult to manage as far as using it either in the evaluation of an individual's or group's degree of development of communicative competence, or in the design of experiences, activities, and tasks to encourage learner growth. Some way of simplifying and more easily using it needs to be developed. In addition, it would also be important to develop some way of determining which are the most important factors within each of the categories and which are factors that need to be developed as a prior step to the development of others.

In conclusion, by defining communicative competence as "the possession of the knowledge and capabilities for effectively and successfully performing the necessary communicative roles and associated tasks in the complex of situations related to a particular life position", and by developing a procedure for expanding and specifying the supporting terms of the definition, we have obtained a specific, inclusive, and practicably applicable conceptualization of communicative competence. This definition and its expansion and specification found in Table I of this paper provides us with a clear and attainable goal which can be used in relation to programs aiming to develop the communicative competence of second or foreign language learners.

TABLE I

EXPANSION AND SPECIFICATION OF THE DEFINITION OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

I ROLES	II SITUATIONS	III TASKS	IV KNOWLEDGES	V CAPABILITIES
1. Listener-viewer	listening to radio watching tv, a movie listening to a speech, lecture, report, announcements being a spectator, eavesdropper listening to instructions	a. get the topics, main ideas, supporting ideas, facts, details b. get the feelings, emotions, attitudes, values c. get the intentions, motives d. get the image, process, relationships e. get what is not said, implications f. use the above in subsequent action: e.g. conversation	1. of the linguistic codes: the sounds, intonation, stress patterns, grammar, vocabulary, idioms	1. process the linguistic code: perceive and produce sounds, meaningful changes in intonation, stress, voice quality; interpret meanings of sentences, words perceive and produce visual symbols
2. Speaker-actor	speaking on radio being on tv making announcements presenting a speech, lecture, report	g. elicit certain reactions, responses in others h. have others get topic, main ideas, supporting ideas, facts, details i. have others get a particular feeling, image, emotion, intention, implication j. present, organize, sequence ideas, facts, examples in cultural patterns of thought k. describe, explain, narrate, argue	2. of the non-linguistic codes: gestures, facial expressions, posture, spatial arrangements, timing, silence, visual symbols of charts, graphs, pictures	2. process the non-linguistic codes: perceive and produce meaningful gestures, facial expressions, postures, spatial arrangements, etc. interpret and produce charts, graphs, pictures
3. Reader viewer	reading letters, books, magazines, reports, instructions, signs, subtitles	a+b+c+d+e+f + 1. extract meaning from visual symbols, linguistic and non-linguistic	3. of socio-cultural rules and and forms: appropriate ways of behaving, addressing, greeting, asking/giving opinions, etc. in relation to particular people in particular situations: the ways in which particular situations manifest themselves and are managed	3. perceive and produce appropriate behavior, manage situations in expected or culturally acceptable ways

TABLE I (Cont.)

I ROLES	II SITUATIONS	III TASKS	IV KNOWLEDGES	V CAPABILITIES
4. Writer-Actor	writing letters, notes, reports, papers, articles, stories	g+h+i+j+k+ m. create visual symbols in a standard form, both linguistic and non-linguistic	4. of rhetorical forms: ways of presenting, organizing, sequencing, introducing, concluding, qualifying, describing, explaining, arguing; of differences between oral and written forms of expression	4. process extended speech and action: perceive and present (organize, sequence, introduce, etc.) ideas feelings, descriptions, explanations, arguments, etc. in ways reflecting cultural patterns
5. Listener-Viewer/ Speaker-Actor	taking part in conversations#, social and business situations*, discussions, meetings, debates, interviews presenting a speech, lecture, report	a+b+c+d+e+f + g+h+i+j+k+ n. adapt to changing situations o. say things in alternative ways p. elicit repititions, clarifications, information	5. of the communication process and problems that may occur: inattention, misunderstanding, non-comprehension	5. participate in the communication process and cope with problems that may occur: adapt to changes in the situation, express ideas, feelings in alternative ways
6. Listener-Viewer/ Reader-Viewer	reading along with a lecture, speech, report, presentation	a+b+c+d+e+f+l+ q. read along with the person speaking		
7. Listener-Viewer/ Writer-Actor	taking notes on a lecture, speech, report, discussion, etc. taking dictation	a+b+c+d+e+f+m+ r. discriminate and write significant ideas, facts, details		
8. Speaker-Actor/ Reader-Viewer	reading aloud quoting from a written source in a speech, report	g+h+i+j+k+l+ s. read in an interesting easy to follow way		
9. Speaker-Actor/ Writer-Actor	writing or drawing supplementary visual material while presenting a speech, lecture, report, etc.	g+h+i+j+k+m+ t. write in a clear, easy to follow way		

TABLE I (Cont.)

	I ROLES	II SITUATIONS	III TASKS	IV KNOWLEDGES	V CAPABILITIES
10.	Reader-Viewer/ Writer-Actor	taking notes on something being read writing comments, questions about something being read writing summaries, answers to questions	a+b+c+d+e+f+m+r		
11.	Listener-Viewer/ Speaker-Actor/ Reader-Viewer	reading something aloud or quoting something as part of a conversation, discussion, meeting, interview	a+b+c+d+e+f+g+h+i+j+ k+l+n+o+p+s		
12.	Listener-Viewer/ Speaker-Actor Writer-Actor	taking notes during a conversation, discussion, meeting writing or drawing while speaking or listening during a meeting	a+b+c+d+e+f+g+h+i+j+ k+m+n+o+p+r+t		
13.	Listener-Viewer/ Reader-Viewer/ Writer-Actor	reading and taking notes during a speech, lecture, report	a+b+c+d+e+f+l+m+g+r		
14.	Speaker-Actor/ Reader-Viewer/ Writer-Actor	writing or drawing and reading while speaking lecturing, making a report, etc.	g+h+i+j+k+s+t		

TABLE I (Cont.)

	I ROLES	II SITUATIONS	III TASKS	IV KNOWLEDGES	V CAPABILITIES
15.	Listener-Viewer/Speaker-Actor/Reader-Viewer/Writer-Actor	reading, reading aloud while writing or drawing in a conversation. social or business situation, discussion, meeting, etc.	a+b+c+d+e+f+g+h+i+j+k+l+m+n+o+p+q+r+s+t		

° these are usually interactive processes and in most cases fit better under the role Listener-viewer/Speaker actor.

be able to take part in conversations about a number of different topics: weather, families, interests, activities, plans, other people, etc.

* be able to participate in and manage social and business situations: introductions, greetings, farewells, directions, instructions, buying and selling, restaurants, hotels, telephone, etc.

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An Attributional Approach to Culture: The Culture Assimilator*

Rosita D. Albert and John Adamopoulos

Interpersonal encounters among people who come from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds are difficult and can often lead to misunderstanding and conflict. The difficulty stems in part from varying predispositions which lead individuals from different cultures to expect different kinds of behaviors in a given situation, and to interpret the same behaviors differently. The particular experiences that persons from different cultural backgrounds bring into social interaction situations can thus create obstacles to effective and satisfactory communication.

Assumptions concerning the occurrence and meaning of a particular behavior depend upon the manner in which people characteristically perceive their social environment, that is, their "subjective culture" (Triandis et al., 1972). The subjective culture of a person from culture A is usually different from that of culture

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B. It follows, then, that the assumptions that the former makes concerning a certain behavior can be quite different from the assumptions of the latter about the same behavior. Thus, if in a particular intercultural interaction the behavior of the two parties is determined by their respective cultural norms, then differences in the norms themselves or the way in which they operate may result in the eventual breakdown of communication between the two parties.

Interpersonal differences which are caused by variations in cultural assumptions about, and interpretations of, behavior, can usually be understood in terms of the *attributions* that a person makes about the other's behavior.

Attributions are inferences about the causes of behavior. In their attempts to understand the world, individuals constantly make inferences about the causes of both their own and other persons' behavior. There may be several attributions which can be made in a particular situation. For example, a teacher who receives a gift from a student may react very differently if he or she perceives the student's action to indicate respect and appreciation for something special that he or she did, than if he or she believes it to be a bribe for more lenient grading.

Attributions depend on the norms, affect, roles, and consequences of actions seen as operating in a social situation (Triandis, 1975). Discrepancies in attributions may cause misunderstandings, interpersonal rejection, and low interpersonal attraction. These discrepancies are more likely and important when two individuals, P and O, belong to different cultures. When P and O are raised in environments which differ in norms, roles, attitudes, and values, they may develop patterns of attribution for social behavior that are different from each other. As a result, P and O may interpret a given behavior very differently.

If P is to understand O's behavior, he must analyze the social situation in a way that is similar to the manner in which O analyzes the situation. When P and O make similar attributions about O's behavior, we say that they have made *isomorphic attributions.* One of the main purposes of cross-cultural training is to help people from two cultures make more isomorphic attributions and teach them about each other's subjective culture.

Triandis (1975) suggests that teaching a person the subjective culture of another person with whom he is expected to interact will increase the ability of the former to reward or reinforce the other person, and will, thereby, reduce the possibility of interpersonal conflict. For example, Triandis et al. (1972) have reported that behaviors that are considered appropriate in an intimate context in one culture may only be considered appropriate in formal contexts in another. Culture training should help the individual make the appropriate attributions, and should result in an increased awareness of cultural details which can be important to the success of an intercultural encounter.

CULTURE TRAINING APPROACHES

There are several approaches through which individuals can be trained to interact effectively with persons from other cultures (Brislin and Pedersen, 1976; Albert and Triandis, in press). We will briefly mention three, and then discuss one of them in greater detail. The first method is experiential. Spending a great deal of time in a culture is a good way to learn about it. However, it is very expensive and time-consuming. For this reason experiential culture-training has often been confined to controlled settings, such as encounter and sensitivity training groups.

The second approach is through the use of behavior modification techniques. The individual is punished for behaving inappropriately or reinforced for behaving appropriately within the context of the culture. Albert and Triandis (in press) give the example of an individual from a culture where people shout going to a culture where people whisper. During training, the individual would be reprimanded when he shouted and complimented when he whispered. His behavior would thus be "shaped" according to the norms of the other culture. It should be noted that behavior modification techniques would probably be most effective with those behaviors which are primarily determined by habits.

The third approach emphasizes the informational aspect of training. It seeks to teach an individual how to use appropriate cues and make attributions commonly made by members of another culture. The *Culture Assimilator* is an instrument which has been developed for such attribution training. It uses a programmed learning approach which exposes persons to several hundred instances of intercultural misunderstanding in the form of stories. The trainees have to read each story or episode and select one of four attributions about the reasons for the misunderstanding. Three of the attributions provided with each episode are typically made by persons from the trainees' own culture, they are told that this is not the best choice, and are asked to try again. If, however, they select the attribution typically made by persons of the other culture, then they are praised and given additional information about the differences between the two cultures.

The three kinds of culture learning discussed above can be complementary since each offers something that the others do not. Behavior modification is costly and time-consuming because it requires that each behavior of the trainee be appropriately reinforced. In addition, it is a technique which focuses only on the modification of behavior, and does not deal with increasing the individual's knowledge and understanding of another culture. Experience training has the disadvantage of being time-consuming. Attribution training can teach a great deal of material about behavior in another culture in a relatively short period of time. However, it does not necessarily result in behavior changes (Weldon et al., 1975).

If one of the aims of culture learning is to increase understanding of, and provide information about another culture, then attribution training would seem to be especially useful, since it can expose a great number of persons to a variety of situations in which the norms and attributions made by persons from another culture may differ. Attribution training is designed to enable individuals to learn how to explain different interpersonal situations from the perspective of the members of another culture.

It is this attribution learning approach which we will discuss in some detail. We will first describe the process of constructing an assimilator – the instrument used in attribution training – and then we will examine attempts to measure its effectiveness as a cultural training device.

In this article the term assimilator, originally coined to label attribution training, will be used. However, we feel that we should caution the reader about the meaning of the term as it is used in the present context. Assimilator training does not require the trainee to give up his own culture and become like a member of the target culture (i.e., the culture which the individual is learning about). Rather, the purpose of the assimilator is to teach members of one culture to see particular situations from the perspective of members of the other culture. The basic idea behind the assimilator is that individuals can learn to make attributions which are appropriate for the environments in which they operate. Just as a bilingual can switch from one language to another, depending on the person he is addressing, so would the trainee be able to switch to a different "attribution system" when interacting with persons from another culture. This individual would continue making attributions determined by his own cultural background when dealing with persons with the same background.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CULTURE ASSIMILATOR

The development of an assimilator for interaction between members of two cultures is a multi-phase, complex process involving extensive field research in several of the stages. Since it is based on the notion that prolonged exposure to cognitions relevant to the target culture will help trainees make the appropriate attributions and communicate effectively (Foa and Foa, 1974), some type of content repetition is sought in the selection of episodes. The basic steps in the construction of the training material for the culture assimilator are the following:

A. Generation of episodes

There are four basic ways in which episodes are constructed: (1) A large number of members of the two cultures are asked to recall various instances when a misunderstanding or a conflict with a person from the other culture occurred. This process involves the use of *critical incidents* to obtain the necessary information for the understanding of the range of the intercultural conflict (for a more detailed description of the idea of the critical incident technique see Fiedler, Mitchell, and Triandis, 1971). The technique usually entails many in-depth personal interviews, the completion of questionnaires, and group discussions. Details concerning the particular circumstances surrounding the occurrence of conflict, the persons involved, and the feelings and thoughts of the informants are recorded carefully for use in the writing of the episodes. (2) Instances of misunderstanding can also be obtained by detailed observation of interactions between the two relevant groups by sensitive observers. (3) Potential intercultural conflict situations are extracted from ethnographic and other relevant material concerning the two cultures of interest. (4) In many cases, the subjective culture of the groups involved was investigated extensively in research conducted prior to the construction of the assimilator. Episodes are then constructed by the investigators on the basis of the information obtained in such previous studies. Thus, differences in norms, roles, and cultural values are presented through the construction of imaginary incidents.

Of the four approaches to episode construction described above, the first is by far the most important and the most heavily weighted one, since it directly links the two cultures to the construction of the assimilator. In many cases, however, subtle differences which are not easily recognized by informants, and which can result in interpersonal conflict, are introduced in the training materials through the other three procedures of incident development.

B. Construction of episodes

In most cases the incidents obtained from the informants are too complicated and full of irrelevant details to be used directly in the assimilator. The typical process of episode construction involves extensive modification of the original material. The modifications are usually directed by expert consultants, who are either members of the two cultures, or have extensive experience with them. The final episodes, as they are used in the next phase, are clear and straightforward representations of the material that is relevant to the original conflict situation. In many instances such modification of the original material is necessitated either because of the nature of the information provided by the informants, or because of the particular characteristics of the population for which the assimilator is being built. For example, a culture assimilator aimed at teaching a group of children should include episodes that are simple enough to be readily understood by them.

An example of an episode constructed for assimilators being developed for use by Latin American students in the U.S. and by their North American teachers is the following:

> One day Inez's friend, Kathy, was upset and crying because her mother had punished her at home. Inez felt very bad that Kathy was so sad, and tried to comfort her and calm her down. She also talked to her, and tried to make her forget her punishment. When Inez finally went to class, the teacher scolded her for being so late. Inez was very surprised.

This story is designed to focus the attention of the reader on the importance of friendship for the Latin-American student, and on the normative expectations of the North-American teacher concerning punctuality and school-related obligations.

C. Elicitation of attributions

The next step in the construction of the assimilator involves field research designed to elicit attributions from members of the two cultures concerning the behavior of the persons involved in the various episodes. An extremely important part of the construction procedure concerns the *types* of questions asked about the episodes. Through these questions, an assimilator may be directed toward emphasizing (a) the cognitive or informational aspects of the described conflict, (b) the affective responses of the actors, or

(c) the behavior of the actors. Usually, however, some form of balance is sought, and the various questions explore all of these aspects of the conflict situation. One way in which this can be done is by posing several questions about the same episode. Alternatively, different episodes may focus on different aspects of the intercultural interaction. An example from the North American-Latin American materials being developed is the following.

> Rocio was very happy with her teacher, Mrs. Winters. She thought that Mrs. Winters was good to her, helping her in her work, and paying a lot of attention to her. To thank Mrs. Winters, Rocio brought a piece of jewelry to class one day and offered it to her teacher as a gift. Mrs. Winters, however, did not accept the gift and gave it back to Rocio.
>
> Why did Mrs. Winters give the gift back to Rocio? (This question emphasizes the interpretation of the teacher's behavior.)
>
> How did Rocio feel when Mrs. Winters did not accept her gift? (This question emphasizes the affective responses of the student.)

Once the final group of episodes and questions has been developed, it is administered to a new group of informants from the cultures of interest. This time the informants are asked to read each episode carefully, and then attempt to answer each question as clearly as they can. In other words, the informants make attributions concerning the various aspects of the episode. These attributions are content analyzed, and a number of the attributions most frequently made by members of each culture are selected. A large sample of members of the two cultures under investigation are then asked to make judgments concerning the appropriateness or likelihood of each attribution as an explanation for what took place, and to select the most likely attribution for each story. Statistical analyses of these judgments and selections indicate which episodes yield significantly different attributions from persons of the two cultures.

The basic purpose of this phase, then, is to select those episodes and those attributions which clearly differentiate between members of the two cultures.

For an example of differences in attributions made by North Americans and Latin Americans, the reader is referred again to the above episode. Typical answers obtained from North Americans to the first question (Why did Mrs. Winters give the gift back to Rocio?) emphasized the possibility that the student had taken the jewelry from home without permission. However, typical responses from Latin Americans implied that the jewelry was a gift from the student's family. Thus, whereas the North Americans saw the student as acting alone – perhaps even against the wishes of his family – the Latin Americans saw the students as acting as a representative of the family.

D. The completed culture assimilator

The final assimilator contains only those episodes which adequately differentiate between two cultural groups in terms of causal attributions made by informants. A culture assimilator item contains a one-paragraph story, a question concerning some emotional or behavioral aspect of the episode, and four possible attributions. Three of these attributions are attributions commonly made by persons of the trainee's own culture, while the fourth is typically made by persons from the other culture.

The individual receiving the training is exposed to more than a hundred such items. In the beginning of the training, the individual is likely to select one of the attributions typically made by members of his own culture. In such a case he is told to reconsider the situation. The aim is to teach the trainee to select the attribution usually made by persons from the other culture. If the trainee chooses this latter attribution, he is praised, offered some additional feedback, and asked to go on to the next episode.

A complete example of a culture assimilator item taken from materials designed to train North American teachers to better understand the cultural background of Latin American students in U.S. schools is presented below.

Mr. Smith was a sixth grade teacher. He was a good teacher and was liked by his students. He usually got along well with everybody and considered himself good at talking to them in a friendly manner. One day, during class, Mr. Smith was talking to various students about the social studies topic for that day. Among the students to whom he talked was Nuria, a Spanish-speaking girl. When he spoke to her, Nuria only lowered her head and looked down at the floor without saying a word.

Why did Nuria lower her head?

1. Nuria was not at all interested in what Mr. Smith was saying.
2. Nuria was showing her respect for Mr. Smith.
3. Nuria has not done her homework and felt ashamed.
4. Nuria felt that she was being reprimanded for something she had done.

Once the trainee selects one of the four responses, he is directed to another page in the manual where he is told either to make another selection (if he selects numbers 1, 3, or 4 in this case), or that he selected the appropriate response (number 2). In the latter case he is told that in Latin American cultures teachers are highly respected and students are expected to show this respect. One of the major ways in which individuals show respect towards figures of authority is by lowering their head and not looking the other person in the eye.

AVAILABLE CULTURE ASSIMILATORS

Several assimilators have been constructed over the past few years. While there were some differences in the procedures utilized to construct them, the basic steps outlined above were similar. Some of the culture assimilators that are available today are for Arab countries (Symonds et al., 1966), Iran (Chemers and Chemers, 1967), Honduras (Symonds et al., 1967), Greece (Mitchell et al., 1969), Thailand (Foa et al., 1967), as well as for Black-White interaction (Slobodin et al., 1972; Clay et al., 1973). As previously mentioned, an assimilator for interaction between North American teachers and Latin American students is currently under construction. The differences among these culture assimilators reflect not only the progress made in the construction procedure, but also differences in the focus of the instrument. Assimilators may differ substantively depending upon the particular reason for which they are constructed.

EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CULTURE ASSIMILATOR

This technique of teaching individuals about the interpretations of behavior made by persons from another culture with whom they interact has some face validity and ought to have some effect on cross-cultural interactions. The critical question is, what effects does attribution training have?

As Brislin and Pedersen (1976) have noted, many studies of the effectiveness of culture training programs have focused on the culture assimilator technique. There have been several studies of the effectiveness of various assimilators. Since most of them have been discussed by Fiedler, Mitchell, and Triandis (1971), they will not be reviewed in detail here. These authors report studies of training with the Honduras, Thai and Greek Assimilators. They report that Americans who received assimilator training prior to going to Honduras were better adjusted and performed their work better than untrained persons. Worchel and Mitchell (1970) found that persons trained with the Thai assimilator gave more favorable self-reports concerning their contacts with members of Thai culture and their work in Thailand than did untrained persons.

Fiedler et al. (1971) summarize as follows findings from studies using the Greek assimilator: "The assimilator-trained Ss . . . saw themselves as significantly better adjusted and as having significantly better interpersonal relations and higher productivity than Ss who has received no training" (p. 102). Several validation studies have also been reviewed by Mitchell, Dossett, Fiedler, and Triandis (1972), and by Foa and Foa (1974).

One of the most informative recent studies of the effects of culture training using the assimilator technique is by Weldon, Carlston, Rissman, Slobodin, and Triandis (1975). The authors report the results of a laboratory study which employed an assimilator designed to train whites to interact with blacks. Assimilator-trained and untrained white subjects responded to a large number of attributional, attitudinal, intercultural sensitivity, and personality questionnaires, and were also given the chance to interact with a black person (confederate) on an experimental task (operating toy cars on a track). The investigation indicated that trained participants, when compared with untrained ones, made attributions which were more similar to those made by members of the target culture (blacks).

Participants in the study were asked to read episodes in which persons differing in race and status were involved in some kind of disagreement. The participants were then asked to indicate the causes of the actors' behavior in the episode. It was hypothesized that attribution training would lead participants to view the behavior of the persons in the episode as intentional rather than viewing it simply as habitual or impulsive behavior. It was also expected that trained participants would perceive the actors' behaviors as caused by external variables (such as norms, expectations of reward, and other consequences of action), rather than by internal ones (such as habits, impulses, attitudes, etc.)[1]. The results of the study supported the first hypothesis, but failed to support the second one. The study indicated that attribution training using the culture assimilator.results in cognitive and attributional changes. The intercultural sensitivity of the trained subjects increased following the training procedure. In other words, there was evidence that trained subjects were able to generalize the information which they received during training to other, similar situations.

Other results of the study showed that trained participants refused to engage in racial stereotyping more than the untrained ones. In addition, it was found that trained participants perceived the attitudes of blacks and whites involved in the conflict episodes as more positive than did untrained participants.

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[1] These predictions follow from attribution theory, as reviewed by Triandis (1975). Attribution theory posits that people view themselves in certain ways. For instance, people view their behavior as caused by external factors rather than by internal traits. Trainees receiving culture assimilators should learn to view others in the same way those other people view themselves. Thus these predictions follow from the general hypothesis that trainees should learn how people in other cultures view their own behavior.

Several other findings are of interest in discussing the possible effect of assimilator training. For example, racial attitudes did not change as a function of the training process. In addition, the effects of culture training with the assimilator did not carry over into the behavioral domain. Thus, there were no differences in the task performance of trained and untrained subjects. In addition, when the black confederates (who did not know which participants had received training), rated the participants on the basis of whom they preferred to work with, they actually chose the untrained white participants in one of the conditions. Further examination of the results suggested that trained participants suffered "evaluation apprehension" and, consequently, behaved in a "frozen" way. That is, participants were so anxious to do well following several hours of training that they did not behave in a "natural" manner. This led the black confederates to prefer untrained participants. The authors suggested that the lack of observed behavioral changes may have also been due to the possibility that the effects of training may need time to become integrated into the individuals' repertoire of behaviors. Consequently, future attempts to measure the effects of the training should allow time for such integration.

The tentative conclusion that can be drawn from all relevant field and laboratory studies to date is that while it is clear that trainees learn how to make more appropriate attributions in the different cultural settings, the results concerning behavioral change are equivocal. More systematic research is indicated. While specific hypotheses concerning the effects of assimilator training may be better tested in laboratory situations, field studies may be even more important, as they involve more relevant situations, often free of the demand characteristics that plague laboratory investigations. It is, after all, for field situational contexts that assimilators are constructed in the first place. Their true effectiveness will also have its final and most important test in such field settings.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

There are many issues concerning the culture assimilator notion still left unexplored. Future research on the assimilator can proceed in several different directions. One issue of general interest concerns the range of problems to which the assimilator can be applied. That range appears to be rather large. The assimilator might potentially prove useful in many situations in which conflict could develop because of the crossing of cultural boundaries. Within cultures, assimilators could be used to inform persons of the other's point of view in interpersonal interactions. In such cases, assimilators would focus on particular situations, such as marital conflicts, school-related issues, labor-management negotiations, and so on. It is not very difficult to see how attribution training can be potentially used in practically every area which involves differential perceptions of the parties involved. It might be useful for future research to delineate more precisely the kinds of problems for which this approach might be relatively ineffective as well as those for which it might be particularly effective.

Despite its potentially wide applicability, relatively few assimilators have been developed so far. This might reflect a general lack of interest in, and awareness of the importance of, cultural training. Furthermore, despite the relative ease of administration of the instrument, its construction is a highly complex and demanding process.

A potential difficulty in assessing the effects and usefulness of the assimilator approach should be mentioned. It is easy to assume that this kind of instrument teaches all aspects of culture. In this case, the expectations which researchers and trainers would have of the culture assimilator would be truly grandiose. It is important to remember that each assimilator is usually built with a specific purpose in mind, in order to meet a particular need, and thus is limited in its scope. The overestimation of the effectiveness of the assimilator has often carried over into validation studies. In many such studies a very large number of indices were used to assess its effectiveness. In a number of these cases it was not always clear why the dependent measures should be associated at all with the effectiveness of the training materials. It should be understood that the theoretical framework within which an assimilator's effectiveness is assessed is dependent upon the basic purpose and aim of the particular instrument. Furthermore, it is important to realize the importance of this problem both from a research and an applied perspective. An assimilator that was built to improve teacher-student intercultural interaction, for instance, should not necessarily be expected to provide complete information on either culture, or even on many aspects of each culture that are not relevant to school situation.

An issue, then, which can be fruitfully addressed by research is the extent to which the assimilator provides cultural information which can be generalized to other settings. For example, can an assimilator developed to teach students from one culture (i.e., Latin American culture) about the culture of their teachers (i.e., American culture), be useful in training Latin American workers, housewives, teachers, etc. about American culture? In other words, to what extent are the effects of the training situation-specific, and to what extent can the materials be generalized to other situations?

Another issue which deserves attention is the relationship between the orientation of a given culture and the empirical approach to training which the assimilator employs. Persons who take the assimilator training supposedly learn to extrapolate from very specific episodes some basic dimensions of the culture to which they are exposed. This inductive approach might be more compatible with some cultures than with others. Comparison of the inductive and the deductive approaches with different populations might yield some interesting information about the relationship between methods of teaching culture, and cultural and individual learning patterns.

Research is needed in addition on specific factors concerning the administration of the different types of assimilators, the amount of time needed for the integration of the materials by the trainees, and other issues relevant to the format and utilization of the materials. For example, in some cases it may be more effective to administer the assimilator training following the first intercultural interaction, rather than prior to it. On the other hand, if a great deal of time is necessary for the integration of the material, it may be more beneficial to administer the training procedure before the intercultural interaction. Furthermore, some types of assimilators may be more effective when administered before the intercultural interaction, while others will be more effective when administered after the interaction. These are obviously very complex questions which would benefit from additional investigation.

Another important area for future research suggested by Albert and Triandis (in press) concerns the comparison of culture assimilators with other culture-training techniques and the combination of several culture-training approaches. Intuitively, it appears likely that the effectiveness of the assimilator will increase if its administration is supplemented by additional techniques emphasizing behavioral or affective responses. This is suggested by some of the results reported by Weldon et al. (1975) in their laboratory test of the effects of culture assimilator training. That study revealed significant cognitive-attributional changes following culture training, but failed to find any behavioral or attitudinal changes. The combination of cognitive training with some form of affective and behavioral training should increase the range of the effects of the former. Recent theories of social behavior (cf. Triandis, 1975) suggest that social behavior is a function of both intentions and habits. Thus, certain conflict behaviors occurring during intercultural interactions may benefit from a form of habit-oriented behavioral training. Hence it may well be that whereas in some situations attributional training is most effective, in others behavioral training might be more suitable. In still other situations, a combination of approaches may be ideal.

Finally, a consideration of the limitations of culture assimilator training is an important issue which has not received a great deal of attention. Some possible limitations of the assimilator technique may include the following: (a) episodes may cover only some of the possible sources of conflict and misunderstanding; (b) the format may not lend itself to teaching subtle nonverbal cues; (c) it is possible that some attributions obtained from respondents in the construction of the materials may not reflect underlying motives and rules of behavior, but may concentrate on more obvious aspects of the situation. This may be due to the inability of the informants to verbalize certain subtle cultural themes; and (d) it is well known that some cross-cultural interactions involve very complex attributional processes. Sometimes, the reasons for the occurrence of a particular behavior are rather vague. In highly differentiated cultures, attributions may be a function of a number of variables (such as norms, roles, affect, consequences of actions and their evaluations, cf. Triandis, 1975). In these cases it is questionable whether the relatively simple episodes contained in the assimilator can deal realistically with the issues. An approach to this problem would be to deal with each variable separately in a different episode. The question, however, becomes whether this would adequately describe the target culture to the trainee. Once again, these are problems which merit more empirical investigation.

There are, on the other hand, a number of distinct advantages to this approach. Among these are the following: (a) this approach exposes individuals to a very wide range of situations and behaviors. As such it has the potential for teaching many different aspects of culture, taking into account many different types of situational factors; (b) its coverage of material can be extensive or it can focus more on certain aspects of the culture. It can be, and often is, tailor-made for the particular needs of users; (c) it requires few resources for its administration, since it involves only the use of a booklet containing the episode; (d) it has flexibility as a teaching device, because it can be administered individually or in groups, at any time, in a variety of settings; (e) it can be easily combined with other approaches to culture training; (f) research undertaken so far on its effectiveness points to some possible beneficial effects of this form of training. As such research continues, we will be better able to determine the form and extent of its impact on culture learning.

At present, the assimilator might be viewed as a culture sensitization technique which holds some promise for use in a variety of settings.

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