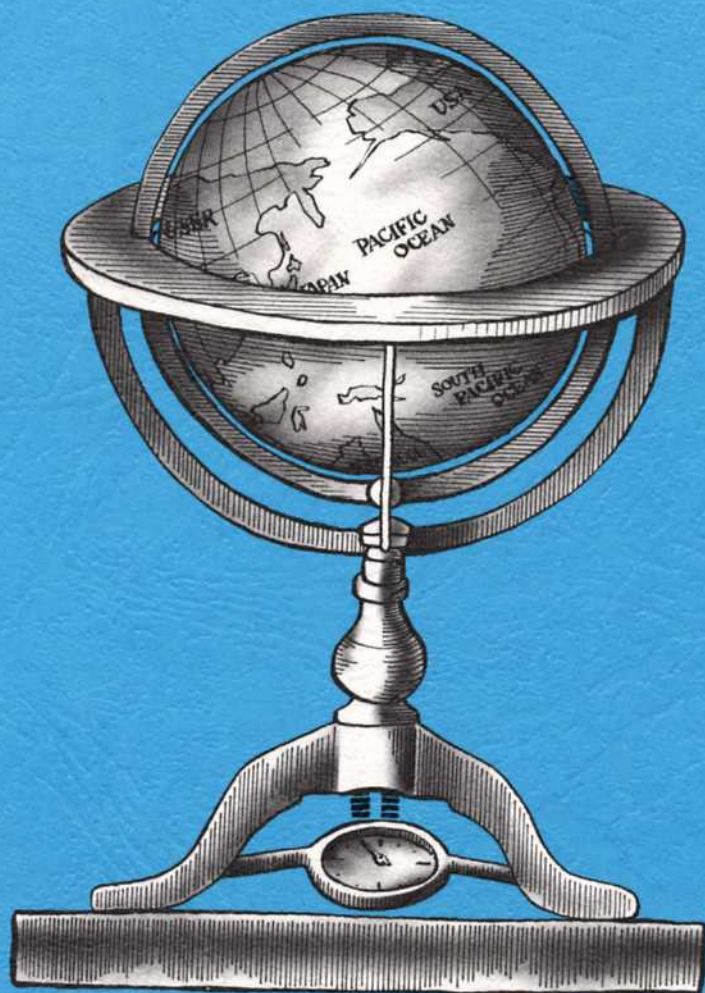


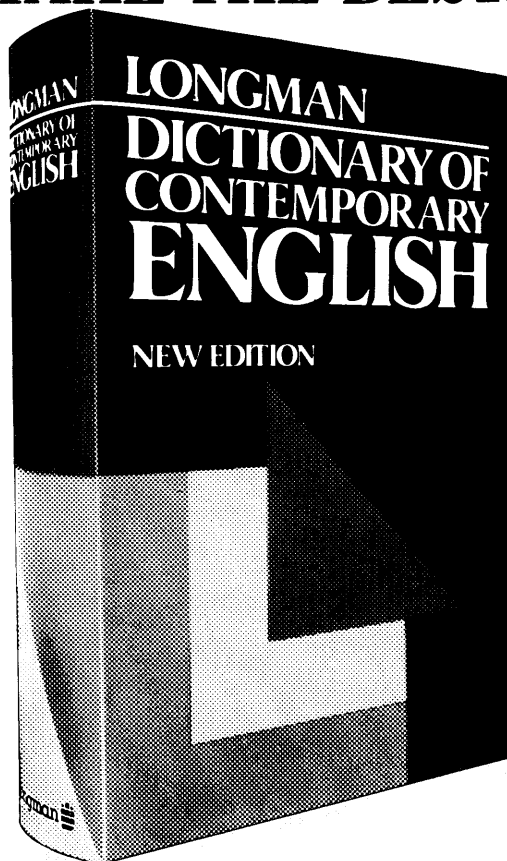
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Volume XV, Number 2, Spring 1989

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Cross Currents is a semi-annual journal published by the Language Institute of Japan in an effort to contribute to an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas within the areas of communication, language skills acquisition and instruction, and cross-cultural training and learning. We are especially interested in articles on 1) Language teaching and learning, particularly regarding English as a Second/Foreign Language and English as an International Language, 2) Language teaching and learning as they apply in Japan, and 3) Cross-cultural communication issues. We also welcome reviews of recently published books in these areas.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOL. XV, No. 2, Spring 1989

SUMMARIES OF THE ARTICLES	iv
ABOUT THIS ISSUE	vii
ARTICLES	
In Praise of Intellectual Obscenity or "The Confessions of an Embarrassed Eclectic" <i>Robert O'Neill</i>	1
Notional Curriculum in an Intensive Course <i>Robert Ruud</i>	11
Don't Sell Short the Exposition Pattern of Classical Rhetoric <i>William West</i>	25
Teaching Writing and Zen: A Curious Parallel <i>Phillip Jay Lewitt</i>	31
Considerations for Japanese EFL Learners Prior to Intensive ESL Programs in the United States: Three Case Studies in Awareness and Motivation <i>Richard Stone</i>	39
BRIGHT IDEA	
Turning "English Conversation" into Communication <i>Mary E. Whitsell</i>	51
BOOK REVIEWS	
Tony Lynch, <i>Study Listening: Understanding Lectures and Talks in English</i> (<i>Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto</i>)	61
Judy Garton-Sprenger and Simon Greenall, <i>BBC Beginners' English: Stage One Student's Book</i> (<i>Keith Hoy</i>)	63
PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED	65
ANNOUNCEMENTS	68

Summaries of the Articles

In Praise of Intellectual Obscenity or "The Confessions of an Embarrassed Eclectic"

Robert O'Neill

Teachers and researchers are always looking for a theory to explain what happens in the classroom. This article examines Structuralism, Audiolingualism, Krashen's Input Hypothesis, the Notional-Functional Syllabus, and Discourse Analysis, and finds each too limited in its ability to describe language teaching and learning. In the end, O'Neill decides that he can best be described as an eclectic.

Notional Curriculum in an Intensive Course

Robert Ruud

The Language Institute of Japan's Residential Business Communication Program is a four-week intensive, residential, total-immersion, English-only course for business people which has existed for nearly twenty years. In this article, the author traces the history of the LIOJ curriculum and describes it as it exists today. Ruud describes the original "notional" idea behind LIOJ and how it has adapted to this specific program.

Don't Sell Short the Exposition Pattern of Classical Rhetoric

William West

Many English instructors look down on the traditional 5-division pattern of expository composition, preferring to permit students to ramble in a free, serendipitous manner. This article self-consciously teaches the elements of the 5-division form as it models the pattern and demonstrates its effectiveness. It specifically examines the unique backgrounds of trainees at the *Gai Mu Sho Ken Shu Jo* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Service Training Institute) and contrasts Eastern and Western rhetorical patterns.

Teaching Writing and Zen: A Curious Parallel

Phillip Jay Lewitt

In this article, the author examines, and attempts to explain, a perceived relationship between the teaching methods of traditional Zen Buddhism and the teaching methods of process-writing English composition. Lewitt's point of view incorporates experience as a participant-researcher who has practiced as a Zen monk, and as a university-level composition instructor.

Considerations for Japanese EFL Learners Prior to Intensive ESL Programs in the United States: Three Case Studies in Awareness and Motivation

Richard Stone

This article presents three case study profiles of Japanese students who have completed university-affiliated, intensive English language programs and who represent the increasing number of Japanese who are coming to the United States to study. The author claims that prospective Japanese students would benefit from a greater awareness of what to expect from ESL programs and an examination of their attitudes, motivations, and learning styles. In addition, Stone offers comments and advice for future Japanese ESL students to consider in order to help them make more informed decisions.

Bright Idea

Turning "English Conversation" into Communication

Mary E. Whitsell

This Bright Idea looks at ways to help Japanese students communicate *with* rather than talk *at* people from other countries, on the basis of mutual understanding and sharing of information. There are a series of exercises designed to help students identify and talk about generalizations or stereotypes they have about foreign residents in Japan, and to help them distinguish between conversational themes appropriate when talking to tourists in Japan and those more suited to foreign residents in Japan. In addition, there are several ideas and a number of exercises on how to help students engage in co-responsive conversations in English, as opposed to simple question-answer "conversations."

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

In this issue, we are pleased to present a number of fine articles dealing with different approaches to English language teaching and writing. In addition, in keeping with our Japanese interests, we have included an article which profiles Japanese students studying abroad, and a Bright Idea which gives practical suggestions on how students in Japan can make conversation truly communicative.

"In Praise of Intellectual Obscenity or 'The Confessions of an Embarrassed Eclectic'" by Robert O'Neill is a fascinating look at the history of English language teaching in general and specifically at the issue of eclecticism. It is also a biting polemic against theoreticians who profess to have discovered the "truth" about how language should be taught.

Robert Ruud, in "Notional Curriculum in an Intensive Course," deals with one of the issues brought up by O'Neill, that of functional-notionalism. He gives an in-depth account of how a notional approach to language teaching has been applied, both in theory and in practice, in the highly successful, intensive, English-only course for business people at the Language Institute of Japan.

"Don't Sell Short the Exposition Pattern of Classical Rhetoric" by William West and "Teaching Writing and Zen: A Curious Parallel" by Phillip Jay Lewitt are insightful articles which both address the issue of teaching writing in English, but from opposing points of view. The former demonstrates and models the effectiveness of the traditional expository pattern, while the latter propounds the notion that writing is an inner process in which students should be allowed creative freedom to develop.

For those readers interested in the ever increasing flow of Japanese students to U.S. colleges to take part in intensive ESL programs, "Considerations for Japanese EFL Learners Prior to Intensive ESL Programs in the United States" by Richard Stone offers some valuable advice. Three case study profiles provide the basis for an examination of how attitudes, motivations, and learning styles affect the success of such students.

Our Bright Idea, "Turning 'English Conversation' into Communication" by Mary E. Whitsell provides suggestions on how to help Japanese students communicate in English *with* people from other countries, rather than just talking *at* them, as well as identifying many common stereotypes that the Japanese often hold in regard to foreigners.

Finally, this issue includes two book reviews: *Study Listening* by Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto and *BBC Beginners' English* by Keith Hoy.

This will also be the last issue for our departing Editor, Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto. We at *Cross Currents* would like to take this opportunity to thank Barbara for her dedication and hard work throughout her editorship and wish her well in her future endeavors.

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New books for teachers

Understanding Research in Second Language Learning

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James Dean Brown

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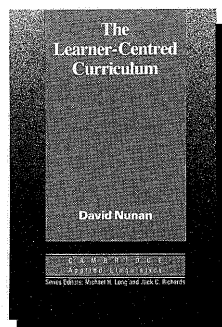
Lyle F. Bachman, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

New Directions in Language Teaching **The Learner-Centred Curriculum**

David Nunan

Traditionally, the curriculum has been regarded as the statement of what *should* be done in a course of study. This book takes as its starting point what *is* done by language teachers in their classes. The concept of a negotiated model is developed, in which the curriculum is arrived at collaboratively between teachers and learners.

The author looks at the curriculum from the teacher's perspective, and reports on what teachers focus on in the planning, implementation and evaluation of language courses.



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In Praise of Intellectual Obscurity or "The Confessions of an Embarrassed Eclectic"

Robert O'Neill

I am anxious, insecure, and always afraid of being wrong. What is worse, I am always afraid that the person who says I am wrong is better than I am. ...That is why I like to write for the newspapers, to reread myself the next day, and to read the reactions of others. A difficult game, because it does not always consist of being reassured when you meet with agreement and having doubts when you are faced with dissent. Sometimes you have to follow the opposite course: distrust agreement and find in dissent the confirmation of your own intuitions. There is no rule; there is only the risk of contradiction.

Umberto Eco — *Travels in Hyper-reality*

I, too, am anxious and insecure. I suspect that this is a healthy state to be in, particularly today. As they say in Northern Ireland, "Anyone who isn't confused doesn't know what is going on here!"

One of the things I am anxious and insecure about is the theoretical basis of the language materials I write and the *raison d'être* for the things I do when I teach. A theory I could believe in—a set of goals—some kind of "scientific assurance" that the methods and techniques I am using are at least credible—any of these things would be more than welcome. To put it another way, perhaps the reason I need a theory—and spend so much time looking for one—is not really to tell me what to do, but rather to help me make sense of what happens when I do it.

Robert O'Neill is author of *Kernel Series*, *English in Situations*, and *Lost Secret*. He has been active in the ESL field for the past thirty years as a teacher.

When I was teaching back in the 60s, the theory or approach which was most commonly used to justify what happened was something called "structuralism." Or rather, it is the term most commonly used to describe today what language teachers thought they were doing or were supposed to be doing then. I don't think this term is really appropriate at all, but I shall come back to that later.

Today, as we crawl or stumble towards the 21st Century, there is a healthy variety of theory and method in language teaching, far more than there was 20 or 30 years ago, or probably at any time in the past. Despite this—or perhaps because of it—few teachers are prepared to teach totally within the confines of a particular method or theory. Even teachers who go through a period of almost religious dedication to the Silent Way usually emerge at the end no doubt wiser and better for the experience but hardly rigorous in its application. To some observers this is even more deplorable than those teachers who profess to disdain all formal theory and method.

Stephen Krashen is reported to have described Eclecticism as an "intellectual obscenity"—and yet it seems that the term "eclectic" is the only adjective that can describe with any accuracy the intellectual basis of language teaching in the late 80s. Am I reflecting only my own skepticism towards theories which claim to have an empirical and scientific basis when I say that this kind of eclecticism is not necessarily unprincipled opportunism? Neither do I think it is a hostility to theory as such, although I believe I detect among many teachers who care and think about what they do a current of distrust towards theorists who are always eager to tell us what we should be doing but cannot themselves be lured into the classroom or induced to undergo what Karl Popper refers to in another context as a "detailed confrontation with reality." Can I, I wonder, really claim that it is this kind of confrontation which ordinary language teachers accept as an ordinary part of their ordinary working lives which leads to this eclecticism?

If there is any one particular label that teachers use today to describe their approach more than any other, it is probably the label "communicative." This however, usually turns out to be more eclectic—and often even more unprincipled—than those who are content to be abused as eclectics. What, indeed, does the term "communicative" mean? To borrow Chris Brumfit's

remarks about humanism and his reluctance to use that term, if some teachers say they teach “communicatively”, where are the teachers who would say they do so “uncommunicatively?”

At a conference in Paris, John Soares recently reported the remark of a young teacher who told him, “I never use grammar. I teach communicatively.” “That,” as John added, “was the end of the conversation. There was nothing either of us could say.” The term is meaningless. Everybody who thinks seriously about their own teaching would claim they were teaching students to “communicate.” And so, probably, would just about every teacher who cannot be bothered to think at all. Teachers who use Grammar-Translation exclusively would—and did—claim that this is the only way their students can learn to communicate. Teachers frozen in the culture and attitudes of behaviouristic Audio-lingualism and Pattern Practice Drills no doubt would claim that it is only through such “habit-forming” that their students can “be free to think not about the structure or the mechanics of the message, but about the message itself.” This is what the most eminent American linguist and grammarian of his time, Charles Fries, claimed in the preface to *English Pattern Drills* thirty years ago. If this is true, is it not “communicative” to teach through Pattern Drills? If it is argued that the claim is patently untrue, and that therefore Pattern Practice and the so-called “structuralism” that underlies it cannot be called communicative, then where is the proof that some other “communicative” approach leads to true competence in a foreign language?

There is, of course, one person at least who claims such empirical evidence for his theories: Stephen Krashen. The classic “hard” version of his theory is that there is one way and one way only in which people acquire a foreign language, and that is through optimal comprehensible input. Grammar is either useless or definitely harmful. There is no evidence whatsoever that all the role-plays, open-ended exercises, discussion, question-answering, and all the other things that teachers employ to encourage students to use what they understand has the slightest effect on learning. The only thing that helps is lots and lots and lots and more and more “comprehensible input” which to be “optimal” should always be a little above the learner’s present stage of competence but never beyond her or his capacity to get the general sense.

Personally, I have not seen much evidence that teachers are willing or able to use the classic, hard version of this theory. If there is one common characteristic among self-styled “communicative” teachers, it seems to be a reluctance to speak to the class at all, let alone read aloud to them, or use their own voices and undoubtedly superior pronunciation of the foreign language so that students can from time to time actually hear a reasonably natural model of the language they are learning. The only voices most students in many of these “communicative” classrooms are likely to hear are their own, or the equally defective model of the person sitting next to them. Laudable, you might argue. At least students are getting plenty of practice, and I, unlike Krashen, would be the last to argue that this practice is not extremely useful, even essential. However, as much as I disagree with Krashen that “optimal input” is the *only* path towards acquisition, I happen to agree very much with him about the need for “input” itself. I mean not only “text” in textbooks but the informal type that students get when they hear the teacher regularly speaking in short but complete units of discourse. I believe you give valuable—no, essential—input when you describe to the class what you did last weekend or when you talk about the place you were born and where you grew up before you ask the class to do the same thing. I think of all the informal, brief “spoken paragraphs” which teachers can use as models for the students’ own production as essential to language teaching, and I am constantly astounded when I see teachers refusing to do this because they associate it with being “teacher-centred.” This certainly makes me very much an eclectic. Here I am borrowing or welcoming one aspect of a dominant and well-articulated contemporary theory of language-teaching as argued by one of the most polished, persuasive, and witty speakers of his time, and yet rejecting the central thesis itself—that it is only through such comprehensible input that we can acquire a foreign language.

Before I give my reasons for this “unprincipled position,” let me turn briefly in the one other direction today that might seem to offer guidance and salvation, if not of my soul, at least of my desire to be regarded as something more than an unprincipled opportunist. This is a turn in the direction from which the term “communicatively” came in the first place. It is a turn in the direction of the Functional-Notional approach. It is easy for anyone

to claim that they are being “communicative,” but something quite different to claim that you are teaching the kind of language that can be shown to be compatible with students’ true “needs.”

There is nothing wrong about thinking in the communicative categories we find in a list of functions. There is nothing wrong in locating the language we teach in contexts and examples we think are most likely to be useful to those we teach. There is nothing wrong, that is, in applying the common sense to language teaching that David Wilkins is now justly famous for in his *Notional Syllabuses* (Oxford University Press, 1976). The only thing that is wrong with this is to describe it as a syllabus. Perhaps it depends on what we mean by a “syllabus.” Is a syllabus a list of categories it is advisable or essential to include *among a number of other elements*? Or does it also include within it some idea of a progression, a series of steps that not only helps define a system but gives us some *insight into the inner workings* of that system?

In the second sense, there is little in anything written about Functions and Notions, even in Wilkins’ own book, which can be called a syllabus. Who today would want to deny that it is useless to teach language only as a series of “structures” and to show no interest in the ways, meanings, and situations with which those structures are most commonly associated? But who would seriously claim that pointing to the uses we make of language is the same thing as explaining how we come to use it creatively, independently, and adaptively for our own personal uses? If I tell you that “should” is used, among other things, to give advice in English, have I no need also to help you adapt that knowledge so that you can say the things you personally want to say? Can you do this without insight into “should” as a structure; for example, into how questions are formed, what kind of verb comes after it, how to make the negative, etc.? And if I decide that this, too, is an essential aspect of communication, how do I go about staging and arranging that knowledge so that you can acquire it? Here, functional-notional syllabuses give us no help at all. Such “syllabuses” are not and do not pretend to be a theory of language use or its acquisition. A theory of language that tells us something about the purposes we use language for, but which tells us nothing about how we learn to use it for those purposes in the first place, is no theory of language at all. It may be useful—even essential—for us to recognise such functional categories, but we cannot use them

as our sole guide in deciding when, where, and with what other elements to introduce particular examples of language use.

What I am saying, in short, is this: how we help students develop a variety of insights into the structure of a language is still enormously important and always will be. Unless we do this, everything else we do is simply a message scrawled on the sand, waiting for the next tide to come in and wash it away. Does this make me a structuralist? I am not sure. It is now that I have to come back full-circle to my statement at the beginning: the term "structuralism" has never seemed adequate even to describe what teachers such as myself thought we were doing back in the mid 60s, when structure drills and structural syllabuses were all the rage.

Even then, there was an attempt to relate form to function and meaning. There was, however, no principled description of that relationship, no sets and sub-sets of the primary functions of language use that we should be taking into account as we constructed our syllabuses. All too often those syllabuses themselves, though called "structural" were not really that at all. Structuralism, in its philosophical or sociological sense, is concerned not only with the bare structure of whatever phenomenon it is investigating, but also and primarily with the ways that structure *can affect and even constitute meaning*. In some of the more radical structuralist approaches to literary criticism, the structure is held to be an essential component of that meaning. It dominates not only what we try to express, but also the way we understand what others tell us. How, then, can the term "structuralist" be used to describe the type of syllabus that was associated with Pattern Practice and "habit-formation?" Too often it seemed to have no interest in meaning or even a recognition that it existed. Vocabulary learning was neglected, even decried. Attempts to explain grammar (and thus to give some formal guidance as to how to construct one's own personal utterances—an essential aspect of language use) were never encouraged and sometimes officially prohibited. I do not remember the term "structuralist" being used very much at the time to describe these ideas, although the term "structure" was certainly common enough. A far better term to use retrospectively is "formalist." The term is borrowed from the history of art, where it describes certain types of painting that simply arrange forms but make no attempt to give the arrangements any meaning.

The only other description of such syllabuses might be "structure-based." However, I reject this. I do so because I believe that even today, our syllabuses must be based—*among other things*—on structures. That, however, does not mean the structures can be divorced from their principal uses. When, for example, we teach things like the Present Progressive, we have to show through context and situation how we use this to give warnings (*Look out! Those men are fighting!*), or to get attention to something in the present we regard as important and worth mentioning (*Hey, buddy! You're standing on my foot!*).

Even this is not enough. We have all become more aware in the last twenty years or so of units beyond the sentence—of things referred to today as cohesion and coherence. It is easier to label them than it is to develop effective strategies of helping learners to organise their spoken and written language coherently and cohesively. And it is painfully obvious that lists of functions and notions, as useful as they are in referring to units at and below the sentence level, tell us little or nothing about the larger units of language. Perhaps the only discipline that has ever attempted seriously, not only to define these larger units, but also to come to terms with teaching them, is the now forgotten Art of Rhetoric. We desperately need a modern equivalent of it, and it would seem that the only thing Discourse Analysis has yet delivered is an even more elaborate meta-language for referring to the phenomenon.

Any principled attempt to teach language must take all these things into account. It is as short-sighted and wrong to focus only on the functions and notions we express through language as it is to concentrate solely on the formal means we employ when we do so. What is more, this principled approach involves a series of decisions which go beyond any single theory of language use or acquisition that we have available today. Functional-notionalism has brought us further, but can all too easily become an intellectual dead-end if it is the only guide we use. This, by the way, is recognised nowhere more clearly than in the writings of David Wilkins himself. In a paper read at the Royal Society of Arts' seminar in 1976 and later published in *English For Specific Purposes* (Modern English Publications, 1977), he stated, "It is essential for the learner to achieve some degree of generalisation in what he has learned, and one of the essential elements of generalisation, and I cannot stress too much, is the grammar of the language itself."

This, however, raises another, deeper issue. What are the teaching strategies most likely to be effective in helping learners to “generalise?” This has been a central issue in language teaching for centuries, and nothing that has been said in all the seminars on Functional-Notional syllabuses, Discourse Analysis, or anywhere else has really brought us much further. We are left with only the realisation that Formal Knowledge of a language (for example, verbal knowledge of rules) is totally different from, and often has little or no effect on Performance Knowledge—that vast, little-known area of sub-verbal and non-verbal insights that gives us an instinct for when something is right or wrong.

Formal knowledge of grammar may be useful for some, but not for all, and even for those for whom it is useful, even the best rules can only be regarded as metaphors. They are not the same at all as the knowledge we actually possess which enables us to speak grammatically, but are, at times, crude attempts to picture and represent that knowledge.

Krashen’s theory of “optimal-input” is extremely useful here, even though it is undoubtedly incomplete and certainly flawed as a universal account of the way people acquire language. Interestingly enough, flawed, imperfect ideas like Krashen’s can lead to far more progress than those with greater verisimilitude. People like Krashen with their immense persuasiveness can move us to try out ideas which we first regard as improbable. In practice, we soon become aware not only of the limits of such ideas but also of how they can be used together with other ideas. Krashen’s emphasis on input and content came at a moment when teachers seemed (and still seem) terrified of giving any meaningful input at all, when they were afraid of being called “teacher-centred” or something else equally simplistic and crude. Being a good teacher consists of much more than being or not being student-centred. It is a matter of getting students to confront in a mature way aspects of what they are trying to learn which they would never confront or learn at all without direct intervention at critical moments by the teacher. This intervention may appear at times to a partial or native observer as very “teacher-centred.” If “teacher-centred” means the teacher taking control of a lesson at critical stages of its development, of assuming responsibility at times not only for what students do successfully, but for what they fail to do, and trying to correct it—forcibly and with authority if need be—then all of us must be very teacher-centred at times.

But where has all this led me—and where does it leave me now? As far as I can see in the light of my imperfect experience and even more imperfect method of interpreting it, I still have only two choices.

One of these choices is to describe myself perhaps as a “neo-structuralist.” It is after all far easier to adapt functions and notions to structures, to focus on structures with clear reference to their functions and uses in every day communication than it is to base teaching on functions and notions alone. If functional-notional teaching means ignoring the structural backbone we need to express anything at all, then I want none of it. If, on the other hand, it means combining functions and notions with the structural building blocks of language, then I might as well come clean about what I am doing. For this, the term “neo-structuralist” is as good as any.

However, if I do this, those who today still use the term “structuralism” with vigour and force in other fields like literary-criticism will no doubt accuse me of lack of rigour. And they will be right. My job as a teacher and a writer is not to describe with detachment the daily events I am involved in for they often have a complexity that defies the categories of any theory I know.

I cannot accept Krashen’s empirical proofs because I suspect that the instruments used to collect the proof are very narrow. There seems to me something wrong about regarding as “facts” only those things which our imperfect empirical tools are capable of recording or analysing. I am aware, of course, that this argument could be used to justify a belief in spiritualism and little green men on the moon. But then I am not interested in communicating with my dead relatives or visiting that distant sphere.

What I am interested in is the banal but forceful reality of the young Japanese student I give private lessons to twice a week here in Brighton, and in how I can justify to myself the modest fee I am charging. How can I be sure that what I do and say and elicit from her is worth it? I have, if I am honest, only my intuitions. These intuitions have been partly developed and certainly influenced by what I have heard, read, and seen as a teacher in the last 30 years. I do not choose only what suits me. I am critical of my own methods and beliefs, but am still left with something that at times aims for something far short of relying only on optimal input and which goes beyond the confines of a functional-notional approach.

The conclusion seems both uncomfortable and inescapable. I am an eclectic. I may be embarrassed about it, but it is the only description I can honestly apply to my daily attempts to make sense of what happens when I teach or when I try to produce something which others might be interested in learning from or teaching with. This may be imperfect, but then I live and work in a very imperfect world. I cannot wait for proof from distinguished academics that what I do is respectable. Every hour that I teach I am forced to take simple decisions about simple things that those distinguished academics would not know how to define or interpret if they saw it—which may be one reason some of them show so little interest in contending with it as I have to. I will certainly not ignore what they say nor allow my “practical experience” to lead me to feel smugly superior. I am only too aware that a fool does not learn from experience at all but only goes on repeating it. I can only hope that this is not what I am doing in my obscene eclecticism.

Notional Curriculum in an Intensive Course

Robert Ruud

Introduction

The Language Institute of Japan's Residential Business Communication Program is a four-week intensive, residential, total-immersion, English-only course for business people. It has existed in slightly changing form for nearly twenty years. Its curriculum pre-dated D.A. Wilkins' *Notional Syllabuses* by several years; nevertheless, it is said to be "notional." In this paper I will trace a brief history of the curriculum and describe it as it exists today. And although the debt owed to the original *Notional Syllabuses* is undeniable, a major purpose of this paper will be to show how the original idea has adapted to a specific program.

History

The original designers of the residential program at LIOJ say that they knew very little about language teaching; that they just wanted to "put people from different countries together and see what would happen." The participants and the teachers in the course were brought together in a situation where interaction was not only encouraged, it was all but unavoidable. Behind the scenes of "putting people from different countries together," of course, teachers were busy organizing activities and planning lessons. However, "putting people together" clearly established interaction as an end as well as a means. Subsequently, emphasis naturally fell on language use and meaning before language form and description,

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despite the difficulty of predicting the outcome of such emphasis in specific or behavioral terms. There would probably be acquisition of morphemes and sub-phonemic particles going on, but this was left somewhat to chance, and there was an unscientific assumption that interaction between well-intended people from different cultures and language backgrounds could have a general positive effect. This interaction would not eliminate differences, but would concentrate on making very different people more practical communicators.

This basic principle of interaction, then, was the foundation of the curriculum for LIOJ's intensive program. The program evolved with Japan, gradually moving toward where the need for communication was most obvious: the business world. With the stronger attachment to business came an increasing need for stricter accountability, both by an increasingly sophisticated clientele, and by teachers trained in the new science of language teaching methodology. It was a thriving curriculum, waiting (though not anxiously) for science to give it a name. Then *Notional Syllabuses* was published. Like the already existing LIOJ curriculum, it advocated a meaning-based teaching plan which accommodated a variety of approaches to classroom teaching. The term "notional" attached itself quickly and securely. Other theories of methodology and language acquisition have had their impact and gradually been absorbed or discarded, but "putting people from different countries together to see what would happen" is still really what is done at LIOJ, and "notional" is what is said about it.

The LIOJ Curriculum Today

In general, the curriculum provides a framework which makes coordinated interaction among teachers and students a matter of course. It does not prescribe what to do in the classroom. Teachers' daily records of how they actually implement the curriculum are used by subsequent teachers, and thus function as a syllabus. But, in general, teachers are encouraged to create these records as well as follow them.

I would now like to describe briefly a number of the important features of this curriculum: Schedule, Perspectives, Notions, Short-term Goals, Sequencing, and Evaluation.

Schedule

Students in the residential program stay on site for most of four weeks (they are allowed to go home on weekends). They take meals with teachers in the cafeteria. Classes begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 8:00 p.m. Each class has three time slots, each of which has a different teacher. Each also has a different "perspective" on the curriculum: in the morning is Business English Skills (BES), in the early afternoon, Micro, and in the late afternoon, Macro (see descriptions below). The following is a student's typical daily schedule:

8:00 – 8:30	Breakfast
8:30 – 12:10	Business English Skills Class
12:10 – 1:10	Lunch with Teachers
1:10 – 4:00	Micro Class
4:00 – 4:30	Break
4:30 – 6:00	Macro Class
6:00 – 7:00	Dinner with Teachers
7:00 – 8:00	Macro Class

In addition, students and teachers often participate in activities such as parties, nights downtown, and entertainment programs after class in the evening.

Perspectives

In an intensive program in which the students are in class for nearly nine hours a day, change in perspective is good simply for change's sake. In addition, the changes in perspective in the daily schedule in LIOJ's curriculum appeal to some common inclinations and address some common weaknesses students have when they enter the program.

Micro is designed to improve students' ability to understand and speak in sentences, emphasizing questions and answers. Micro focuses on the expression and comprehension of ideas in controlled practice, and on language use in one-to-one situations. The main skills being developed are: controlling conversations with questions (such as "Could you repeat that?", "What does xxx mean?", etc.); initiating, maintaining, and closing conversations; and communicating on the telephone. This perspective combines communication with the exactness our students are used to in studying English.

A typical lesson begins by making a distinction within a particular conceptual area, and exercising various related functions of language. The following is a popular format and sequence (see Fluency Squares in the references as well):

	+	-
A		
B		

Figure 1: Micro Square

The columns depict a simple distinction between positive and negative. The rows would be assigned to two (and eventually all) students. What I will call here information would go into the squares, and could be anything the teacher wanted to focus on. For example, if the teacher wanted to teach the language for expressing likes and dislikes, the information might be kinds of food in a Chinese restaurant. Students would be asked for one item they liked, and one they did not like. (It would also be possible for them to say they didn't like Chinese food at all, or that there was no Chinese food they didn't like.) The result is a grid with two basic dichotomies: positive/negative, Student A/Student B. In addition, there are specific items from the general category of "kinds of food in a Chinese restaurant." If reference to positive/negative is taken away, yes/no questions can be asked (e.g., "Do you like egg foo yung?"). If reference to Student A/Student B is taken away, "Who" questions can be asked (e.g., "Who likes spring rolls?"). And if the information is hidden, we get back to "What do you like?" and "What don't you like?", "Is there anything you don't like?", etc. There are, of course, many variations possible, including the obvious changes in person.

This very structured exercise introduces a very few basic conceptual distinctions, and is the springboard for the exercise of more functional language, such as "What would you like?", "I don't care so much for Chinese food, so...", "Would you like to order some egg rolls?", etc., that might be part of a real dialogue.

Macro is designed to teach students to comprehend and express main ideas. In listening, the focus is on extended (relative to level),

uninterrupted speech. In speaking, the focus is on the organization of ideas. The situational focus is on speaking to a group, and listening as part of a group, where the control language emphasized in Micro may not be appropriate. The main skills being developed are gist understanding, summarizing, organizing explanations, descriptions, etc., and making generalizations and supporting them with examples. A weakness this perspective is designed to address is students' tendency to want to understand every detail or nothing at all, and to want to speak perfectly or not at all. In other words, it is designed to help students overcome their linguistic limitations through recognition of the organization of English speech, in both speaking and listening.

One way a teacher might introduce this strategy of comprehension is to have the students do a simple exercise accompanied by a graphic illustration:

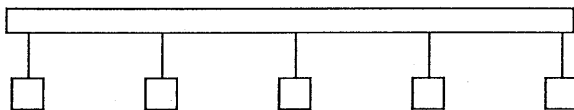


Figure 2: Macro Chart

The exercise might entail the teacher telling the students that they would hear a series of terms, each one of which belonged in one of the lower boxes. Their task would be to decide what to put in the upper box. (Students in this program have usually studied English before, and even very low students are usually capable of such a task, especially if they work together.) The teacher would then read off a list like: Research and Development, Sales, Personnel, Manufacturing, and Advertising. The students would work together to come up with a superordinate term or phrase (such as Departments in a Company). The exercise duplicates the tendency of students to pick out stressed items from what they hear. The point of the exercise is for them to get as many details as they can, rather than to insist on getting them all, and to try to piece together the general meaning from what they have gotten. They apply this basic principle to a variety of listening and summarizing activities throughout the four-week term.

Business English Skills is designed to teach students the language of business. The focus is on the use of English in the students' own business situations. The main skills being developed are presenting, participating in meetings, exchanging business-related information, etc. Students' need for such skills is obvious. This perspective is defined by its content. That is, in the Business English Skills slot students talk about business in general and about their own business in particular, and they use language that they will have to use in their work. Materials and methods vary widely. Presentations and other activities are video-taped and critiqued.

Notions

The term "notional" means, for LIOJ, "meaning-based." While meaning is obviously most important in a program which claims communication as a goal, however, it is not enough to simply say "meaning must come before form." Terms like "notional" and "meaning" in this context must have direct application to the designing of materials and planning of lessons.

It is assumed that whatever any occurrence of language means can be traced to its notional, that is *conceptual* and *functional*, root:

Concepts: Basic units of meaning in the categories of:

Space (e.g. spatial relations, location, direction, naming, attribution, etc.)

Time (e.g. past, present, tense and aspect in general, etc.)

Logic (e.g. induction, deduction, speculation)

Functions: Communicative intent (e.g. greeting, introducing, parting, etc.)

Specific concepts are focused upon each week of the four-week term, from simple to more complex (see Sequencing below). In addition, constant recycling of concepts already exercised, preview of concepts to come, and coordinated coverage by the three slots are essential.

Functions are specified as they pertain both to the communicative needs of the students at the time in the program, such as having to introduce themselves, or invite others to join them in an activity, and to the concepts in focus, such as the natural attachment of the concept of comparison and the function of persuasion.

Short-term Goals

Each week in the four-week term has a focus, stated in both concepts and functions. At the end of the week students make presentations and participate in simulations which exercise the language in focus. These activities are both end products of the week's work, and indicators of students' abilities.

Sequencing

The order of these weekly focuses is based on a rough hierarchy of complexity for concepts, and application to the daily life of the program for functions.

In the first week, teachers diagnose and promote proficiency in the primary concepts of space (naming location), and time (past, present, and future), and simply answering the question "what" (e.g., "What is this/that?", "What do you do?", etc). Naming things is seen as the simplest thing you can do in a language, and the next simplest thing is to attribute simple characteristics, such as physical appearance or position in time, to those things. In business this means *identifying* and *describing* things. The presentation the first week is "Job and Company Description."

The functions in focus are those that are most appropriately exercised in the daily life of the first week of the program, namely: introductions, greetings, invitations, etc.

The next step in the conceptual hierarchy is *comparison*, which is essentially a dual description. The first week focus consists of describing something (company, job, etc.) and establishing a basic time framework (past, present, and future). When students apply what they have learned to more than one product or service in their businesses, they can hardly do so without indicating differences and similarities. The use of these differences and similarities for persuasive effect naturally follows. Thus we have comparison/contrast as a kind of dual description, and the added "function" (meaning "intent") of persuasion.

The functions in focus in this step are defining, comparing, persuading, offering and soliciting opinions, etc.

If we emphasize the passage of time in description in business English, we have the concept of *process*, addressing the questions "How?" and "What for?" The emphasis is shifted from basic space concepts to time concepts, on purposeful change over time. This is much more complex than simply establishing things in time or

space, which is the basic framework for both description and comparison. (Of course, processes can also be compared, and frequently are as a way of recycling.) Process language also entails simple description, and often includes comparison as well. It also usually entails a historical or time perspective, establishing points in time within the larger dynamic time framework, and tracing them through a time sequence. The links in this chain of events are causes and effects, and the question "how" and the language of explanation are main features of the speech.

The function in focus here is explaining and emphasizing organization and key phrases. For example:

In order to understand how this works, it must be clear that this is xxx, not yyy. (identification)

It is made of xxx, and therefore...(design, character, nature, make-up)

It works in much the same way as...(analogy)

This part functions as a...(purpose)

That's because of this new element here, which is...(cause-effect)

The final conceptual focus is *problem analysis* and speculation. Causes and effects of known problems, anticipated problems, and proven and possible solutions are the main subjects of discussion. What makes problem analysis complex is that it is abstract and relies on the expression of logical relationships. It entails all of the previous areas of focus, stemming from description and basic factual time to the complex cause/effect relationship of process. But what it adds is of a more abstract nature: talking about things that do not exist in reality or are contrary to fact. Tracing the possible causes of a problem and the effects of possible responses to it entails describing things, comparing alternatives, and tracing processes, but emphasizes the abstract and the conditional, and relies on logic.

The functions in focus are those that are most easily exercised in the fourth week of the program, such as closing, parting, etc.

Week	Concept Focus	Function Focus	Goal
1	Description: Present/Past/Future, etc. Location, Direction, etc. General/Specific	Control Language, Greetings, Introductions, Invitations, Thanking, etc.	Presentation/ Simulation: <i>My Job and Company</i>
2	Comparison: State/Events, Frequency, etc. Character, Nature, Make-up, etc. Modality, Quality (Review/Recycle others)	Defining, Persuading, Offering and Soliciting Opinions, etc. (Review/Recycle others)	Presentation/ Simulation: <i>Comparison</i>
3	Process: Cause-Effect, Action-Consequence, Passive (Review/Recycle others)	Explanation (Review/Recycle others)	Presentation/ Simulation: <i>Process</i>
4	Problem Analysis: Problem/Reason/Solution Conditional (Review/Recycle others)	Synthesizing, Closure, Parting (Review/Recycle others)	Presentation/ Simulation: <i>Problem Analysis</i>

Figure 3: Curriculum Calendar

Evaluation

The evaluation system consists of assessments of linguistic, skill, and communicative abilities. Although some aspects of evaluation in a notional curriculum are readily accomplished by conventional tests, it is also important to assess how effective "putting people together and seeing what happens" is. To this end, familiarity is just as important as reliability. In other words, as well as getting some good objective information through standard testing procedures, we have to be able to say that we know the student well. Regardless of the grounding of our tests in science, they cannot really tell us very much about how well students will get along with foreigners in the international work place, or how well they will perform tasks which require making the right impression as well as using the correct verb form. Familiarity cannot simply be factored into the testing apparatus: it must be gained through interaction over a long enough period of time.

After that period of time, in addition to taking the conventional battery of objective tests, students are evaluated on scales in the general categories of linguistic ability and business skills (see samples in appendix).

Teachers then write the primary evaluation document, which consists of three sections, one of which is written by each of the student's teachers. This prose describes not so much what the student *can* do, as what he/she *does* when there is obviously a need or an opportunity to communicate. It is designed to address the fact that there are students who have considerable linguistic ability, but for some reason do not communicate well across cultures, as well as the fact that there are those with very limited ability who not only accomplish work tasks which are seemingly beyond their linguistic ability, but who make good impressions and lasting friendships as well.

Conclusion

Teachers need to understand the basic principle of the program, and use it as a guidepost in their teaching. What other people have done in the past serves as a model, but teachers are encouraged to decide for themselves how closely to follow what has been done. Their restriction is to stay within the relatively broad conceptual bounds of the curriculum, and direct students toward the long and short term goals of the program.

Students suffer an induced culture shock characterized by their adjustment to the English-only policy. Sometimes they are frustrated by the seeming lack of attention to grammar rules. The program is residential, and there can be problems with that aspect of the program as well. But in general, the program does what it sets out to do. That is, it produces students who are practical communicators. Students who complete the program are generally more proficient linguistically. But they have also grown accustomed to associating with foreigners on a daily basis. And, very importantly, they are also more able to overcome their linguistic limitations by persisting appropriately both in getting their meaning across and in understanding what others are saying to them.

The term "notional" in reference to the LIOJ program refers to a set of ideas and a system of teaching, in a program which emphasizes interaction. It allows teachers to make an art of teaching; art that is guided and disciplined, but at the same time expressive and experimental. The curriculum, truly "notional" to whatever degree, is the guide toward both the broad communicative goal, and the narrower, more incidental, linguistic and skill goals. It works pretty well.

Appendix A: Linguistic and Skill Assessment Draft Form

Student: _____ Term: _____ Class (ABCD): _____

NOTE: These areas of assessment pertain mostly to what the student is capable of doing. The written evaluation emphasizes how well the student actually applies his/her capability.

LINGUISTIC (Drafted by Micro Teacher and verified by others):

1. Pronunciation	-	n	+
2. Grammar	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
3. General Vocabulary	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
4. Fluency	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
5. Listening Comprehension	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
LINGUISTIC AVERAGE:	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5

BES (Do #s 1, 2, and 3, and choose two from 4-8 for a total of five; use #8 sparingly):

1. Participating in Business Meetings	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
2. Making Presentations	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
3. Exchanging Business-Related Info	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
4. Conducting Training	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
5. Undergoing Training	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
6. Being a Guest	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
7. Dealing with Visitors	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
8. Professional Vocabulary	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5

MICRO:

1. Conversation in One-to-One Situations	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
2. Communicating on the Telephone	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
3. Asking for Clar, Rep, ...	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5

MACRO:

1. Comp & Sum Uninterrupted Speech	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5
2. Impromptu Speaking	1	+ 1.5	+ 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5

SKILL AVERAGE: 1 + 1.5 + 2 + 2.5 + 3 + 3.5 + 4 + 5

EVALUATION OF STUDENT'S PROGRESS:

Poor Fair Good Very Good Excellent

Teachers: _____

Appendix B: Written Evaluation

Application of Skills to Communication

Student: (Sample)

General Communicative Ability in One-to-One Situations (Micro):

Mr. Xxx is a good communicator one-to-one. He still makes some grammatical mistakes, but almost always communicates successfully despite them. Mr. Xxx actively seeks opportunities to engage others in conversation in English. He also asks consistently for repetition and clarification when he needs it, in addition to asking many questions simply out of curiosity. He maintains conversations well by asking for examples and details, and by contributing his own ideas. He is comfortable and confident around non-Japanese, managing to solve most communication problems by asking for help when he does not understand or has difficulty expressing himself. He is interested in other people and has a sense of humor. In one-to-one situations with non-Japanese, he will make a good impression and friendships as well.

General Communicative Ability in Group Situations (Macro):

Mr. Xxx performs well in group situations. He uses logic and visual cues as well as follow-up questions to enhance his comprehension of difficult speech. He is also comfortable and attentive as a member of an audience, cooperating and participating fully in group tasks, asking insightful questions in a timely and tactful fashion, and generally giving a good impression as an attentive team player. He has learned to express his thoughts systematically in English, making general statements, supporting them with examples, and introducing and concluding appropriately. Mr. Xxx still has definite linguistic limitations, but he is relaxed in a group, and is not unduly nervous even when addressing the group as a whole. He is interested in cultural differences, and adapted well to the simulated foreign culture at LIOJ.

General Communicative Ability in Business (BES):

Mr. Xxx is a good communicator in business situations. He expresses even complex business concepts quite clearly for his level, and can understand well enough to work in English, even on his own, provided some concessions are made for his limitations. He is obviously very knowledgeable in his work, and makes a good professional impression. He uses polite expressions consistently, and uses humor and appropriate personal questions to put others at ease. He also recognizes and adjusts to differences in formality in different situations. He uses persuasive language effectively in situations such as business meetings or contract negotiations. Although Mr. Xxx's linguistic skills are still somewhat limited, his application of those skills and his constructive attitude indicate that he will have few serious communication problems in international business situations.

Teachers:

 Micro Teacher

 Macro Teacher

 BES Teacher

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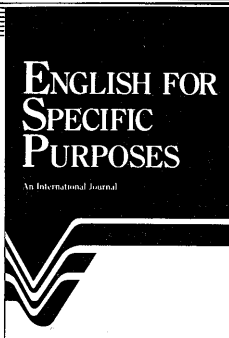
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Don't Sell Short the Exposition Pattern of Classical Rhetoric

William West

Thesis statement: The exposition pattern of classical rhetoric provides an effective base for simple, direct communication.

Purpose statement: As a retired, but still involved teacher of English and speech, I self-consciously want to exemplify the effective use of the classical rhetorical pattern of exposition for professional teachers among whom it is currently in disfavor. My purpose is to promote its use as a sound point of departure for expository communication.

Exordium (Introduction: establish rapport with the audience; arouse interest): Last year, at the age of 62, I left my professorship at the University of South Florida to train budding diplomats for the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Gai Mu Sho) in its Tokyo Foreign Service Training Institute.

(Have I established rapport? Are you interested?)

State the main idea: Little did I realize that the old familiar 5-division expository composition—which comes straight from classical rhetoric—would be an invaluable tool in my teaching.

(Do you know what I hope to illustrate?)

Dr. William W. West has spent forty-two years as a high school and college teacher of English and trainer of English teachers, taking two years out as English editor for a Boston publisher. Upon retirement from the University of South Florida in August of 1987, he became a full-time English instructor at the Gai Mu Sho Ken Shu Jo (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Service Training Institute). He is now a professor at the new Meikai University in Urayasu, Tokyo.

Divisio (indicate the main divisions of your presentation): Perhaps the backgrounds of my students generated a special need to learn this pattern, and perhaps foreseeable applications in their careers established a special readiness, but I soon developed a new commitment to our old standby when I saw its effectiveness in a variety of situations.

(Do you have an overview of the organization of this paper?)

Body (take up each point from the Divisio in the exact order presented):

Backgrounds of the students

Our students at the Gai Mu Sho Ken Shu Jo were of several types. Entering diplomats were top graduates of Japan's best schools, usually from aristocratic families and with career commitments. All would receive one year of combined academic and on-the-job Ministry training before going two years for a Master's Degree at government expense to any of the world's best universities. Midcareer diplomats from non-English-speaking assignments were being retreaded prior to a fresh overseas assignment in an English-speaking nation. Officials from Ministries other than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were preparing for overseas assignments as specialist consular attachés or as representatives to international organizations. And some special classes were preparing for special duties: security guards were preparing to handle new waves of terrorist problems; former Japan National Railways employees whose "lifetime employment" had evaporated when the railroads were privatized were being absorbed into the Ministry wherever they could be used; and charming and beautiful wives of all ages were preparing to become effective and gracious hostesses and overseas helpmates for their diplomat husbands.

None, however, had ever prepared a straight, simple, linear presentation of an idea. In Japan, one does not "lay out" or expose (exposition) a proposition for discussion and consideration. The usual pattern is to approach an audience fawningly and apologetically, discuss casually a number of insignificant and unrelated items, and then almost as an after-thought mention the primary subject. But even after *almost* identifying it (it still lies buried in a heap of miscellany), one doesn't treat it directly. Instead, the communicator sneaks up on it, surrounds it with a plethora of seemingly

unrelated ideas which may, or may not, bleed into it. Finally, one sneaks apologetically away from the tortured subject as if to guarantee confusion in identifying it and the mystery concerning the thesis or proposition intended.

And none of the students had ever been in an argument or debate. In Japan, one does not argue or debate. One bows, apologizes, and keeps on bowing, promoting at all costs group identity and solidarity and avoiding disagreement.

Of course, Orientalists emphasize that Japanese rhetorical strategy is not all bad! Indeed, as opposed to the Western linear approach, they see it almost as though one were to write an idea on tissue paper and then very carefully make ink dots on the tissue around the idea. As the blots expand, merge, and interact, they completely cover every aspect of the subject and each other in much more depth and intensity than the simple Western line. Moreover, though slow, for the trained participant, the process is pleasureable—like the exploration of fine poetry for ambience, allusion, metaphor, and color—and before action everyone understands completely.

Similarly, Orientalists emphasize that participation in argument or debate is not only unnecessary, but destructive to group solidarity. Indeed, any groups in which Japanese might argue and debate are so close and the experiences of the members so similar that one need only toss in a subject, wait, and as a result of a mystical, quiet, nonverbal process called “haragei” (belly talk), a consensus emerges so that the total group, without discussion, becomes committed to one point of view and one course of action. It is somewhat like the process of seeking Quaker consensus—but without talking.

Foreseeable applications in students' careers

But the oriental rhetoric so effective in their own country and with their own people may not be either effective, useful, or comprehensible in other cultures. Time-conscious Americans may refuse to listen to a presentation in which the subject is not identified; pragmatic Russians may refuse to expend the psychic and creative energy to perceive the metaphors and assemble the allusions; and even the poetic French or Italian aesthetes may not be aware of the necessity of calling on metaphoric and poetic skills to comprehend the intricately woven message.

In short, despite the unquestioned values of Japanese rhetoric in Japanese society, as Japan prepares diplomats to handle its role as a world leader, it must prepare them to state simply and support directly, clearly, and effectively the Japanese stance. As Japan negotiates new trade relations, gives billions to developing nations, trades industrial and scientific technology, assimilates more Western culture and becomes a leader in humanistic and ecological sensitivity, its speakers and writers need to communicate more effectively than ever before. There is no better place to begin than with the simple classical rhetorical pattern of exposition—the 5-division composition.

Effectiveness in a variety of situations

The 5-division composition is, or course, short, easy to exemplify, and easy to teach. Moreover, it is easy to apply. Even though I was teaching English as a second language, my exceptionally bright students—who, of course, already had a good deal of communication experience (though with a different kind of rhetoric) and who were motivated by their foreseeable needs—applied it in many situations. They wrote letters for publication in the English edition of the Japan Times, they prepared mock addresses to a model United Nations, they wrote real essay examinations following imaginary RFP's (Requests for Proposals), and they prepared and delivered dozens of very brief expository and persuasive speeches.

Peroratio (Conclusion: restate your main idea, and if you can make them effective, restate the main points of your division): Although I have been but one year at the Gai Mu Sho Ken Shu Jo, I have already heard from, among others, Naoki Hoshi that he enjoys being a member of the Classic Car Club in San Francisco, from Shimizu Yasuhiro that his first assignment in Washington was touring with two Congressmen, and from Takahashi Toru that he is working on agricultural problems in Ottawa. These and other gifted Japanese diplomats are now using advanced versions of the classic 5-division composition effectively, because they are really special students, because they have foreseeable significant communications needs, and because this simple pattern is effective in many different applications.

(Do you now have a quick recap of the main points of the article?)

End interestingly, if possible re-stating your thesis: If the 5-division composition can be used advantageously in the training of Japanese diplomats, the chances are that it can be used effectively by communication teachers in many other settings. I've developed great new respect for this simple tool—though it hasn't the beauty and depth and intricacy of poetry and fiction (or oriental rhetoric)—none of which it should pretend to possess or aspire to.

I am waiting eagerly for the time a few years from now when I shall encounter someone who will look aghast and exclaim in amazement, "You're not still teaching the 5-division theme!" At that time, if my students are as good as I think they are, I shall not apologize: I shall state simply and directly, "But, of course. The Prime Minister and several Ambassadors have written me about how valuable they find the 5-division form."



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Teaching Writing and Zen: A Curious Parallel

Phillip Jay Lewitt

The teaching of writing has too many experts; what we need are some old beginners. My first Zen Master, Japanese-American Shunryu Suzuki of San Francisco Zen Center, wrote: "In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities; in the expert's mind there are few....When we have no thought of achievement...we are true beginners. Then we can really learn something....So the most difficult thing is always to keep your beginner's mind. There is no need to have a deep understanding of Zen....You should not say, 'I know what Zen is,' or 'I have attained enlightenment.' This is also the real secret of the arts: always be a beginner. Be very careful about this point" (1970:22).

I was talking about winning at tennis with a Japanese colleague out on the courts one day, but we could have been talking about writing. "Results aren't very important," I said, "because as soon as you talk about results, you're living in the past, and life is lived in the present. It's the game itself, the process, that's so vital and interesting, not the results."

"That's very American, isn't it!" he said.

"Maybe it is," I told him, "but I got the idea from practicing Japanese Zen Buddhism for twenty years."

A traditional Buddhist story about an old beginner, and about rules and results, might illuminate the matter: long ago in Sri Lanka, where the rules for male monks were very strict and a woman could never be touched, an old monk and a young monk

Philip Jay Lewitt has studied Zen at Tassajara Monastery in California; he also holds an M.A. in Creative Writing (S.F. State) and a Ph.D. in English & American Literature (Indiana U. of Pa.). Since 1977 Dr. Lewitt has been Foreign Professor of English at Tottori National University in Japan, where he directs programs for future teachers in Writing, Spoken English, and American Literature.

were walking along a forest path, when they came to a river. At the bank stood a gorgeous young woman in her best sari, obviously unwilling to get it wet in the muddy stream. Without any hesitation, the old monk picked her up, held her closely in his arms, and carried her across the river. On the other side he put her down gently, she thanked him and headed off in one direction, while the two monks set off in another. After two hours of walking in silence, the young monk, who had been stewing and steaming all this time, couldn't stand it any more.

"I...I...I don't understand how you could break our rules!" he spluttered. "You not only touched her, your whole bodies were rubbing against each other!"

"Ah, well," the old monk said, "I put her down two hours ago; you're still carrying her."

In the Western world, rules of logic and dialectic demand that everything be divided into This and That, but in the Eastern world often This *is* That (in Sanskrit *tat tvam asi*). The division of everything into at least two parts by the ancient Greeks, while creating a background for the brilliance of Western science, has also led to a dualism which lends itself to a false view of things as being static, unchanging, as though we can hold two opposing parts up for scrutiny and they will stay there, fixed like butterflies on pins.

In Zen, duality is an illusion, maybe temporarily useful for talking about something (in terms of teaching, the Sanskrit *upaya*, or skillful means; or the Coyote Trickster engaged in what poet Gary Snyder calls the Real Work). We must not forget, however, that the illusion rides lightly on the surface of reality. Underneath is unity and a oneness which is never static, but always in motion, and always was and will be in motion. This is an unending process which we are all part of and which is always "now."

Since the Zen teacher knows from experience that there is only process, that stasis is an illusion, s/he must use process as a teaching method.

Zen teaching method uses four main processes (plus whatever else is around that will do the trick): meditation, physical work, personal interviews, and group lectures, in that order of importance. Zen meditation is called *zazen* (sitting zen) and is the heart of Zen training because it is experiential, something you do, and must do alone even if fifty other students are sitting in the meditation hall with you.

Next is physical work, lots of it, but with no hurry, nothing to finish, for the work goes on forever. You seek the rhythm of the work; you work the work and the work works you. You are "keeping in shape."

In the personal interview, or conference with the teacher, the student gets a regular and continuing chance to talk on a one-to-one basis with the teacher, a person who has been through the same process with his or her own teacher, and knows most of the frustrations and pitfalls, as well as the occasional joys of the process. The teacher does much more listening than talking, knowing that students must find out for themselves, that although *showing* a student once in a while may help, just *telling* a student is generally a waste of breath. The conference is quite brief, just a few minutes, though when necessary it can go on longer.

Last in importance is the lecture to the group: the teacher may seem to speak rather randomly, to cast around for a theme or a mood, maybe tell funny stories from his or her own student days, or traditional Zen stories that sound like paradoxes and often don't make much sense to the intellect:

Student: "Is there a Hell?"

Teacher: "Umn, yes there is and no there isn't."

Student: "What do you mean, yes there is and no there isn't?"

Teacher: "Well, if you're in Hell, there is, and if you're not in Hell, there isn't."

If the student is ripe, the story makes sense, either at that time, or later in a delayed reaction. On occasion, the teacher may even do a bit of gentle exhortation, if the students seem to have been especially sleepy of late; more often, the teacher just says, "Let's not talk, let's sit," and the lecture turns into yet another meditation session.

Of course, no matter what the teacher says or does to the contrary, the young Zen student still thinks that there is something to attain, some Big Goal, some Product.

In the middle 1960's, writing teachers began to realize that the traditional way of looking at writing as a product, and of teaching writing with the product as a clear goal, was a faulty view resulting in a faulty procedure which more often than not produced poor writing. What is poor writing, anyway? Is this piece, which I found printed on a Japanese plastic beach bag, an example?

"Honey....Smile Punch! Beer with Healthy. Asahi Draft Beer, the best thirst-quencher for you and anyone else; brown liquids with tiny white bubbles penetration into throat and stomach, gorgeous confidence. Ingredients; malt, hop, rice, corn, starch.... simultaneously about 4 and 0.5 percent alcohol. NO dispose of heat. Brewed and nice ALL-Aluminum canned by Asahi Breweries Limited Japan (but worldwide scale company, You Know It!)

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Message from the bottom. First Time, drink up all six cans full of Asahi Draft Beer. Next to Last. This bag will be useful for letting in bikini and other swimming suits. Plus Think for yourself in any case!

I think it is pretty good writing: it communicates, it's funny, has rhythm and imagery. Give a student with a mind that creative and loose to many of today's writing teachers and they will be delighted. There has been a significant and growing shift toward the view that writing, like living, is a process without absolute and logical goals, and that to learn to write, students and teachers alike must write regularly and often. They should work with the whole spectrum of the writing experience from thinking to note-taking to writing to rewriting to revising to editing and back around again in a continuing cycle. Moreover, focusing only on the product, the paper to be handed in for correcting and grading, results in a concentration on error that unintentionally reinforces error as well as loathing and failure-angst.

It seems to me that the process of teaching writing is becoming much like the process of teaching Zen, a marvelous cross-fertilization of Eastern and Western ways. Donald M. Murray writes: "The process of making meaning with written language cannot be understood from looking backward from a finished page. Process can not be inferred from product any more than a pig can be inferred from a sausage" (1980:3). Saying the obvious, and saying it well and concretely, is enormously difficult and enormously helpful. It is a display of the skill of a true teacher.

Even more important is the skill of knowing what not to say and when not to say it. "Each year I teach less and less," Murray confesses, "and my students seem to learn more. I guess what I've learned to do is to stay out of their way and not to interfere with their learning" (1979:14).

Correction is only for those who are ready; like a Zen story, if you're ready, you understand it, and if you're not, you don't. But advanced students are usually self-correcting, anyway, and a teacher probably should not waste much energy on a student who does not care. My friend, Zen Master Kobun Chino in California, once said to me: "When Buddha meets Not-Buddha, he does not speak."

Writing is an ethical act, as Zen teachers believe that meditation is an ethical act. Neither the practice of Zen nor the practice of writing should be done only for the self, for selfish purposes. In one sense it is done for the self, but in another sense it is done for everyone, for all beings; it may be practice alone and in quietude, but its implications eddy out through the world like the rings from a rock tossed into a still pool.

In a loose way I would compare meditation and physical work, the most important and intertwined processes in Zen, with thinking (prewriting) and writing. At first comes that outwardly quiet time when connections begin to occur among bits and pieces of previously collected information, when the voice inside the head starts to speak, halt, rearrange, and speak again. Writers do, and should, spend a lot of time just "gazing at the wall" like Zen monks.

Writing itself is, in fact, hard physical work, whether with pencil or keyboard: hands cramp, neck-cords tighten, shoulders ache, eyes unfocus. The writer sweats, paces, chills, moves back in for more, looking for a rhythm to emerge.

The writing conference is like the Zen conference, one-on-one, teacher listening carefully to student so that the student can learn to listen carefully to the self. Students need to prepare themselves for the conference, because the teacher of Zen or of writing will ask questions rather than make detailed comments or criticisms, turning back questions toward the student like the farmer from Maine who, when told that the weather's fine, replies, "Is it?"

The group lecture, least important and rarely indulged in both by the Zen teacher and the process-writing teacher, is reserved for those occasions when the teacher really feels some need to talk to everyone as a group, or it becomes evident to the teacher that the group truly needs him or her to address some problem held in common.

Buddhism is called "the middle way," because Siddhartha (the historical Buddha) found that neither starving himself nor pamper-

ing himself helped him to come to understand the nature of reality, so he learned to work and meditate calmly, eating when hungry, drinking when thirsty, sleeping when tired. "When you eat, just eat," says the Zen teacher, and the writing teacher can say, "When you write, just write."

When I was a graduate student many years ago, I was fired from a job correcting business letters for a business-English teacher, because I couldn't bring myself to fail those students who wrote simple, clear letters but strayed from the rigid formulae this teacher insisted upon.

Years later, a friend working for the president of a giant cosmetics company in Osaka told me that the boss could not understand why, in translating his business letters from Japanese to English, two pages became half a page. What had happened to the rest of his letter? My friend tried to explain, unsuccessfully, that the polite diffuseness of the Japanese business letter style and the relatively brutal terseness of the American business letter style created big problems in translation and editing.

So there is a middle way in writing, too. In student essays, a middle ground exists between a sloppy formlessness and the rigidity of the error-free, five-paragraph piece of dullness that makes students ardently desire to trash teachers and read comics.

What is the *Dharma*, the Truth, the Way, when it comes to writing? Poet W. S. Merwin says, "Practice, practice, put your hope in that."

Teaching practice is just advanced-learner practice, but the teacher must exercise a fine and unobtrusive and non-interfering yet clear control over the classroom and its activities, setting an atmosphere of *self*-control, for writing, like Zen, aims at total freedom, but its practice is disciplined. To be effective, that discipline has to be internal, a balancing of self between dopey laziness and paralyzing stress. The Zen teacher never whacks you with the long stick unless you ask for it; you get to find your own way.

As Zen teachers always meditate with their students, so writing teachers should write in class along with students: you cannot teach what you cannot or will not do. Busy writing, the teacher won't be looking over people's shoulders, making them nervous; the students will plainly see that you practice what you preach.

One way of expressing Buddhism's Triple Treasure is as body, mind, and speech (or writing), because at the crosshair of speaking/

writing with body and mind, a physical act and a mental act simultaneously combine and become one, producing a communication which is both emotional and intellectual, both immediate and storable.

"Your" students have not taken your writing course to accomplish your set of goals, but to learn to write, and they need plenty of space to grow in order to do this: the teacher provides a big space and a broad way. Growing is a process, not a product. Grammatical structure, figurative language, accurate punctuation, the bones, the flesh, the jewels of writing, given enough space and time for practice, appear real and dazzling.

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Considerations for Japanese EFL Learners Prior to Intensive ESL Programs in the United States: Three Case Studies in Awareness and Motivation

Richard Stone

The fact that English is a dominant world language today is important in understanding how linguistic attitudes are shaped. Edwards (1982) holds that a language of great scope, dominance, and prestige will evoke attitudes in learners different from those related to "smaller" languages. However, the language attitude or aptitude of incoming ESL students are generally not assessed in their program's battery of tests; instead, students almost invariably take only proficiency or placement tests. Ryan et al. (1982:16) state:

Aptitude, as assessed by standardized tests, is viewed to be much more important in formal learning situations than in informal ones. Attitudes have been shown to relate to perseverance (i.e., the measure of motivational intensity) in language study as well as to classroom behavior.

In Krashen's acquisition/learning dichotomy (1982), aptitude can be more closely associated with second language learning and attitude with acquisition. This paper takes the position that attitude and motivation play important roles in influencing both productive and counter-productive language learning behaviors, and therefore, L2 development.

Few adjustments need to be made in the lifestyle, learning style, or personal expectations of Japanese students who wish to study EFL in their own locales, since input is available from a multitude

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of public and private sources. In addition to the variety of English exposure found in radio, TV, movies, newspapers, and books, settings for more structured learning range from sophisticated, intensive English-only institutes to private tutoring by native speakers to traditional English classes within the Japanese educational system which employ Japanese nationals as teachers.

However, an increasing number of Japanese students are seeking language learning experiences other than those found in their own country and are enrolling in intensive English language programs in the United States to further their individual aspirations. Some of these students intend to matriculate at an American college or graduate school; others are merely taking advantage of the relative strength of the yen, and therefore, the chance to go abroad.

Unfortunately, many Japanese go into their cross-cultural language learning experience naively thinking that their ESL program will be predictable, if not identical, to their EFL experiences in Japan. Some expect the program to meet their personal, preconceived agendas, which is part of the educational and cultural baggage that they may bring with them. Others hope to improve their English proficiency and learn more about U.S. culture but fail to recognize the necessity of making adjustments themselves for social and educational norms that differ between Japan and America.

Because they often employ strategies to preserve those aspects of culture and learning that they are already accustomed to (Schumann 1976), such learners exemplify what Gardner and Lambert (1972) term "instrumental motivation." The result is often less satisfying personal and language learning experiences, especially if a program employs a seemingly informal, communicative curriculum, or emphasizes extra-class sources for input in second language acquisition and learning.

Hildebrandt and Giles (1980) suggest that the overwhelming attitudinal orientation of Japanese society toward learning English is instrumental, despite the strong desire that exists in many to be able to speak English with foreigners. They cite the example of students who demand grammar-translation lectures from professors—even native English speakers—in order to do better on university entrance exams, in preference to communicatively-based classes. This is supported by Honna (1979), who says regarding social identity theory, that while a certain amount of English

fluency receives prestige and social reward in Japan, those who speak English and adopt cultural mannerisms too natively are viewed negatively by their society.

Yet there are also those Japanese whose motivation is more "integrative" (Gardner and Lambert); that is, they "want to learn more about the American way of life," a most predictable formulation penned by Japanese students in their initial correspondence with a U.S. language program. By employing acculturation and assimilation strategies (Schumann 1976), these individuals make more concerted efforts to fit in culturally and modify their previous educational experiences.

The success of such learners in American classrooms is enhanced by their greater flexibility in important social, psychological, affective, and cognitive factors, given the same type of communicative program alluded to above. Since little or no growth in attitude can be associated with the degree of language program success, it is important for students to develop productive attitudes prior to starting their studies. The most reliable indicator of second language success is the student's willingness to extend the learning setting beyond the classroom to interaction outside of class (DiPietro 1987).

Case Study Profiles

The following section presents anonymous case study profiles of three Japanese students who studied ESL in an intensive English program in the eastern U.S. Each profile reflects one of three categories: 1) Students who expected their ESL program to mirror their previous EFL experience, and thus, had an unrealistic set of expectations, 2) Students whose dominant motivation was instrumental in nature, and as a result, made few personal changes, and 3) Those whose source of motivation was more integrative, and in seeking fluency, assimilated fully into their new surroundings. The information presented in each profile reflects the primary orientation of that student; however, all students demonstrated a multiplicity of attitudes and behaviors.

Profile One—Expectations in ESL vs. EFL Programs

Y.N. was a college graduate who transferred from another ESL program which he felt wasn't meeting his needs. Y.N. came to the U.S. primarily with high integrative motivation, in order to study

for the TOEFL and GMAT tests and to prepare himself for graduate studies in business through English study and exposure to the American style of education. He arrived with a strong sense of his own agenda—the “when, where, why, what, and how” of language and culture learning already pre-determined.

Unfortunately for Y.N., this agenda was based, in part, on expectations manufactured from vague and incomplete discussions with his EFL teachers and his own lack of knowledge about the many differences he would be exposed to in an ESL system, rather than on a personal commitment to be flexible and appreciate the merit in all facets of his program. He clung tenaciously to the teaching/learning style which he had grown accustomed to within the Japanese educational system that was instrumental in shaping his expectations about his ESL program: memorization, correctness, structure, and testing.

At a point early in the semester, Y.N. decided to withdraw from his writing class when he discovered that his teacher was not starting the class with those aspects of writing that he most wanted to work on. Since he was unable to predict the outcome of her method of instruction, which was a cognitive process approach in which student-teacher conferences were central and surface errors were not rigorously corrected (Flower and Hayes 1981; Carnicelli 1980), Y.N. lost confidence in her teaching and in his writing. He was unaware of the concept of taking personal responsibility for his writing, whereby the learner generates ideas, explores alternatives, gets teacher and peer advice, re-thinks, revises—all recursively—and then edits (Emig 1971; Reigstad and McAndrew 1984).

In his composition classes in Japan, his teachers exercised control over his writing, so he learned to write to please them, fulfilling the explicit requirements of their assignments (Smith 1981). Since a certain distance exists between students and teachers in Japan in their role as master and examiner (Condon 1984), Y.N. could not bring himself to discuss or negotiate with his American teacher the dissonance between his personal expectations and experiences in Japan and the instructional goals and style that she employed. In his impatience to drop the course, Y.N. lost his primary opportunity to improve in academic writing, an area which he had originally identified as being essential to his long-range goal of earning a graduate degree at an American university.

Profile Two—Instrumental Motivation

I.T. was a graduate student attending the summer ESL program immediately preceding his year of study as a special undergraduate Business Administration student. He chose his ESL program based solely on proximity and low cost and verbalized the goal of getting all the factual knowledge possible in a year about English and the U.S., in order to better his employment prospects. He viewed language learning, if not all learning, thinking, and study habits, to be absolute in nature; that is, he saw learning as being the compilation of discrete facts, either black or white, right or wrong. These attitudes fostered noticeable intolerance toward language development and the style of his American teachers.

I.T. considered the teacher to be at the center of the learning experience and the source of unerring knowledge from whom he sought single, correct answers; for example, I.T. believed that all textbook exercises in his reading class should be completed individually and corrected on the basis of absolute answers, rather than apportioned out to individuals or small problem-solving groups where answers could be negotiated on the basis of reader-writer interactions (Thomas 1968; Smith 1982).

He held the view that language learning consisted of rote memorizing of grammar, spelling, and pronunciation rules, and accumulating vocabulary and facts. He resisted his teachers' advice to relax, tolerate ambiguity, modify his perspectives, and work in cooperation with others, believing that it would diminish his ability to apply all his energy toward meeting his personal goals within the time frame available to him. Thus, I.T. exemplified the classic instrumentally motivated student in many ways (Gardner and Lambert), interested primarily in what English language training and university courses could do for his personal and professional goals. He wanted his ESL program to be a well-oiled piece of machinery, an automated assembly line that would transform him into a fluent speaker and scholar.

I.T. contributed to his own limited language learning success by making little effort to learn important non-verbal communication or social acculturation behaviors; for example, he spoke self-aggrandizingly about his university experiences in Japan. In light of the egalitarian nature of the American classroom setting he was in, people perceived him to be conceited and withdrew from him, when in fact, he may have desired just the opposite effect, since

he occasionally made remarks that indicated that he had unfulfilled social expectations. Consequently, he felt that Americans weren't friendly, although he dismissed this thought summarily, since establishing friendships wasn't an expressed, motivational priority for him.

His mal-adaptive attitudes and behaviors set the stage for the critical evaluation he gave during his exit interview regarding certain aspects of the program. I.T. believed that everything that he derived from his program could just as easily have been accessed back in Japan: textbooks, tapes, native speakers, etc. While his assertion was true from an unenlightened, critical perspective, it is actually more of a comment on his own performance because he failed to recognize that interaction with teachers, classmates, roommates, and other Americans, both on and off campus, is crucial to language development and cultural understanding.

The beliefs that I.T. held were equally inconsistent with important underlying assumptions about communicative needs, whether informal or academic, that communication is proposition based, conventional, appropriate, interactional, and structured (Richards 1981). As his program was based on these assumptions, his instrumental orientation betrayed the opportunity he otherwise had for substantial growth in the second language and culture.

Profile Three—Integrative Motivation

N.D. was a high school English teacher who attended a short, summer ESL program following a cross-country tour of the U.S. She came with the specific intention of sharpening her aural/oral abilities and long-range goal of pursuing a graduate degree in English education at a later date. Although N.D. brought specific language learning goals with her, as did other students, she pursued them with an integrated motivation bent on maximum assimilation into her new environment.

N.D. worked hard to achieve her specific language goals. Her style of learning was characterized by an ability to tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity in the input she received from textbooks and teachers. She saw partial answers as challenges to learning and welcomed discussions, group work, and cooperative outside assignments. She often asked questions in class, scheduled office conferences with teachers, talked openly about her language learning struggles and successes, and came to the language lab for extra work in pronunciation and listening.

N.D. also pursued self-learning strategies to use outside of class: she focused on being an active listener, which helped reduce her anxiety in new surroundings and made input easier to process; she analyzed her oral performances in conversations to discern what she might do differently the next time; and she kept a notebook about what she learned—vocabulary, questions, irregularities and surprises, and new plans that she wanted to use in future conversations.

At the same time, she was able to perform satisfactorily in more structured kinds of language learning activities. Her classmates felt comfortable with her confident and relaxed manner and she proved to be a very good model for them. All this suggested that N.D. had a high level of self-esteem and accepted personal responsibility for her own learning rather than sitting back and waiting for it to be brought to her.

By using a good portion of her free time away from structured language study to seek out friendships with Americans, N.D. did not limit herself to making friends only among fellow ESL students. She was successful in turning single acquaintances into the start of multiple friendships and genuinely enjoyed meeting new people in her residence as well as public places off campus.

N.D.'s evaluation of the program was a positive one, although it might be said that she contributed much to her own learning and goal realization, above and beyond the in-class instruction and structured cultural exposure that the program provided. As a highly motivated and mature student with useful insights from her background as a language teacher, she pursued her short-range goals diligently, bringing her closer to attaining her long-range goal.

Discussion

How much students learn in their ESL programs and how satisfied they are with what they learn is determined by a number of factors. Many of these factors are not within the scope of this paper, and only a handful of them are purely instructional in nature: goals, teacher, method, text, time, intensity, and evaluation (Schumann 1978). Diversity in the perspectives that ESL programs have regarding instruction and the actual operational differences between them (i.e., methodologies, staff experience, location, operating budget, etc.) are so vast, that the discussion which follows limits itself to the student, since the more extensive variables that

shape language acquisition and learning are those that the individual student brings to a program.

In the above profiles, all students made measurable progress in their English language abilities, but consistent with Gardner and Lambert's findings, those who showed more flexibility, accepted more personal responsibility, modified their expectations more and followed through on their socio-linguistic inclinations and opportunities, also showed more progress in language and culture learning. As DiPietro (1987) concludes from data relating to good language learners, those who fail in traditional language learning programs blame themselves, whereas those who fail in innovative programs fault poor teaching or the program itself, as did Profile One and Two students.

Christine Meloni's study of the needs of East Asian students in the U.S. (1985) records a number of interesting points for prospective students to consider. The Japanese, as they assessed themselves, had difficulty participating in classroom-size discussions, possessed limited vocabularies, were more proficient in reading than in the other three language skills, were inhibited by their shyness and the informality of Americans, and spent most of their free time with other Japanese watching television, going shopping or to the movies, or studying at home alone. Homesickness and depression were seldom listed as problems by the Japanese, except when related to English communication difficulties in class and otherwise.

Meloni reported, in reference to the American style of education, that the Japanese felt that American students attended class more regularly and were more active while there, and according to Japanese standards, demonstrated less outward respect for their teachers. They also thought that teachers taught more informally, were more friendly and easier to talk to, gave more frequent quizzes, tests, and homework, and taught smaller size classes. But the Japanese students also wanted their American teachers to do more to help them feel sufficiently relaxed, encourage them to talk, or insure their understanding of key points. Additionally, they were uncomfortable with the fact that teachers may occasionally criticize a student openly in class.

Discrepancies also exist between certain unrealistic expectations or fantasies and the realities of being in an ESL program in a new culture. These can be categorized as individual teaching and learning

styles in Japan versus America (where responsibility for learning lies—i.e., with the curriculum, teacher, or student); tensions inherent in social, cognitive, and affective domains (e.g., ethnocentrism, self-esteem, introversion/extroversion, tolerance of ambiguity, etc.); knowing how to make acquaintances and form friendships; and dealing with the hazards of culture shock in matters of daily life (Rubin and Thompson 1982).

Students in our program also reported being uncertain about their language progress during the course of their study, even though data was gathered from the instructors, synthesized, and then discussed with the students at three week intervals. While most were pleased with the results of their exit test scores, some expressed vague disappointment in their programs based on their prior learning experiences and expectations. The more successful students became more responsible for their own learning, depending less on their rote memory skills or the teacher's ability to fill empty vessels, as it were, and more on their own creative initiative in class and outside.

Our successful Japanese students brought more realistic sets of expectations with them and were at least aware that there would be educational and cultural differences before coming to the U.S. Similarly, they came to realize that some of the expectations which they entertained prior to arriving were unproductive and based only on limited exposure to language use, American culture, or the ESL program that they selected. Although all students held personal goals in studying ESL, those who were more successful at realizing their goals blended their instrumental motivation with a high degree of integrative motivation.

Such learners had the characteristics of being more mature, relaxed, socially active with non-Japanese, and willing to take personal risks. At the same time, they were less critical of what was new and different to them. Having adjusted to their new environment and working hard to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by their programs both in and out of class, they have reported a continuing appreciation for their experiences after returning home and a desire to pursue the next step in their long-range goals.

Summary

This paper takes the position that ESL students with specific, realistic goals set in a framework of flexibility regarding the differences in education that exist between countries (i.e., EFL in Japan versus ESL in America) and with the desire to assimilate to a high degree into their new environment (i.e., integrative versus instrumental motivation) can expect greater success in the language and culture of another country. Case study profiles of Japanese ESL students who demonstrated three commonly held orientations have been presented to substantiate this position. By considering them in the context of the article, EFL teachers and their Japanese students can become more aware of potential strengths and weaknesses in attitudes, expectations, and behaviors, and make more effective preparations.

While more informed decisions on the part of the students themselves promote more successful experiences abroad, it is equally important to stimulate awareness and response within the EFL community in Japan to the significant role it can and must play in more fully preparing Japanese students. It is not enough to only offer courses and curricula in English or about American culture; it must also accept a degree of responsibility concerning the preparation of learners for actual language use and cultural assimilation in the L2 country. Too large a sector of the increasing number of Japanese who come to America to study demonstrate counter-productive expectations, attitudes, and behaviors regarding the second language and culture, which inhibit learning and result in less than fruitful cross-cultural experiences.

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Bright Idea

Turning "English Conversation" into Communication

Mary E. Whitsell

Internationalization and the important role English plays as a *lingua franca* have become popular issues in today's Japan. Many students are studying English for the commendable reason that they want to communicate with people from all over the world. The English language can be an indispensable tool toward this goal, but there is a need to distinguish between simply "making conversation" in English and effectively communicating ideas and exchanging information.

Japanese students come to the classroom with a full set of stereotypes regarding foreign lifestyles, preferences, and handicaps. Many of these are simply part of the natural "foreigner folklore" which has been collected over several decades, perhaps even dating back to as long ago as the Meiji period, in some cases. The "foreigners can't..." myths that are so deeply ingrained in the Japanese mind are often actually taught in the schools or passed along from generation to generation. Many are based on former truth; in occupied Japan, for instance, American servicemen did balk at the idea of eating things like raw fish and seaweed, but in today's rapidly changing world these still firmly held stereotypes about what foreign people can and can't do have become outdated.

In addition to the troublesome "Can you...?" questions students sometimes ask, there are other types of questions which, especially when asked at a first meeting, may be quite inappropriate. Whereas "Can you...?" questions often arise from preconceptions about foreigners, these other potentially socially incorrect questions have their origins in direct translation from Japanese to

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English or are questions which, while not especially socially offensive in Japanese, can be so in English. An example of the latter is the notorious "How old are you?", (also a favorite question because it is so easy to ask!), while a typical direct translation question would be something like, "When are you going home?" (*Itsukaerimasu ka?*). A question like, "How many boyfriends do you have?" also sounds a bit less intrusive in Japanese, due to the fact that in Japanese a "boyfriend" is not necessarily a lover.

English language teachers owe it to their students to point out the inappropriateness of these questions and correct the misinformation that prompts them. Teachers are often their students' only English conversational partners and, moreover, are likely to be the only people who will give the students any useful feedback concerning appropriateness of speech in English. What it finally boils down to is simply this: if teachers don't tell students these things are potentially offensive and not conducive to making English-speaking friends, who will?

Enlightening our students as to the negative feelings these questions can create, helps them become "internationalized" by providing them with honest feedback and steering them away from potentially offensive subject areas. Obviously, no serious student of English wants to offend or embarrass the people with whom s/he is trying to communicate. The more sensitive a student is about the feelings and experiences of foreign residents and tourists in Japan, the more long-term conversational partners s/he should make and keep. This lesson brings out many of the commonly held stereotypes about foreigners that often lead students to ask inappropriate questions. The students are first presented with a series of questions and told to mark the questions as "T" (appropriate for a tourist in Japan), "R" (appropriate for a foreign resident of Japan), "B" (appropriate for both tourists and residents), or "D/A" ("don't ask" — inappropriate question). Students work individually on the questions at first, then discuss their answers with a partner or partners. As students rarely have the same opinions about these questions, the interchanges are usually quite lively and time-consuming. When the students have thoroughly discussed their various opinions and given their arguments for them, the class discusses each question as a group. Students who have spent time abroad and have accordingly been exposed to offensive myths and stereotypes about Japanese people can contribute quite

a bit to this lesson by sharing their overseas experiences. Those students who have never been out of Japan are often amazed and even shocked to hear what misconceptions people from other countries have about them: Japanese, Chinese and Korean people are all the same, Japanese mothers and fathers are not affectionate toward their children, Japanese people live in paper houses and do not use knives or forks, etc. A discussion on commonly held beliefs and stereotypes, whether those held by Japanese people about other nationalities or vice versa, can be an eye-opening experience in many ways. Often a good follow-up to this lesson is to have those students who have lived abroad or spent some time travelling abroad write about their experiences, good and bad, and make short presentations on them in class.

The “D/A” questions may be considered inappropriate for a variety of reasons. Questions such as, “What are you doing here?”, “What is your purpose in Japan?”, and “When are you going home?” obviously carry other than their linguistic surface meanings and may stem from direct translation from Japanese. That these questions can be interpreted as being quite rude often comes as a surprise to many Japanese students of English. “Can you...?” questions are generally not offensive to tourists, for whom Japanese customs, food, and living conditions are usually new, while they are inappropriate for foreign people who live in Japan. Likewise, a question that involves fairly detailed information about Japan such as, “What do you think of the Japanese educational system?” would be more appropriate for a resident of Japan than for a tourist. Most students know that questions like, “How old are you?” and “How much money do you make?” are completely inappropriate for anyone, but as there is some controversy among Japanese people as to whether these questions are rude or not, it is a good idea to include them in such a list.

FOREIGN TOURIST OR FOREIGN RESIDENT?

Please read the following questions. If you think a question is appropriate for a foreign resident of Japan, mark it "R". If you think it is appropriate for only tourists in Japan, mark it "T". If you think you can ask both tourists and residents this question, mark it "B". When you think a question is entirely inappropriate for anyone, mark it "D/A" (Don't Ask!). When you have finished marking the questions, discuss your answers with your partner/s. If you don't agree with something they have written, be sure to tell them and explain why!

Can you use chopsticks?

What is your purpose in Japan?

How many boy/girlfriends do you have?

Where do you live?

Can you eat raw fish?

What do you think of the Japanese educational system?

How long have you been in Japan?

Are you going to visit Kyoto?

What do you think of Japanese trains?

What do you do here?

How do you like Japanese food?

How much money do you make?

Can you sleep on a futon?

Do you ever feel homesick?

What food from your country do you miss the most?

How old are you?

What are you doing here?

When are you going home?

What's your favorite Japanese city?

Where have you been so far in Japan?

Another difficulty many students have is the tendency to concentrate more on the conversation they are producing than what their partner is saying. This is a difficult problem for students because, of course, it takes years of practice before a language student becomes confident and relaxed enough to understand everything his or her partner is saying. Teachers can help even their

beginning students prepare themselves for questions and responses they might hear, as well as refrain from producing the kind of one-sided dialogs that are common:

Japanese Person: Where are you from?
 Foreigner: Uh – Brazil.
 Japanese Person: What is your name?
 Foreigner: Jorge.
 Japanese Person: Why are you in Japan?
 Foreigner: Eh?
 Japanese Person: Why did you come to Japan?
 Foreigner: I'm here on holiday

When a dialog such as the one above is actually written on the blackboard for students to see, it is easy for them to understand just how choppy, disjointed, and disconcerting it might sound to a foreigner.

Students can see how the conversational partner who is receiving all the questions has no idea of what the next question will possibly be. Rather than being involved in a real exchange, s/he is being “talked at” or “practiced on.” By listening to the answer and responding accordingly, the student of English can completely alter the tone of the conversation from that of aggressive inquisitiveness to one of sincere interest. A good contrast is the following:

Japanese Person: Where are you from?
 Foreigner: Brazil.
 Japanese Person: Oh really? I don't know much about Brazil but it must be an interesting place! How long have you been here?
 Foreigner: Only two weeks.
 Japanese Person: Are you a tourist, then?
 Foreigner: Yes I am. I'm going back next week.
 Japanese Person: What places have you visited here?

(Etc.)

Although the above conversation is admittedly not a particularly thrilling or creative exchange, it is considerably easier to follow and less threatening than a volley of unrelated questions fired “interview fashion” at one's partner. Fairly predictable and commonly used phrases such as “I don't know much about _____, but it must be an interesting place” and “What places have you visited so far?” will hopefully help students elicit more information

from their conversational partners than a simple “yes” or “no.” Students also feel comfortable knowing that there are in English, as in Japanese, expressions commonly used in certain situations.

To help students “construct” interesting and connected conversations, there are a variety of exercises that can be used. To begin with, teachers can write a typical opening line on the board, “Where are you from?” and elicit the rest of the conversation from the students, encouraging them to relate their comments and questions to the previous utterance instead of coming up with completely unpredictable elements. This can be followed with an open conversation cloze where only the foreigner’s part is written and the student must come up with his or her end:

- You: Suteki na paati desu ne! (What a lovely party!)
- Foreigner: I’m sorry – I don’t speak Japanese!
- You: Oh – I’m sorry! I thought you were Japanese.
Where are you from?
- Foreigner: Yes, I know. My parents were second generation Japanese – You say “nisei” in Japanese, I think.
- You:
- Foreigner: Only a month.
- You:
- Foreigner: Yes. I’m going back in a month.
- You:
- Foreigner: Oh, lots of places. My relatives have taken me to see Kumamoto, Nagasaki, and Beppu, and of course I’ve been to Kyoto and Nara.
- You:
- Foreigner: I LOVED it! The thing I liked the best was the deer!
They were so cute; they ate bread from my hand!

This activity can be followed or preceded by a scrambling exercise, where students are given a conversation that has been cut into strips and asked to reconstruct it to make a connected, understandable conversation.

These sentences can be cut out, scrambled, then given to students to reconstruct into a conversation:

Where are you from?
Portugal.
Really? I've never been there, but it must be a beautiful place. I've seen a lot of travel posters...
Yes, you're right, it is. Japan is really beautiful too, though.
I'm glad you think so. By the way, how long have you been here?
Only a week.
Are you just here on a visit or do you plan to stay for a long time?
Oh, I'm just here as a tourist.
Where have you been so far, in Japan?
Only to Kyoto, Nikko, and Kamakura.
What did you think of Kyoto?
Oh, it was lovely – I especially enjoyed the Golden Temple!
Yes, that is pretty, isn't it.
Have you been there many times?
No, only once on a high school trip, but I remember the Golden Temple – we call it Kinkakuji in Japanese.
You should go again! If I lived here, I'd go to Kyoto every month.
Well, I wish I could, but unfortunately it's rather expensive. Shinkansen tickets cost a lot of money!

If the gapped dialog proves too difficult for students, the teacher can write out some appropriate responses and have the students fit them into the conversation. Any problems in the English itself can be ironed out, and easier gapped dialogs can be given to the students to complete until they feel more comfortable with the format.

Finally, when students have had enough time to practice, they can be given the task of constructing their own conversations from scratch, including both their own and the foreigner's sides of the dialog. This is a lot more difficult, and of course entails quite a bit

more than simply making a connected, appropriate conversation. Again, it is helpful to assign students conversations with foreign tourists and conversations with foreign residents, pointing out the different directions these conversations are likely to take. It is helpful to establish the scenario first, as follows:

Meeting a Tourist

You are sitting on the Shinkansen when a young woman with red hair and green eyes gets on the train and asks you — in English! — if the seat next to you is free. You say that it is and she sits down. A few minutes later she smiles at you. You want to begin a conversation with her, so you start by saying, “Where are you going?” She answers, “Kyoto. I’m just here for two weeks, so I want to see as much of Japan as possible!” Now finish the conversation! Find out where she is from, how long she has been in Japan, what places she has already visited, when she is going back to her country, etc.

You: Where are you going?

She: To Kyoto. I’m just here for two weeks, so I want to see as much of Japan as possible.

You:

She: (And so on. Leave a good margin of paper for students to complete this dialog; have them use both sides of the paper if they can.)

Meeting a Foreign Resident

You are shopping in your local supermarket when you see a tall black man who is also shopping there. He is having trouble because he can’t find whatever he is looking for, so you decide to help him. You decide to speak to him in Japanese first to show him you aren’t just trying to practice your English on him (and also because you aren’t completely sure he speaks English).

You: Nani ka o-komari desu ka? (Can I help you with something?)

He: I’m sorry — I don’t speak Japanese.

You: Oh — I see. What are you looking for? Perhaps I could help.

He: I’m looking for something called — wakame — ? Do you know where it is?

You: Yes, it’s over there I think.

He: Oh, thank you! I’ve been in this country three years but I still don’t speak much Japanese, I’m ashamed to say.

After you leave the store you meet the man again, and you decide to go have a beer together. Complete the conversation you have with him. Remember — he has been in Japan for three years, so when you ask him questions, make sure they aren't the kind of things you would ask a tourist.

He: Well, this is a nice place. I like these aka-chochins, don't you?

You:

He: (And so on.)

When marking the students' completed dialogs, the main points to look for are as follows:

- 1) Did the student fully exploit a possible conversation opportunity or did s/he cut it off?
- 2) Did s/he keep the conversation smooth and connected, or was it full of abrupt changes of subject and unrelated remarks?
- 3) Were the questions s/he asked appropriate to the conversational partner?
- 4) Did the student ask any D/A questions, or ask a rather personal question too soon, without a proper approach?

Finally, the students' completed dialogs (with their names erased, of course) are excellent material for global correction. They can be by the class as a group. The teacher can also keep a collection of past classes' efforts and display these instead, if the class is so small that it is obvious who wrote what, or if the problems students have are markedly similar in nature. The students can also use their completed, corrected conversations as dialogs for role plays with other students. These dialogs will mean a good deal more to students than those available in books, as they will contain things the students want to say and involve situations students are very likely to find themselves in.

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Book Reviews

STUDY LISTENING: UNDERSTANDING LECTURES AND TALKS IN ENGLISH. Tony Lynch. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 1983.

Recently it has become easier to find authentic, natural English materials for improving listening comprehension skills at the elementary and lower intermediate levels. However, it is still difficult to find good, challenging listening materials for students at intermediate and higher levels. Most texts provide exercises to check comprehension but don't explicitly teach the skills that will enable students to become more efficient listeners. Students learn to be successful in listening to controlled extracts, but are still woefully unsuccessful when actually attempting to listen to conference presentations or lectures.

Study Listening assumes that being able to listen effectively to public talks requires a number of skills, and that these skills can be explicitly taught. Specifically, "the listener has to decide *what* is being said, its *meaning*, its importance and *whether* to note it down, and *how* to note it down." Most listening texts stop after the first two skills, and trust students to acquire the ability to judge importance and note information through repeated exposure to extended discourse. However, students can learn to recognize the same "marker words" that native speakers use in order to more easily follow long presentations.

Lynch's text teaches students to recognize the structure of talks: for example, the verbal markers speakers use to indicate central information, the structure of logical arguments, and how to follow chains of reference. As Lynch states in his preface:

"Foreign listeners tend to do mental dictation, listening word by word—and even sound by sound. A principal objective of *Study Listening* is to increase the effectiveness of a learner's listening by showing how he can relax the intensity of his listening effort, through using such clues as his knowledge of the topic, the context in which something is said and the way the speaker chooses to express it."

Study Listening provides students with increasingly longer extracts of authentic language and increasingly more complex tasks to perform. The seven talks include such diverse topics as "Problems of Urbanisation," "Competition for Land Use," and "Microtechnology." The speakers provide students with practice listening to a variety of North American and British accents. A feature of *Study Listening* is that extracts from five of the talks appear in each unit for intensive exercises, and again in the note-taking practice units as complete talks. The book takes students through four phases: "finding central information *in sentences*, recognising connections *between sentences*, evaluating the importance of information *in sections of a talk*, and finally, using information from *complete talks*." After each of the first two phases, there is a note-taking unit where "features presented earlier in short exercise extracts are re-presented and exploited." The spiral progression of activities allows students to gain confidence as they clearly see progress in their listening skills.

Although the uncontrolled vocabulary and natural hesitations present in the talks provide valuable practice, they also can be intimidating for students who have never attempted this kind of listening. Especially in the first few units, my students have required a lot of coaching and encouragement. As they see that they can follow the structure of a talk even if they don't understand every word, they are more willing to trust their guesses.

Study Listening works. I have used it with students preparing to enter graduate study in the United States, with students preparing to take the TOEFL, and with students preparing to attend and participate in international conferences. They have all benefitted from Lynch's supposition that prediction and guessing in listening are skills that can be taught, and that all students can become more efficient listeners. They learn to use what they know about the topic, and what they know about English, in addition to what they hear, in order to increase their understanding.

Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto

BBC BEGINNERS' ENGLISH: Stage One Student's Book. Judy Garton-Sprenger and Simon Greenall. BBC English by Radio and Television. 1987.

Today, with so many English language textbooks on the market, how can one know what constitutes a good text? What motivates the student, teacher, or administrator to buy a particular book? Is it its suitability for the students in question, the number of units it contains, or the quality of its graphic layout? It seems there are nearly as many reasons for purchasing a book as there are students who buy them. *BBC Beginners' English*, Stage I, incorporates many aspects of what a good text should be for beginning students. It has something for everyone. It is well organized, visually appealing, and contains a wide variety of practical activities.

One of the most striking features of this book is its graphic layout. Each of the five units is grouped by color. Throughout the book there is a consistent color pattern: sentence and dialogue clozes are bordered in green, language structures are framed in yellow, and review exercises are outlined in black. Not only are the colors visually attractive, but they also allow the reader to focus on more important information. For example, certain words are highlighted in red to further emphasize the grammatical point being taught. The use of various typefaces helps as well. *BBC Beginners' English* also contains a wide array of pictures, photographs, cartoons, sketches, maps, and painting reprints, many of which add an international dimension to the text.

Of course, these graphics would be of little benefit to the student if they were not organized with a particular educational goal in mind. *BBC Beginners' English* is set up in such a way that students progress sequentially. Most units are structured so that the learner begins with activities that focus on him or herself. Later activities are expanded to include pair and group work. The overall sequencing of units in the book is well planned, taking into account classroom dynamics. For example, in the first five units tasks are kept simple, allowing time for students to become comfortable with one another. The following units deal with progressively more difficult structures.

BBC Beginners' English helps students prepare for many of the practical, real-life situations they will encounter in an English-

speaking country; for example: telling time, asking directions, shopping for food and clothing items, making reservations, and ordering at a restaurant. An interesting and useful section, which many other texts do not include, deals with the language involved in coping with an emergency.

BBC Beginners' English provides students with a wide range of activities. Most of the units contain a high percentage of student-centered activities, including matching, listening, pair and group work, individual speaking practice, dialogue and sentence clozes, and information gap exercises. The text also includes practice for building reading skills. There are exercises in scanning for the main idea and important details, as well as others in which students are required to answer questions from reading passages. There is a language review section at the end of the book which allows students further practice with grammatical structures and pronunciation. Most importantly perhaps, *BBC Beginners' English* allows students to express their creativity in designing and acting out their own dialogues.

Although the text presents many interesting and well-organized exercises, there are some areas which could be further explored. Even though descriptions and comparisons are covered, there is no focus on explanation strategies. This could be particularly useful for those students with a limited vocabulary.

In general though, *BBC Beginners' English* is a good introductory text that offers much for elementary level students. The activities are organized in such a way as to encourage language learning in a gradual and relaxed manner. It is a good springboard for students wishing to further their studies in English.

Keith Hoy

Keith Hoy graduated with a degree in Education from the University of British Columbia. He has taught E.S.L. to immigrants in Vancouver and E.F.L. at the Language Institute of Japan. He is currently an instructor at the University of Pittsburgh's Japan Program.

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BBC BEGINNERS' ENGLISH

**Judy Garton-Sprenger
and Simon Greenall**

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courses

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The course aims to help learners to achieve a variety of educational objectives and to tackle a broad range of communicative tasks. The students' involvement in these aims is ensured by the following features :

- ☆ Communication practice in social and professional contexts
- ☆ Realistic activities and tasks
- ☆ Exposure to national and international variations of English
- ☆ A learner-centred approach
- ☆ A balance between communicative activities, structure practice and grammar
- ☆ Systematic skills development



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