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ABSTRACT

This document presents some 20 papers on projects conducted by Foreign Teaching Assistant (FTA) participants in the areas of academic/pedagogical issues, cross-cultural issues, and testing issues. Papers are as follows: "The Testing and Evaluation of Foreign Teaching Assistants: Where Are We and Where Are We Going?" (Ralph Pat Barrett); "Screening Tests for Training Programs for Foreign Teaching Assistants: An Examination of Rationale" (Sally Brett); "FTA Tests and University Testing Policies" (Phil Johncock); "A Plan for Testing, Training, and Supervision of Foreign Associate Instructors at Indiana University-Bloomington" (Virginia S. Martin); "The Development of a Questionnaire to Determine the Effectiveness of the Foreign Associate Instructor Examination at Indiana University" (Susan Greer); "Cross-Cultural Considerations in Designing a Foreign TA Training Program" (Lynne A. McNamara); "Pre-departure TA Orientation Workshop in Taiwan" (Chen, Fu-Yen); "FTA Cross-cultural Communication Syllabus" (Jacque S. Behrens); "Integrating Campus and Community Resources into the Social Support Component of an FTA Training Program" (Lawrence H. Bell); "Writing Across Cultures: Cross-cultural Interaction in the Writing Class" (Bruce Leeds); "Questions to Guide Thinking about Pedagogy and Language in FTA Training" (Patricia Byrd); "Some Typical Problems in the Training of Chinese Teaching Assistants: Three Case Studies" (Erik E. Christy); "Focusing on Specifics: Strategies for Improving FTA Lectures" (Cindy Myers); "Oral Communication Training: A Bridge to Teaching Effectiveness" (Lorraine P. Sarhage); "Training Undergraduates to Help in FTA Training" (Peggy Allen Heidish); "Proposal for a University-wide TA Orientation Program" (Daryl Kinney); "The Organization of American Undergraduate Students to Foreign TAs: A Videotape Preparation Survey" (Rosslyn Smith); "Video Use in FTA Training Programs: A Survey" (Peter Lee); "The Language and Purpose of Questions in Teaching" (David Stewart); "Pronunciation, Grammar, and What Else?" (Darlene Larson); "The Teaching of Physics at the University Level" (Mary Anne Wieferich); and "Preliminary Bibliography: Discourse Strategies in Teaching University Biology, Chemistry, and Engineering" (Rosslyn Smith). (GLR)

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WYOMING/NAFSA INSTITUTE ON

FOREIGN TA TRAINING

JULY, 1988

WORKING PAPERS

VOLUME II

Janet C. Constantinides, Editor

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

This second volume of WORKING PAPERS from the Wyoming/NAFSA Institute on Foreign TA Training represents two important changes from the first volume. First, the Institute was funded in part by a grant from the United States Information Agency to NAFSA. One of the participants, Chen Fu-Yen, attended as part of an individual training grant, also funded by USIA; his project, to design a pre-departure orientation for foreign teaching assistants (FTAs) from Taiwan, was one of the goals of his grant application. Its inclusion in this volume is a first: it is the first time a publication in the United States has included a discussion of an FTA program to be conducted prior to departure from the home country.

Secondly, the papers in this volume represent a variety of types of projects in various stages of completion. During the Advanced Session of the 1987 Institute, three areas of investigation were presented in background sessions: academic/pedagogical issues, cross-cultural communication issues, and testing issues. Participants then chose one of these three areas to work on with a group of participants and one of the consultants who functioned as faculty for the Institute. Each Working Group decided on its schedule and methods of investigation. Some participants came to the Institute with pre-determined goals; for example, Rosslyn Smith's project on a videotape for orienting American students to FTAs was a project which she had already begun work. Jacque Behrens had already identified her goal--revising the cultural awareness component of an FTA training program. Other participants found ideas for investigation during the Institute, as in the case of Sally Brett's inquiry into the rationale behind screening tests in FTA training programs. The Working Groups gave reports at the end of the Institute on the projects initiated in each group. Individuals were asked to submit their papers later or the Editor had the option of using the draft submitted at the end of the Institute.

When the participants returned home, they sometimes found extenuating circumstances which prevented them from completing their investigations. Their papers are included here as "Investigations in Progress" or "Ideas for Investigation" in the hopes that they may be helpful for others who are interested in this area. Others were able to complete their projects; their papers often describe projects tailored to the needs of their particular institutions, but they may help others design similar projects. An example of this is the paper co-authored by Daryl Kinney which proposes a solution for Arizona State's training of FTAs--and all TAs. Still others have more general application, as, for example, Barbara Plakan's plan for training raters of videotapes. And still other projects indicate the kinds of research to be done in the field, for example, the papers in the Bibliographies in Section Three.

This collection of papers, then, represents some of the most recent research which has been completed as well as investigations yet to be completed (or even undertaken). What

they all have in common is that they are the result of the interchange of ideas among a group of professional involved in FTA training.

The papers are in different formats and type faces because they were printed sometimes by the author and sometimes by the editor, after editing. Some of the papers represent only the beginnings of ideas while others present highly polished drafts. Most of these are, in fact, drafts--papers on the way to becoming something more than they are here. I ask you to remember that as you are reading.

If any of the papers intrigue you, raise questions for you, pique your curiosity, you may contact the author directly; the list of participants at the end of this volume includes their names, addresses, and telephone numbers. In the spirit of the Wyoming Institute, they have all agreed to continue the sharing that has begun with the publication of these papers.

Editing these papers has again generated the same sense of excitement that I felt during the Institute itself. It has been a pleasure.

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SECTION ONE

TESTING AND EVALUATION

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THE TESTING AND EVALUATION OF FOREIGN TEACHING ASSISTANTS: WHERE ARE WE AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Ralph Pat Barrett
Michigan State University

I. WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Most academic institutions that employ foreign teaching assistants (FTAs) for classroom teaching require some form of evaluation of the students' language proficiency and/or pedagogical skills before allowing the students to begin their teaching. The tests used for such evaluation generally fall into three general categories: (1) language proficiency tests, (2) tests requiring simulated teaching, and (3) tests of communicative competence--the ability to communicate in a manner appropriate to the communicative situation (here, the classroom).

It is also well to note that evaluation tests can be divided into three groups according to their purpose. The first group consists of screening tests designed for foreign students that have applied for teaching assistantships but may or may not receive them, depending on the results of the FTA evaulation. The second group consists of placement tests which decide the placement of foreign students who have already been promised an assistantship. Depending on the results of such tests, the student might be assigned as a classroom teacher with full teaching responsibilities, a recitation class teacher with limited responsibilities, a laboratory assistant who assists with demonstrations, a study group leader or a tutor. The third group of tests (often combined with one of the two types above) are designed to determine whether a foreign student who has been awarded an assistantship needs to attend a training program (orientation, seminar, workshop, etc.) in order to improve his/her language and/or pedagogical skills.

Before discussing language proficiency tests appropriate to FTA evaluation, a "basic truth" must be noted: if the foreign student has not completely fulfilled the regular English language requirement for his/her institution, he/she must do so before getting permission to take an evaluative test for FTAs.

The language proficiency test most commonly used is the SPEAK

[1] This paper was presented as a Background Session at the Institute.

test available from the Educational Testing Service. It is the commercial form of the Test of Spoken English (TSE), a test usually administered at the same time as the TOEFL in many foreign countries. The SPEAK test is designed to render scores on the student's pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and general comprehensibility. The advantages of the SPEAK test are compelling; it offers (1) professionally prepared testing materials, (2) easy availability, (3) widespread use which permits comparison of results among user institutions, (4) ease of administration, and (5) materials for training novice test raters.

However, the disadvantages and weaknesses of the SPEAK are also numerous; these include (1) only three forms available to date, (2) some lack of parallelism among the three forms, (3) the unintentional testing of listening comprehension (which is not scored), (4) possible invalidity in the scoring of fluency on the "reading aloud" task, (5) no provision for interactive communicative testing (the testees are not able to ask for repetitions or clarifications of question cues), (6) uncertain scoring rules for certain types of responses, (7) the need for high-quality tape recording equipment (preferably a modern language laboratory), (8) artificial time limits on responses (leading to tremendous pressure on the testees), and (9) considerable training required for raters to ensure reliable scoring. For these reasons, the SPEAK is often used in conjunction with another type of test which allows for untimed communicative interaction between the test administrator and the foreign student.

Perhaps the most common supplement to the SPEAK is a type of oral interview, in which the interviewer assesses the student's ability to understand and answer questions on various topics. In addition to yielding potential scores on the student's pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, intonation, word stress, and fluency, an assessment of the student's ability to understand and respond to various types of questions and instructions can be obtained. Among the advantages of the oral interview are (1) the potential measurement of a variety of language and communicative categories, (2) flexibility of administration and scoring, (3) no need for high-quality recording equipment, (4) no set test forms requiring security handling, and (5) individual administration, allowing for personal treatment of nervous students. The oral interview has some disadvantages, however: (1) greater possibility of personal bias on the part of the interviewer, (2) a possible lack of face validity (no clear tie between oral interview results and

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student's teaching effectiveness), (3) reliable scoring requires considerable rater training, and (4) possible lack of comparability of scores due to non-standard administration and/or unequal handling of individual testees.

There is no doubt that most of the language features (pronunciation, listening comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, etc.) that can be evaluated with an oral interview can also be assessed by means of a teaching simulation performed by the would-be teaching asssistant. But the real reason for using the teaching simulation is to assess the student's effectiveness as a classroom teacher, and so a variety of "presentation skills" (such as the ability to explain concepts clearly and the use of teaching aids/media) and the use of eye contact, voice control, gestures, and body language are rated. There are some real advantages to using the teaching simulation test, as it is perhaps the most economical means of evaluating the foreign student's English ability and presentation skills. Other advantages include (1) high face validity (the testing task has a strong correspondance to the probable teaching task), (2) a realistic simulation of a classroom situation which may include questions from "students" that require question-handling strategies, (3) an opportunity for the student to use compensation techniques to make up for possible weaknesses in presentation skills, and (4) the possible inclusion of raters from departments other than ESL (thus building credibility for the testing procedure within the institution).

The teaching simulation is not without its disadvantages, however. Among the most serious are (1) the possibility that the student is required to perform a testing task (teaching) which he/she has never done before, (2) the possible elimination of potentially good teachers due to one poor performance because of nerves, fatigue, ill-health, etc., (3) the considerable rater training necessary for reliable scoring, (4) the videotaping resources required for recording the teaching simulation (for checking scoring), and (5) the problem of possible misuse of test results by various academic departments.

The last type of test, the communicative competence test, is designed to discover whether the foreign student can perform satisfactorily (appropriately) as a teacher in the American classroom. Teaching behavior that is effective in the student's own culture may be out of place or actually unacceptable in a U.S. institution. The communi-

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cative competence test usually consists of a variety of subtests, each of which assesses a particular skill or set of skills which underlie appropriate language use, pedagogical skill, and effective communication in the classroom. Such tests might be scored for any of the language features noted above, but in addition might specifically evaluate the foreign student's skill at reading aloud or pronouncing technical terms specific to his/her academic area. Other communicative tasks can be evaluated, also, including the student's ability to explain a concept in his/her own academic area, to make a classroom announcement, or to provide reasonable answers to questions dealing with teaching behavior. Such tasks often involve the construction of an "oral text" which can be scored for its clarity and its cohesiveness. Also, because many communicative competence tasks may involve interactive role play, the student's ability to understand questions, instructions, and comments can be evaluated, as well as his/her sensitivity to the listener's possible needs for additional information (usually clarification in the form of examples, repetition of crucial facts, definitions, etc.).

The most obvious advantage of the communicative competence test is its flexibility to assess a wide range of language and pedagogical behavior which underlies the teaching task. Some other advantages include (1) simple administration and easily-obtainable test materials, (2) no special equipment other than a tape recorder required, (3) flexibility with respect to test content and scoring, (4) adjustable administration time, (5) possible personalization of test content according to the testee's area of academic study, and (6) possible personal treatment of individual students depending on their state of anxiety, condition of health, etc.

Some disadvantages of the communicative competence test are (1) a possible lack of face validity if no teaching simulation is included, (2) the necessity of considerable rater training to insure reliable scoring, (3) the need for the test administrator to engage in demanding role play, which may call for spontaneous interaction with the testee, and (4) the lack of comparison with other test results. For more information on the communicative competence test, please refer to the outline of such a test designed for use with potential FTAs at Michigan State University (attached).

II. WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Most of us working with FTA evaluation feel that we are at the forefront of a rapidly expanding new field of testing. In many cases we are seeking tests which combine the assessment of both language and pedagogy skills, while in other cases we want to obtain a personality profile and a cross-cultural familiarity assessment of our foreign students as well. And as testing persons, we require these tests to have the three basic requirements of all good tests: validity, reliability, and practicality (with respect to the length of the test, the resources required, and the scoring procedure used). In addition, we want these tests to be readily available for all to experiment with, at a reasonable price. Also, if subjective scoring is involved in these tests, we want them to come complete with rater training materials, such as those provided in the SPEAK.

In dealing with FTA evaluation, it is clear to many that the next step in the process is the evaluation of all teaching assistants, both foreign and American. Although language proficiency is not an issue with most American TAs, their teaching skills and their ability to handle cross-cultural teaching situations certainly is. (Note that cross-cultural here can include cultural and socio-economic differences within the American culture as well as between the U.S. and foreign cultures.) It seems only a matter of time until our institutions require all TAs to demonstrate good pedagogic skills and familiarity with cross-cultural teaching methods in order to ensure the best TA teaching possible.

How do we reach this goal? First, we need to identify the criterion performance and specific skills that are required of all teaching assistants. Then, we must determine what special skills the TAs teaching in specific academic fields and departments must have. Lastly, we must specify any additional skills required of FTAs.

Once this is accomplished, we need to construct valid tests that reliably measure the skills and performance identified above. We must then educate those on our own campuses in the wise use of the results which these tests render, whether it be for screening or placement purposes or as diagnostic measures in a TA training or orientation program. After suitable refinement and standardization, we then need to make these tests available to all institutions which need to do

their own TA evaluation but which lack resources of their own for test development. And finally, we need to let one another know what we are doing, through publications, conference talks, meetings, and even personal letters.

These goals may seem formidable, but there are dozens of U.S. institutions engaged in the basic groundwork necessary to achieve them. If FTA specialists continue to share their successes (and their failures) with one another, there is no reason to fear that we will fail this challenge. Perhaps the only thing we need to fear is that, once having succeeded in providing many excellent means of evaluating TAs, we will be handed an even tougher job.

OUTLINE OF MSU FTA ORAL INTERVIEW (REVISED JUNE, 1987)

*** The oral interview procedure will consist of two tiers:

Tier One: (A) Introduction and Information-Getting (3 mins.)
(B) Reading of Technical Terms (2 mins.)
(C) Explaining an Extended ESP Passage (5-10 mins.)

Total Time: Approx. 10-15 mins.

Tier Two: (D1) Pedagogical Questions (4-6 mins.) or
(D2) Office Hour Role Play (4-6 mins.)
(E) Classroom Task Role Play (4-6 mins.)

Total Time: 8-12 mins.

NOTE: If the student's linguistic performance is either very good or very poor (mostly unintelligible) according to evidence gathered in Parts A, B, and C, the interviewer should consider ending the oral interview at the end of Tier One.

*** Materials Needed: Tape-Recorder, Tapes, Chalkboard or Writing Pad, Pen

For Parts (A) ELC TA Form
(B) List of Terms
(C) Passage on ESP Subject
(D1) List of Qs for Interviewer (or)
(D2) List of Office Hour Role Play Situations & TA Slips
(E) List of Classroom Task Role Play Situations & Scripts

*** Scoring is divided into three general areas:

(1) Oral Production (OP)

(*) Pronunciation (P): Accuracy of speech sounds, word stress, and sentence intonation.
(*) Grammar (G): Accuracy and appropriateness of grammatical structures.
(*) Vocabulary (V): Appropriateness of lexical selection.
(*) Fluency (F): Appropriateness of pauses and hesitations in speaking.

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(2) Aural Comprehension (AC)

(*) Question-Handling (QH): Ability to comprehend and appropriately answer questions
(*) Understanding Instructions (UI): Ability to comprehend a range of instruction types.
(*) Giving Appropriate Responses to Comments (AR): Ability to respond appropriately to a range of comments by the interviewer.

(3) Discourse Strategies (DS)

(*) Organization (O): Ability to construct a clear, coherent oral text using an appropriate rhetorical device and suitable transitions and sequence markers.
(*) Sensitivity to the Listener (S): Ability to modify an oral text (by adding examples, illustrations, restatements, clarifications, etc.) in order to enhance the listener's comprehension.

*** Each scoring unit is scored from 1-4 (no zero rating). Each tier = 40 possible points. When both tiers are administered, the separate tier scores are added together and divided by two to derive the final score.

The basis for each rating is native English speaker competence. Scores are based only on what interview material is audible on the tape recording (i.e., the student's non-audible performance (gestures, facial expressions, etc.) is ignored in arriving at his/her rating.

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Tier One:

(A) Introduction & Info-Getting	AC-QH
(B) Reading of Technical Terms	OP-P
(C) Explaining an Extended Passage	AC-QH,AR
	OP-P,G,V,F
	DS-O,S
Highest Possible Total:	40

Tier Two:

(D1) Pedagogical Questions or	
(D2) Office Hour Role Play	AC-QH,UI.AR
	OP-P,V,G
(E) Classroom Task Role Play	OP-P,F
	DS-O,S
Highest Possible Total:	40

Summary of Scoring Units:

OP:	P = 16; G = 8; V = 8; F = 8	(Total: 40)
AC:	QH = 12; UI = 4; AR = 8	(Total: 24)
DS:	O = 8; S = 8	(Total: 16)

SCREENING TESTS FOR TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR FOREIGN TEACHING ASSISTANTS: AN EXAMINATION OF RATIONALE

Sally Brett
Duke University

This paper originally was intended to examine the processes of selection and training of raters (evaluators) of various proficiency tests used to screen graduate students applying for admission to a teaching assistants' training seminar or in the process of being appointed to teach undergraduate classes. Before I could begin analyzing those processes, however, I reasoned that first I should determine what screening tests were employed and what exactly the tests were supposed to measure, as reflected in (a) the descriptive statements about the tests and (b) the areas of evaluation given to raters to score. There should be, I assumed, a correlation between the raters' backgrounds and the areas being tested.

I surveyed the Clearinghouse [on Training Programs for International TAs] literature available in the Resource Room of the Wyoming/NAFSA Institute on Foreign TA Training and spoke with program representatives from various schools attending the 1987 Institute, in each case asking these questions:

1. Do you use a screening test?
2. If so, what test(s)?
3. Who rates the test(s)?
4. What is the rating scale?
5. What are the areas being rated?
6. How are those raters selected?
7. How are those raters trained?

Note that I was not concerned with pre- or post-evaluations and that I was determining only what tests, and what areas of proficiency, were being initially tested before the student began any training as a teaching assistant. Given the time constraints and the somewhat predetermined nature of the sample (I could only review those materials and question those persons present and available at the Institute), I cannot claim that this survey is complete. But I can say that this survey is reasonably based and fairly representative of current test practices.

RATERS AND FORMS

Some of the twenty-odd surveyed reports of seminars, pilot projects, or special sessions designed to implement training of foreign teaching assistants did not mention a screening test. (NB: I am using "Screening Test" as a term for tests of proficiency used for diagnostic or placement purposes.) In others in which screening was explained, even if only in a sentence (see Appendix A), the nature (occupation, rank, background) of the raters was infrequently mentioned (see Appendix B). Only a few gave rating sheets or explained scoring values.

Most schools use instructors of ESL courses and instructional staff of the TA training program as raters for screening tests. This seems both logical and fair, since those are the instructors with the backgrounds appropriate to judge language proficiency--the avowed purpose of most screening tests. One school reports good results and inter-

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rater reliability in using undergraduates who are tutors in the ESL instructional program as raters for oral interviews.

Some schools include as raters, particularly of taped interviews or classroom simulations, members of the faculty in the major department of the foreign student being tested. The rationale for including these faculty is twofold: first, it is politically expedient and in many ways validates the efforts of the ESL staff when "outsiders" see what "they" do; second, departments can assist in locating material appropriate for such a presentation--keyed to the freshman or sophomore level at which most TAs instruct.

Only one school mentioned a "paid outside rater," but two or three schools mentioned that they pay or plan to pay evaluators and sometimes even the undergraduate participants who function as the "class" in a simulated setting.

OBSERVATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

It is fairly evident from this small sample that some assumptions underlie the screening of foreign students who are hoping to become (or whose departments hope they will become) teaching assistants, in charge of an undergraduate class. Seasoned veterans of ESL instruction (and by that phrase I refer to the instructional staff, not the students) will probably think the articulation of such assumptions is unnecessary. However, examining the premises of our actions, while it may serve only as a review and a confirmation of the wisdom of our decisions, can make clearer also some of the connections among the various goals of the training programs and their relationship to the academic goals of the university. (Would that that were a redundancy!) I present these assumptions paired with the observation(s) from which the assumption was inferred.

Observation One: Most of the tests used to screen TAs were measures of language proficiency. SPEAK was commonly used, as was an oral interview, usually devised in-hous, and either taped or videotaped. The rating area common to such tests was the general comprehensibility of the speaker--grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency.

Assumption One: Students who do not demonstrate fairly advanced oral language proficiency will not benefit from training in classroom teaching. That is, classroom teaching requires sophisticated oral language skills, such as clarifying and elaborating, framing and responding to questions, and narrating, which cannot be attempted by a speaker of minimal or near-average conversational skill.

Observation Two: Some schools administer a teaching simulation test, usually videotaped, in which the would-be teaching assistant presents a basic concept to a class (or at least an audience) and fields questions. Several schools ask that students additionally present materials which they must organize, very akin to the "announcement" section of the SPEAK test.

Assumption Two: By placing the student in a simulated classroom situation, we can judge his/her knowledge of (or proficiency in) the advanced communication skills required in the classroom. I have some difficulty with the rationale of this simulated testing. What is the point of testing their teaching skills, when teaching skills are what we are supposedly going to teach them? In answering this questions, I came to the next area.

Observation Three: Some schools screen students in order to inform the departments that the prospective TA has or has not the language proficiency necessary to conduct a class and/or supervise a laboratory. Theirs is a recommending or certifying function. Other schools screen in order to determine placement in courses: eligible for a TA training course, eligible for advanced ESL instruction, needs remedial work, etc. Theirs is a placement function, and they generally are responsible for seeing that TA training takes place--either within the department or in the ESL program or other

appropriate designated university program.

Some schools screen in order to diagnose individual student needs as teaching assistants. Their function is not certifying or recommending or placement, but training. That is, the TAs are already departmentally selected and appointed, and the TA training seminar is just that: training for TAs who will go into the classroom. Still other schools do not screen, but give pre- and post-evaluations, usually videotaped simulated classroom presentations, which will indicate the achievement of the student. And, one would deduce, how well the student masters the pedagogical, cross-cultural, and advanced communicative skills of the TA training class will in itself be a certification or recommendation for classroom assignment.

But in reviewing the purposes of the screening and the functions of the tests, one comes back to this question of the purpose of the simulated class presentation, particularly those videotaped presentations in which a "class" is present and asking questions. The validity of the question is reinforced by the areas being rated. In most cases, the evaluation sheet contains a rating area that can only be described as pedagogical skills--use of the blackboard, eye contact, and so forth. Yet, as we observed above in One and Two, the rationale for the classroom simulation is purportedly to measure advanced communication skills, the kind of proficiency in language interaction demanded of the classroom teacher.

Assumption Three: The simulated classroom teaching test is a measure not only of language proficiency but of broader communicative skills. However, to the degree that such tests include a rating area for pedagogical skills, the simulated classroom teaching tests also can be a measure of pedagogical skills. When such a pedagogical rating area is included, it would seem logical that the test and the raters are distinguishing between "advanced communicative skills" and "pedagogical skills."

Observation Four: Most raters are ESL instructors.

Assumption Four: Since most of the tests are intended to measure language proficiency, then those instructors with a background in measuring such skill are the appropriate raters.

Observation Five: Since most raters are ESL instructors, training is infrequently a part of the rater selection process. However, when videotaped simulated classroom presentations are used, training of the raters--who are ESL instructors, students, and/or other departmental faculty--proceeds on the model of holistic scoring. In training, model tapes are viewed with an explanation of why one speaker is a 4, for example, and another is a 2. Then the rater-trainees view several tapes, rating each and discussing afterwards with an experienced rater, in groups, their ratings and why they are "off" or appropriate.

Some raters score while observing the simulated classroom presentation as part of the class/audience, or within a hour or so after the testing; a few ratings are made a day or so after, commonly of videotaped presentations.

Assumption Five: The immediacy is not a variable. Raters will not be affected by personal presence. (I think that the common use of immediate scoring has been dictated more by logistics than by logic.)

CONCLUSIONS

Most schools use either SPEAK or a SPEAK-like test to determine basic language proficiency. But most schools are not content to rely solely on such tests since they do not measure nor give the students a chance to demonstrate interactive listening and speaking skills. To measure those more advanced communicative skills, schools have chosen to construct in-house tests, particularly the oral interview and the simulated

classroom presentation.

The format of the oral interview can be short and relatively informal, almost like a job interview in that the student answers questions about field of study, interests outside academe, and so forth. Some interviews, however, move on to more direct information about the student's language facility within his field: the student is asked to read a list of terms from his/her field, or to give an explanation of a paragraph-long passage related to his/her academic field. [Editor's Note: For an example, see the brief description of he interview developed at Michigan State University, pp. 7-9 in this volume.] The interview is either audio- or videotaped, and rated thereafter for language fluency and ability to organize and explain material, respond to questions, ask for clarifications, etc.

Many schools are either beginning to use or are adapting current uses of the simulated classroom presentation. These seem to range somewhat in format and audience. Some schools ask students to present material to a selected class of undergraduates; others ask students to present to a room with only the rating panel present; some have students from the training course present to other prospective FTAs. Some raters score as the presentation is ongoing; others mark immediately afterwards; others are shown the videotaped presentation within days of the actual presentation.

The areas of evaluation for the simulated classroom presentation reflect the pioneering aspect of this form of screening, for some rating forms do address behaviors that can only be considered pedagogical. For screening, this is a difficult issue, as I have indicated above. The responses to that issue include:

(1) We address some pedagogical behaviors because our screening test can certify FTAs to go directly into the classroom, so we must have some measure of how well the prospective FTA understands American classroom situations.

(2) We are indeed putting the student in the classroom situation, for we are measuring the language of the classroom, the sociolinguistic proficiency of the prospective FTA.

(3) While the oral interview does give us a measure of the student's one-on-one communication skill, we need a measure of his/her understanding of communicating with a larger audience.

As we have discussed these rating sheets and other issues at the Institute, we have agreed, I think, that the design of simulated classroom presentations as a screening test for foreign teaching assistants is a challenging new field of ESL/TFTA testing. Certainly, in this review of practices and underlying assumptions, the need has become evident for all who work with FTAs to articulate to themselves and their university community the purpose of both their tests and their programs. By correlating the test format, the raters, and the uses of the test results, we strengthen our credibility and our successes.

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APPENDIX A

SCREENING TESTS IN CURRENT USE

SCHOOL	SPEAK	INTERVIEW	PRESENTATION	OTHER
Arizona State	X	X		
UCLA				ESLPE
Carnegie-Mellon	X	X		
Cornell	X	X		reading list
Georgia State	X	X	X	reading test
Kentucky	TSE	X	X	
Indiana U		X		written test
Iowa State	X		TEACH	
Michigan State	ELC	X		
U. Michigan		X	X	listening test
U Nevada-Reno	X	X	X	
Ohio State	X	X		
Penn State	X			
Texas Tech	X			Michigan Battery
U. Pittsburgh		X		
Utah		X		
U Wyoming		X	X	Oral Comp; (writing sample)

APPENDIX B

RATERS FOR SCREENING TESTS

SCHOOL	RATER			
	Student	ESL Faculty	Other Faculty	Other
Arizona		X		
UCLA		X		
Carnegie-Mellon	X(undergrad)	X		
Cornell		X		
Georgia State		X	X	
Kentucky	X(undergrad)		X	
Indiana U.		X		
Iowa State	X(grad)	X	X	
Michigan State		X		
U. Michigan		X	X	paid outside
U. Nevada-Reno	X(grad)		X	
Ohio State		X	X	
Penn State		X		
Texas Tech	X			
U. Pittsburgh	X(undergrad)	X	X	
Utah		X		
U Wyoming		X	X	

FTA Tests and University Testing Policies

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INTRODUCTION: FTA TESTING SITUATION

During the 1980's, interest in the preparation and training of graduate teaching assistants (TAs) and growing concern that TAs possess adequate communication skills to satisfactorily perform their roles as TAs have increased. TAs are faced with genuinely compelling pedagogical and communicative issues. In addition to these TA concerns, non-native English speaking, or foreign TAs (FTAs) often face major linguistic and cultural differences. These differences create communication difficulties often referred to as "the foreign TA problem." The aspect of "the foreign TA problem" receiving most attention by campus communities today is the English language abilities of the FTAs. In fact, the severity of the problem has prompted many state legislators and university systems to impose oral or speaking English language proficiency requirements in addition to the already established written requirements (i.e., the Test of English as a Foreign Language or TOEFL) for all FTAs (Heller, 1986; Constantinides, 1987a).

Imposing oral proficiency requirements implies that there be appropriate assessment instruments available to measure oral proficiency adequately, fairly, and, in most cases, cheaply. However, language and testing specialists are quick to point out that TOEFL (commonly used for admissions purposes) should not be used to gauge speaking proficiency since it does not have an oral component. Furthermore, there is widespread dissatisfaction toward the appropriateness, accuracy, validity, and reliabilit in scoring of the two most commonly used standardized oral proficiency tests currently available [i.e., Educational Testing Service's Test of Spoken English (TSE) and institutionalized version, SPEAK] (Barrett, 1987; Byrd, 1987). In addition, there has been continuing controversy and debate over alternatives or supplements to SPEAK and TSE.

The issues related to language testing are sensitive ones and extend beyond the realm of the tests themselves. For example, the author of a recent article in the <u>Chronicle of Higher Education</u> asserts that "programs to assess the language ability of foreign-born TAs ... are proving to be complicated, time-consuming, and politically sensitive" (Heller, 1986, p. 9). That is, language testing programs, usually conducted by English language centers, are considered by some as demoralizing to foreign students, hurt graduate recruiting, and are an intrusion into the decision-making process of departments (i.e., admission and issuance of assistantships) (Heller, 1986).

Yet, in support of the states and universities mandating oral proficiency testing of FTAs, research indicates that a minimal level of English language proficiency is necessary to successfully perform the role of teaching assistant (Bailey, 1984; Fisher, for 1985; Byrd, 1987; Constantinides, 1987a) or to benefit from pedagogical training

(Siebring, 1972; Davis, 1987). In fact, "there is a minimal level of English proficiency below which even the most enthusiastic, intelligent, or active FTA cannot perform" (Constantinides, 1987a, p. 3). Despite this knowledge and an increased interest to determine a minimum standard of language proficiency, a firm standard has not been established.

The current literature on the "foreign TA problem" has continually addressed the language testing aspect. Little information has been provided regarding the rationale for test selection, and little work has been done to compare tests and testing programs around the country. Because of this and given the complexity and sensitivity of the problem, there is a need for better understanding of the tests currently used to test language abilities of FTAs as well as the standards being set by universities across the country.

This paper will attempt to help clarify many of the issues related to the current language testing of FTAs. The paper will first discuss some of the tests commonly being used to assess the linguistic and pedagogical abilities of FTAs, secondly examine how these tests are being used, and finally present the results of a recent study intended to survey FTA tests and testing policies used by U.S. universities.

FTA TESTS

TOEFL

The language screening process of FTAs begins with the admissions requirements for foreign graduate students (Fisher, 1985). Most U.S. universities use TOEFL for admission screening purposes to test the language proficiency of foreign students applying to advanced degree programs (Packwood & Packwood, 1987). TOEFL is basically a "paper and pencil" test that intends to measure "listening comprehension, reading ability, and recognitional contextually appropriate morphology and syntax" (Clark and Swinton, 1980, p. 1). It is commonly accepted among language specialists that written test scores are not necessarily good predictors of speaking abilities. Moreover, TOEFL does not include a direct test of speaking English.

TOEFL does measure listening abilities, which generally correlates with oral proficiency. However, the relationship is not strong enough to use TOEFL scores as an accurate measure of the FTAs' speaking abilities (Byrd, 1987). Relatedly, Briggs (1986) argues that we should also consider the sub-score of the listening section in addition to looking at the total TOEFL score as most universities do. She claims that her university's FTAs who score low on the listening section (as compared with the other two sections) do not do well on other FTA tests. Currently, at least two universities require or recommend a minimum score on the listening section of TOEFL (i.e., 52 and 55).

MTELP, CELT and ALIGU

Other "paper and pencil" tests which are occasionally accepted for admission purposes by universities are the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP), the American Language Institute of Georgetown University (ALIGU) test, and the Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT). These tests are not used as often as TOEFL, and do not test oral proficiency.

TSE and SPEAK

TSE, and the three forms of SPEAK, were developed by the Educational Testing Service to fulfill the need for a reliable and economical way of measuring oral proficiency. Although only a few universities use TSE and SPEAK for admission screening, more use them for additional screening of the speaking abilities of FTAs. That is, TSE is frequently used for overseas testing of FTAs, and SPEAK for on-campus testing once the FTAs have arrived in the U.S. Barrett (1987a) presents five obvious advantages of SPEAK: "(1) professionally prepared testing materials, (2) easy availability, (3) widespread use which permits the comparison of results among user institutions, (4) ease of administration, and (5) well-prepared materials for training the novice test rater" (p. 20).

However, as Barrett (1987a) clearly points out, SPEAK has several limitations. First, although professing to test only speaking skills, it also tests listening comprehension. Second, the scoring for fluency is suspect. Third, the test does not allow for the "obvious communication strategy of asking for a restatement and/or clarification of an unclear question (p. 21)." Finally, the quality of the pictures on several of the test forms is poor which creates an additional problem for the nervous, time-pressured test taker.

Semi-direct measures of oral proficiency, such as TSE and SPEAK, are certainly better screening mechanisms than are written exams, such as TOEFL and MTELP (Bailey, 1984). These tests are designed to measure general oral proficiency and not designed to evaluate the language used in the teaching context which FTAs find themselves (i.e., in the classroom), nor do they evaluate effective teaching (Jones, 1979; Carrell, Sarwark, & Plakans, 1987; Schneider & Stevens, 1987).

Oral Interviews

Oral interviews, such as the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) or American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) oral interviews, have also been used to assess general speaking and listening abilities. TSE has been shown to correlate fairly high with FSI interview ratings (Stanfield & Ballard, 1987). Bailey (1982) has revealed that FTAs who score below the 1+ level on the FSI could not be successful in the classroom regardless of their interpersonal skills.

Oral interviews are usually structured, like the FSI, to elicit sufficient speech to determine speaking and listening competence. At the various U.S. universities, English language centers normally administer such interviews, although some department chairpersons and/or committees occasionally administer oral interviews themselves before awarding assistantships. Little is known about the types of interviews these departments use.

Barrett (1987a) argues that for "approximately the same time invested in testing (using SPEAK), a structured oral interview would work just as well ..." (p. 21). A structured oral interview is being developed at Michigan State University [Barrett, 1986; and updated in June, 1987)].

Other universities, such as Southern Illinois University, add question-handling tasks to the oral interviews to gather further information about the FTAs' listening comprehension and ability to answer student questions. Southern Illinois University includes representatives from the English language center, appointing department, and Graduate School as participants and raters (Carrell, Sarwark, & Plakans, 1987). The University of Michigan and the Georgia State University also use question-handling tasks as part of their FTA testing battery. Rather than using them within the context of an oral interview, these questions (which are typically asked by undergraduates) are presented to the FTAs via videotapes.

Teaching Simulations

TSE, SPEAK, and oral interviews do not measure competence in classroom English, although some oral interviews approximate this if they include question-handling tasks and classroom management role-plays. Thus, a major concern arises with most of the tests of general oral language proficiency because they fail to situate the screening within the teaching context, the one within which the FTAs will ultimately find themselves.

Various performance tests, in the form of mock-teaching or teaching simulations, have been developed to offer FTAs an opportunity to demonstrate English skills that will be used in the classroom. In fact, it has been recognized for some time that teaching simulations may be the most appropriate way of deciding if the FTAs has sufficient English proficiency to teach (Jones, 1979; Bailey, 1984; Briggs, 1986). For this reason, most universities have developed and currently use their own type of teaching simulation. "Some schools ask students to present material to a selected class of undergraduates, others ask students to present to a room with only the rating panel present, some have students present to other prospective FTAs" (Brett, 1987, p. 9).

Two types of teaching simulations are the Taped Evaluation of Assistants' Classroom Handling (TEACH), developed by the Iowa State University, and *micro-teaching*. TEACH attempts to test prospective TAs' ability to communicate in the classroom; it consists of a five-minute talk on a topic in the subject to be taught and a three-minute question period, when students ask questions. The test is conducted in a classroom; ratings of videotapes are done by 2-3 trained ESL instructors. In contrast, micro-teaching is a teaching technique rather than an evaluation or test of language/teaching abilities. The basic sequence is teach, analyze, and reteach. Developed by Stanford in the early 1960's, micro-teaching is used with TAs and faculty, as well as FTAs, to help improve teaching skills.

Department personnel are often included in the teaching simulations as participants and raters. This increases validity; helps insure that the recommendations for teaching, or not teaching, are carried out; and/or provides assistance in locating

materials appropriate for discipline-specific presentations (Briggs, 1986; Brett, 1987). Undergraduates are also frequently included since they represent the audience that the FTAs will face in the classroom, and they are presumably less familiar with non-native English speaking students than faculty.

The many types of teaching simulations used by various universities reflect the pioneering aspect of language and pedagogical screening (Brett, 1987). The validity and reliability of these tests, as well as the test results and the FTAs actual performance in their teaching assignments need careful review (Briggs, 1986).

A minimal level of proficiency is necessary for teaching or training, but Byrd (1987) cautions that teaching tests should not be used to test students whose basic speaking is not comprehensible: "the high face validity of videotaped simulation testing has seduced many of us into using it inappropriately for the testing of basic speaking skills" (p. 357). From an administrator's perspective, she argues that the costs of teaching tests may be too high. She concludes that FTAs should be divided into two groups, one that consists of FTAs with such poor speaking skills that they need pronunciation practice prior to teaching or teacher training, and a second one that includes those with adequate speaking skills who need to be evaluated on a teaching simulation test before given a teaching assignment, or before training. This idea supports Bailey's (1984) argument that initial oral proficiency testing should precede any teaching simulation testing.

Telephone Interviews and Classroom Management Role-Plays

Two additional tests are infrequently used to evaluate language skills of FTAs: telephone interviews and classroom management role-plays. Long-distance telephone interviews used to screen FTA applicants have had limited success, and are imperfect screening measures at best (Schneider & Stevens, 1987). Primarily, classroom management role-plays consist of situations representative of routine classroom management duties that teaching assistants have or will have. They provide more information about the FTAs' interactive ability in English (Briggs, 1986).

Compositions or Writing Tests

Many university English language centers test the writing skills of foreign graduate students by using nondirect standardized tests, in-house objective exams, or compositions. These tests are used infrequently to test FTAs. However, if FTAs are assigned grading responsibilities because of weak oral skills, the practice seems "questionable unless it has been determined that the student has no problem with such a task" (Briggs, 1986, p. 9).

Testing Standards

Little comparison has been done to contrast the tests and testing requirements around the country. Stansfield and Ballard (1984) claim that as of August 1983, TSE and/or SPEAK scores were being required or requested by approximately 14 U.S. universities. They assert that institutions set their own criterion levels, that typical standards of acceptable oral proficiency for non-native speaking TAs "fall within a

range of 200-250 on the overall comprehensibility scale" (p. 105), and that academic departments may also use TSE and SPEAK to establish standards for acceptable FTA comprehensibility.

Soppelsa (1985) noted that approximately 40 U.S. universities required or requested TSE or SPEAK scores from FTAs. At that time, almost all the institutions surveyed required a minimum of 200-250 points on the TSE or SPEAK to be considered for teaching responsibilities; the majority required a minimum of 230.

As an example of department-specific language requirements, in November 1986, a chemistry roundtable of 15 participants from 12 universities agreed that "a minimum score of 230 on the TSE and 550 on the TOEFL was necessary for a TA in a typical chemistry assignment (Bauman and Walton-Sonntag, 1987, p. 247)."

Most recently, Barrett (1987b) compiled a list of the various types of tests, test administration time, use of test results, standards, etc. used by the universities represented in the 1987 University of Wyoming/NAFSA Institute on FTA Training. The minimum TSE or SPEAK score to be certified to teach in all but one case was 230.

HOW ARE THE TESTS USED?

Any discussion on the issue of screening FTAs must include a discussion on how the test results are used. For example, some universities screen FTAs in order to inform or recommend to departments that FTAs possess or do not possess adequate oral proficiency to teach or conduct various TA-related duties. This use is commonly referred to as the *recommending* function. When the FTAs' speaking proficiency is certified, this a *certifying* function. Frequently, departments can choose whether or not to follow the recommendation, unless strict adherence is mandated by the university.

Some universities use FTA tests as an *exit* examination to signal graduation from FTA training programs or courses. This may be a form of certifying FTA speaking abilities or a way of advising departments that FTAs are or are not ready to teach. The University of Michigan, University of Wyoming, and Texas Tech University, currently use a form of "tiered" recommendation which includes the types of teaching or TA-related situations that each FTA is capable of handling. (Briggs, 1986; Constantinides, 1987a; Smith, 1987) If enforced, the "tiered" recommendations *limit* the kinds of responsibilities assigned to FTAs, based on the evaluation of their language and/or teaching abilities.

Occasionally, FTA testing may be used to *diagnose* specific language or teaching deficiencies of the FTAs for training purposes. Several universities, such as the University of Washington and the University of Nevada-Reno, isolate specific needs of each FTA and target a major portion of their FTA training programs toward meeting these needs. In other words, they use testing mechanisms to diagnose language and pedagogical weaknesses which subsequently becomes the focus of training.

Finally, FTA testing may be used to indicate *achievement*. Achievement tests measure how well FTAs have mastered the skills being taught in the FTA training program or course. This usage implies a pre- and a post-test to determine improvement over time. Frequently, the post-test is used as an exit examination.

A NATIONAL SURVEY

The current survey was conducted to evaluate the current status of language testing of FTAs. A questionnaire was developed to solicit answers to the following questions: how many FTAs do universities have; what tests and scores are being used as admission requirements for foreign graduate students; what additional FTA language tests, if any, are being used; and how are the FTA test results used?

The survey is largely the result of a cooperative effort of the "testing" working group from the 1987 University of Wyoming/NAFSA Institute on FTA Training. Research was funded by the Graduate School of the University of Nevada-Reno.

The questionnaire was developed and modified during the 1987 summer institute and pre-tested at that time. All four individuals from the "testing" working group and three additional participants from the institute completed the questionnaire and provided feedback on its form and content. Upon return from the summer institute, two non-participants completed a revised form, and also made comments about the format and content of the survey. From pre-testing, the final version of the questionnaire was completed (Appendix A).

SUBJECTS

In the fall of 1987, questionnaires were mailed to 189 U.S. universities. The universities selected had either student enrollments larger than 10,000 or were known to have FTAs and FTA testing programs. Whenever possible, the questionnaires were mailed to directors of FTA training programs or individuals knowledgeable of the FTA testing program at their university. If a specific individual could not identified, the questionnaire was sent to the Graduate School office.

RESULTS

As of January 1988, 102 (54%) of the universities either completed and returned the surveys (n=96), said that the questionnaire would be completed and mailed as soon as possible (n=1), or stated that the information requested was not currently available (n=2). Surveys returned after January 1 were not included in this paper (n=3).

Frequency distributions and cross-tabulations were run on the data collected from the 96 universities. Table 1 portrays the offices of the individuals who completed the questionnaire. The largest portion of the questionnaires [44% of the total number returned (n=96)] were completed by Graduate School personnel. Tables 2-4 depicts the size of the universities and the number of total TAs (native and non-native English speaking) and FTAs, respectively.

TABLE 1

OFFICE COMPLETING SURVEY

Office/Position	Number of Respondents
Graduate School Office	42
English Language Center	15
FTA Training Program	13
Vice President's Office	6
International Office	4
Professor	4
Other*	12
	96

*Offices of Vice Provost(2), Admissions(2), Instructional Development(2), and Other (6)

TABLE 2

UNIVERSITY SIZE

University Size	Number of Respondents
Less than 5,000	1
5,000-10,000	5
10,001-15,000	36
15,001-20,000	11
Above 20,000	42
	95*

*1 survey was not marked.

TABLE 3

TOTAL NUMBER OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Number	Number of Respondents
None or less than 3	4
Less than 200	30
200-400	18
401-600	9
601-800	9
Above 800	23
	93*

*3 surveys were not marked.

TABLE 4

TOTAL NUMBER OF FOREIGN TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Number	Number of Respondents
None	11
Less than 3	2
Less than 50	29
50-100	16
101-150	8
151-200	3
Above 200	23
	92*

*4 surveys were not marked.

Admission Testing

Tables 5-6 show the number of universities using either TOEFL or MTELP to test language proficiency of foreign graduate students for admission purposes. Ninety-seven percent use TOEFL, and the majority (61%) of those who reported a university-wide TOEFL admissions requirement (n=82) require a score of at least 550. Ten universities reported no university-set standard score; thus, at these universities, departments set their admission requirements. Three universities also use TSE or

SPEAK and require scores of 200, 220, and 240. Three universities require the TOEFL writing exam, and no universities reported using CELT or ALIGU. Forty-three percent (n=41) reported having departmental English language requirements in addition to or separate from university-wide requirements for all foreign graduate students. The most frequently mentioned departments or schools with higher TOEFL requirements than the university were Business (n=16), English (n=9), Journalism (n=4), and Computer Science (n=3). The overwhelming majority of the "other" listed departments were from the Humanities and Social Sciences. Twenty-eight percent reported having additional in-house tests, usually conducted by the English language centers, which contain components of writing, speaking, listening, reading, grammar, and/or vocabulary.

TABLE 5

ADMISSIONS: TOEFL

Scores	Number of Respondents
450	1
500	20
520	3
525	8
550	49
575	1
Under Discussion	1
Not Specified	1
Department Specific	10
	94*

*2 surveys were not marked.

TABLE 6

ADMISSIONS: MTELP

Scores	Number of Respondents
60	1
70	2
75	2
80	3
82	1
83	1
85	1
90	1
Under Discussion	1
	13*

*83 surveys were not marked.

FTA Testing

Tables 7-11 display the numbers of universities using TOEFL, TSE, SPEAK, an oral interview, and/or a teaching simulation for additional language testing of FTAs. Of the total number of universities using at least one type of these tests (n=60), 23% use TOEFL, 35% use TSE, 40% use SPEAK, 57% use an oral interview, and 47% use a form of teaching simulation. Ten of eleven universities which reported a TOEFL score require a score of at least 550. All the universities which reported a TSE score (n=17) require a score of at least 220. Seventeen (81%) of the universities reporting a SPEAK score standard (n=21) require a score of at least 220. Only eight universities (13%) use TSE or SPEAK and an oral interview. Three universities use an in-house pronunciation test. Concerning the forms of oral interviews and teaching simulations, Tables 11-12 include the types that were specified. Appendix B includes comments made by respondents concerning the types of oral interview and teaching simulations used.

TABLE 7

FTA TESTING: TOEFL

Scores	Number of Respondents
520	1
550	7
570	1
580	1
600	2
Under Discussion	1
Department Specific	1
	14*

*82 surveys were not marked.

TABLE 8

FTA TESTING: TSE

Scores	Number of Respondents
220	5
230	7
240	2
250	3
Under Discussion	1
Department Specific	3
	21*

*75 surveys were not marked.

TABLE 9

FTA TESTING: SPEAK

Scores	Number of Respondents
200	4
220	5
230	8
240	3
250	1
Under Discussion	1
Department Specific	2
	24*

*72 surveys were not marked.

TABLE 10

FTA TESTING: ORAL INTERVIEW TYPES/TEST ADMINISTRATORS

Type/Test Administrators	Number of Respondents
Given by Dept. Chair	8
FSI/ACTFL-Type	5
Given by Engl. Lang. Center	4
Given by Graduate School	3
Given by Dept. Supervisor	2
Not specified	12
Other	1
	35*

*61 surveys were not marked.

TABLE 11

FTA TESTING: TEACHING SIMULATION TYPES/TEST ADMINISTRATORS

Type/Test Administrators	Number of Respondents
Micro-Teaching	4
Conducted by Department	3
A form of TEACH	2
Conducted by Graduate School	1
Not Specified	3
Other*	14
	27**

*See comments in Appendix B.
**69 surveys were not marked.

Thirty-five percent of the universities with FTA testing (n=60) reported having department-specific English language proficiency requirements for FTAs in addition to or separate from those of the university. The most frequently noted departments or schools with additional FTA testing were English (n=3) and Business (n=2).

Use of FTA Tests

As Table 12 shows, for the universities with FTA testing programs (n=60), the FTA test results are used to *diagnose* linguistic or teaching deficiencies (58%); *place* FTAs into language, communications, or teaching courses (64%); *limit* the teaching responsibilities of the FTAs (65%); *certify* that FTAs have sufficient English language proficiency to teach (70%); *recommend* to departments that FTAs do or do not have sufficient language skills to teach (58%); or as an *exit* examination from an FTA training course or program (20%). Considering the *placement* function, Table 13 displays the types of courses into which FTAs are placed. Appendix B includes comments made by the respondents regarding the use of test results.

TABLE 12

USE OF FTA TESTING

Use	Number of Respondents* "Yes"	Not Marked
Diagnose	35	25
Place	38	22
Limit	39	21
Certify	42	18
Recommend	35	25
Exit	12	48

*60 universities reported using FTA tests.

TABLE 13

COURSES FTAs ARE PLACED INTO

Type of Course	Number of Respondents
General ESL	13
FTA Training Course/Program	10
Speech Communications	6
Not Specified	13
Other	5
	47*

*49 surveys were not marked.

DISCUSSION

A discussion of the results of this study must consider its descriptive rather than experimental nature. Conclusions or inferences made from a sample of 96 to the target population are made with some caution since it is not known if the universities responding are representative of the 183 universities with student enrollments of over 10,000 and the 6 universities with student enrollments less than 10,000. The survey was intended to compare FTA testing programs in an exploratory manner, and the results should be viewed as a contribution to the current discussion on FTA testing rather than providing the final word. Even with these constraints, several interesting facets of the study are worthy of discussion.

Although 35% of the universities reported having more than 100 FTAs, 42% reported fewer than 50 FTAs. This percentage seems rather high given the increased number of FTAs and decreased number of American TAs in the sciences (Heller, 1986). However, exact numbers of FTAs are not available because the question (no. 4) asked that an appropriate range (i.e., less than 50, etc.) be marked. In addition, since some universities did not include their laboratory assistants in the FTA count, laboratory assistants may not have been included in the total number of FTAs. To gauge the magnitude of the FTA contribution, future research should focus on the number of FTAs and distinguish between laboratory and teaching assistants.

Of the universities conducting some form of FTA testing (n=60), 17% report using an oral interview administered by the department [i.e., chair (n=8) or supervising professor (n=2)]. Several universities reported that the oral interview formats used by the departments are somewhat unstructured and informal (n=5).

A meaningful question to ask is: "when" are the tests administered? Are the tests administered before FTAs are granted assistantships? And, if so, is the awarding of teaching assistantships dependent on the test results? Or, are the FTAs tested subsequent to having been awarded assistantships?

Two universities acknowledged that all first-semester graduate assistants (native English speaking and FTAs) do not teach. Three universities noted that first-year foreign graduate students are not hired as TAs. These comments may indicate that a few universities allot FTAs a period of time before being required to teach in order to adjust to a different academic system. Granting such an adjustment period supports a recent national study recommendation that "international students from significantly different educational systems have one semester or quarter of academic experience in the United States before they assume formal teaching responsibility" (Diamond & Gray, 1987, p. 62).

Finally, as the minimum standard for oral proficiency needed by FTAs to perform their classroom roles and/or benefit from TA training continues to be debated, we may speculate, albeit cautiously, that TSE or SPEAK scores of at least 220 are necessary. That is, according to the minimum scores necessary for teaching provided by the universities using TSE or SPEAK, the overwhelming majority require a score of at least 220 to teach. What was not revealed in this study is the standard scores universities use to certify or recommend that FTAs only have "limited contact" with undergraduates. The only information on this is that appearing in a few of the comments reported by the respondents.

SUMMARY

The issue of language testing of FTAs is sensitive and complex. Yet, it is an area receiving increased attention and will continue to concern state legislatures, university communities, undergraduates and their parents, among others. As trainers and testers of FTAs, we need to understand the intricacies of the current testing situation in order to make adequate and appropriate decisions regarding the tests we use. As employees of the university, we have a responsibility to the university and the undergraduates being taught by the FTAs. Part of that responsibility includes assuring people that our FTAs are fairly and adequately screened of language competencies needed to perform their roles as teaching assistants.

The language testing of FTAs begins with the initial admissions language assessment of foreign graduate students. The most commonly used language test for admissions purposes is TOEFL. Although most universities consider the total TOEFL score for admission, they seldom require a cut-off score for the listening comprehension sub-section. Thus, foreign students (prospective FTAs) who possess limited listening skills may be allowed to slip through the system. Moreover, if TOEFL, which does not include a speaking component, is the only test used, foreign students are not initially screened for speaking proficiency.

To test basic oral proficiency, TSE, SPEAK, and oral interviews are commonly used. The minimum standard for oral proficiency necessary to perform classroom responsibilities has not been identified, although results from this survey suggest a TSE or SPEAK score of at least 220 is most commonly as the cut-off point by most universities. If FTAs demonstrate adequate speaking skills, as measured by these general tests, the next step in the FTA evaluation process is to evaluate competence in classroom English through performance testing. Performance testing instruments include teaching simulations, question-handling tasks, and/or classroom-management role-plays.

FTA tests may serve several functions. They may be used to diagnose language or teaching deficiencies for training purposes; place FTAs into language, communications, or teaching courses depending on their level of language or teaching proficiency; certify that FTAs have or do not have sufficient English language proficiency to teach or perform various TA-related duties; recommend to departments the language proficiency of their TAs or prospective TAs and/or the situations which their FTAs are capable of handling; or as an exit examination from an FTA training course or program.

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APPENDIX A

Survey of FTA Testing Policies in U.S. Universities

This questionnaire is intended to survey tests and testing policies used by U.S. universities to assess the English language proficiency of foreign teaching assistants (FTAs). Your responses to the following questions and prompt return of this questionnaire are greatly appreciated. Please return this questionnaire by November 20, 1987.

1. Name of your university:______________________________
   Your position:____________________________________

2. What is the approximate size of your university (check one)?
   _______Less than 5,000 _______10,001-15,000 _______Above 20,000
   _______5,000-10,000 _______15,001-20,000

3. How many total graduate **teaching assistants (do not include research assistants)** does you university currently have (check one)?
   _______Less than 200 _______401-600 _______Above 800
   _______200-400 _______601-800

4. Of the total number checked in #3, how many are **non-native English speaking** or **foreign** teaching assistants (check one)?
   _______Less than 50 _______101-150 _______Above 200
   _______50-100 _______151-200

5. What are the English language proficiency **admission** requirements for international **graduate** students at your university (check as many as are appropriate and give minimum score accepted for admission)?

Test	Score	Test	Score
_______TOEFL	_______	_______TSE	_______
_______TOEFL Writing Exam	_______	_______SPEAK	_______
_______Michigan Battery	_______	_______CELT	_______
_______In-house or Other Test(s)			

   (Please specify test, skills tested, and minimum score accepted for admission)

Test	Skills Tested (speaking,listening,etc.)	Score
______________	______________________	_______
______________	______________________	_______

6. Do any **departments** have English language proficiency requirements in addition to or separate from the university-wide requirements for international graduate students? (circle one: *yes no*) If "yes," please list the requirements and the departments:

7. What additional language testing of **foreign teaching assistants** (FTAs) beyond the admission requirements for all international graduate students does your university have (check as many as are appropriate and give minimum score for becoming an FTA)?

Test	Score	Test	Score
_______TOEFL	_______	_______TSE	_______
_______TOEFL Writing Exam	_______	_______SPEAK	_______
_______Michigan Battery	_______	_______CELT	_______

_______Oral Interview _______ (Please specify type):________________

_______Teaching Simulation_______ (Please specify type):________________

_______In-house or Other Test(s) (Please specify test, skills tested, and minimum score):

Test	Skills Tested	Score

8. Do any **departments** have English proficiency requirements in addition to or separate from the university-wide requirements for FTAs? (circle one: *yes no*) If "yes," please list the requirements and the departments:

9. How are the FTA test results used (check as many as are appropriate)?

_______To **diagnose** linguistic or teaching deficiencies
_______To **place** FTAs into language, communications, or teaching courses
Please specify courses:________________

_______To **limit** teaching responsibilities
_______To **certify** that FTAs have sufficient English language proficiency to teach
_______To **recommend** to departments that FTAs do have or do not have sufficient English language proficiency to teach
_______As an **exit** exam for graduation from an FTA training course or program
_______Other (Please specify):________________

Thank you for your time. Prompt return of this questionnaire is appreciated.

APPENDIX B

Comments made by respondents concerning the type of **oral interview** used were (words are occasionally added to make complete sentences):

*1) *Some departments conduct interviews to get a sense of FTAs' oral skills--sometimes over the phone (long distance).*
*2) *Occasionally, some departments ask me to give an informal evaluation of a prospective FTA.*
*3) *A special oral interview has been developed.*
*4) *Consultation with department head or graduate admissions committee may limit functions if English proficiency does not seem adequate (i.e., may be accepted at university on basis of TOEFL score, but rejected as a teaching assistant until sufficient skills are acquired).*
*5) *Skills tested are primarily speaking (pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and overall intelligibility). This is a videotaped interview type test conducted by trained interviewers.*

Comments regarding types of **teaching simulations** (i.e., "other" in Table 11) were:

*1) *It is conducted by the English language center at end of program.*
*2) *It is videotaped (n=3).*
*3) *It is a 10-minute presentation.*
*4) *It is conducted by speech faculty with ESL experience.*
*5) *A 10-15 minute lecture is requested if SPEAK score is 210-220.*
*6) *It is conducted by department faculty together with ESL program; (the test consists of) 10 minutes of teaching followed by responses to "mock" questions.*
*7) *We use a three-part rating scale to assess a short teaching simulation.*
*8) *The student teaches a passage from an undergraduate textbook in his or her department.*
*9) *The Center for Educational Innovation videotaped presentations and offers recommendations to improve teaching styles.*
*10) *It is a pass-fail test (n=3).*

Nine universities provided these comments on the use of their test results:

*1) *Tests are used to refer FTAs to university writing center and-or communications disorders clinic.*
*2) *All non-native speakers of English who are to be used in instructional situations are required to attend a four-to-five-day instructional evaluation at our English language center. If they do not pass the evaluation, they may be required to take semi-intensive English class or pronunciation for teaching assistants.*
*3) *Tests are used as admission requirement only. The oral interview is too subjective to be called "test," but for those (FTAs) who have difficulty, it temporarily limits teaching responsibilities.*

ERIC

*4) *The limitation of teaching responsibilities is at the discretion of the department chair. It is not mandatory.*
*5) *We are developing an in-house oral interview which actually serves as a certification exam.*
*6) *Although we place, limit, certify, and recommend FTAs for various responsibilities, we use a composite written evaluation from each instructor, which is considered along with the test results.*
*7) *The departments determine, from their evaluation of appropriate admission information and, generally, the interview, whether or not to hire a foreign TA. Only in rare instances is a brand new (first-semester) foreign graduate student hired as a TA.*
*8) *Tests are used to give departments information about their potential TA's ability to use the language.*
*9) *The FTA training staff does not recommend people for positions. We provide a videotape of a student teaching after 2 weeks of training and that student's SPEAK score to the department. The department requires certain criteria to be a TA and selects TAs based upon this specific criteria and the information we have supplied.*

Some of the additional comments about FTA testing were:

*1) *Our FTAs are restricted to those whose native tongue and medium of undergraduate instruction is English (e.g., Western Europe, India, etc.). We differentiate between teaching assistants and laboratory assistants.*
*2) *English and Math departments do not assign classes to new arrivals. After one semester as a non-teaching GA, determination is made on an international student's strength in spoken English and his or her suitability as a classroom instructor.*
*3) [Concerning number of FTAs--question no. 5] *This is not a genuine "population" and the university has no specific guidelines or procedures to deal with them except for those that apply to all graduate students. Admission requirement is successful completion of a new placement test, the Graduate Essay Test (GET). It is used as a screening device for potential TAs and all classified graduate students. Departments are permitted to use alternative methods of screening.*
*4) *230 (SPEAK) is the cut-off score for unrestricted teaching privileges. Students scoring between 190 and 230 must take a course in pedagogy, language, and cultural assimilation. Below 190 are not recommended for teaching. Our "in-house test" results in recommendations from 2 independent scores (not scaled).*
*5) *In general, TAs are seldom awarded to first year foreign graduate students.*
*6) *We expect usually one year in the program prior to appointment as a TA.*
*7) *Departments are required to certify competence, but particular test or method is at option of the department.*

**8) Illinois has a state law mandating English proficiency for <u>all</u> involved in instruction. Chairpersons must certify proficiency. If any person with instructional responsibility is found lacking in English proficiency, that responsibility is relieved, and the person is to receive remedial help (e.g., courses, etc.) until proficient.*

**9) We are currently trying to establish a test supplemental to or replacing the Michigan. The new test will measure speaking fluency and will be, probably, an oral interview.*

**10) We are in the process of creating a university-wide language testing requirement regarding the situation for FTAs. This process has not been completed.*

**11) Departments are required to certify competence but particular test or method is at the option of the department.*

**12) To be given a TA position in the first year, a TOEFL score of 600 is required. Thereafter, a TSE score of 230 is required.*

**13) If TOEFL is less than 600 or TSE/SPEAK less than 240, an oral interview is used.*

A Plan for Training the Raters of a Teaching Simulation Test

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Rating live or videotaped teaching simulations of foreign teaching assistants (FTAs) has much in common with wine-tasting--even if it is not as delightfully decadent. Test-raters and wine-tasters must rely on their subjective judgment, strive for fairness, fight off fatigue, and concentrate on the criteria they have been assigned to assess. During the NAFSA Summer Institute on Foreign TA Training, my project was the creation of a new model for training raters for the teaching simulation used at Iowa State University to screen prospective FTAs (dubbed TEACH—Taped Evaluation of Assistants' Classroom Handling). I hope this model may be transferable to other teaching simulation tests used by other universities for screening FTAs.

Why should test raters be trained? Five reasons come to mind:

1. Madsen and Jones (1981) sum up the situation: "Because the accuracy of an evaluation is directly related to the training of an evaluator, it is vital that the criteria and scoring procedure be clearly defined and understood" (p. 22). Reliability depends upon careful judgment. Raters must be assessing the same features and doing so at every testing session.

2. To function well raters need to develop confidence in their own judgment and believe that there are standards that they must uphold. Careful training can develop these qualities.

3. Training raters as a group provides an opportunity to nurture team-building and allows inexperienced raters to feel support is readily available while they are learning. Raters may also develop a feeling of group responsibility, which can help later when raters are asked to work long hours at inconvenient times. Camaraderie within the group also cuts down on fatigue during the testing process.

4. The training process also provides the trainer with a reason to review the testing process, consider revisions, and glean helpful suggestions and feedback from a fresh group with new perceptions to contribute to test refinement.

5. Universities which have TESL graduate programs may take the opportunity to train advanced graduate students in the most difficult—and currently lively—area of skills testing.

Convinced that the effort is worthwhile, how should training be done and what needs to be taught to new raters? My model attempts to combine the realities of time constraints under which TESL instructors and graduate students operate and the ideal of developing solid understanding and experience. I estimate my training program will require six hours of group work spread over three two-hour sessions, five hours of "homework," and a two-hour "apprenticeship" during the administration of the next TEACH test. I advocate paying the trainees for their training time, provided they can assure the Graduate College they will be available to rate at four of the six TEACH administrations throughout the following 12 months. This includes the major administrations that occur in late August when more than two-thirds of all examinees arrive to be tested.

The following features, considered important by Underhill (1987) and Jones (1985), are included in the training:

- Learning the rating criteria and scoring, the rationale and background for the test;
- Examining the levels of proficiency;
- Developing experiential knowledge;
- Practicing the rating skill:
- Calibrating trainees' ratings with those of experienced raters and with the rest of the group; and
- Serving an apprenticeship until proficiency is demonstrated.

The chart on the following page provides the plan for the TEACH rater training in outline form.

TEACH Training Plan

Session I (2 hours)	Introduce test, explain importance of reliability View videotape of testing procedure, sample performance Examine criteria, rating scale, scoring sheet Practice rating section 1* using audiotapes Discuss ratings, compare with experienced raters
Homework	Read test guide Have trainees videotaped taking test, view, rate themselves
Session II (2 hours)	Discuss trainees' videotaping experience Practice more language ratings—audiotapes Compare trainees' scores using overhead transparencies Discuss criteria for all test sections Practice rating sections 2 , 3, and 4, using videotapes Compare ratings and discuss
Homework	Assign 3 videotaped tests (placed on reserve in the library's media room) to be rated by each trainee Have ratings returned and marked by trainer before Session III
Session III (2 hours)	Review homework, problems with ratings Practice more video ratings, make inter-rater comparisons Simulate live test performances with experienced raters also present to rate and discuss Review procedural matter for forthcoming test
Apprenticeship	Each trainee assigned to rate with 2 experienced raters on testing day Confer with trainer later regarding reliability of ratings
"Continuing Ed."	Brush-up before every future exam date

* Sections refer to the four categories on which the TEACH performance is rated—overall language comprehensibility, awareness of U.S. classroom culture, listening & question-handling, and teaching skills. See TEACH kit for detailed criteria used in rating these categories.

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Experienced raters as well as neophytes should never stop calibrating, especially when several months elapse between test administrations. A one-and-a half hour brush-up session a day or two before a test date should be scheduled. It would involve rating some earlier tapes together. In addition to checking *inter*-rater reliability, these practice tapes might also be used to check *intra*-rater reliability, if the raters had previously evaluated these same tapes during training and their present ratings could be compared with their earlier ones.

I would like to mention a bonus to having TESL graduate students as trained raters: They can be employed as follow-up observers of the FTAs after the FTAs have completed a training course and have earned classroom or laboratory assignments. The TESL graduate students can sit in on FTAs' classes and use the same scoring sheet to do follow-up observations without being conspicuous, encouraging both the FTAs and undergraduate students to behavior naturally.

We are currently developing a kit with training tapes, rating criteria, rating sheets, and instructions to assist others in adapting the TEACH test to their FTA screening programs. Anyone who would like more information about the TEACH kit may contact me: Barbara Plakans, Coordinator, FTA Program, Graduate College, Iowa State University, 213 Beardshear Hall, Ames, IA 50011 (phone: 515/294-4531).

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A SURVEY OF TESTING, TRAINING, AND SUPERVISION OF FOREIGN ASSOCIATE INSTRUCTORS AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY-BLOOMINGTON

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INTRODUCTION

This paper is the result of a survey conducted in the Fall of 1987 of various departments on the Indiana University-Bloomington (IUB) campus in order to gain insight into attitudes, services, and requirements of departments regarding hiring, training, and supervising foreign students who are or want to be associate instructors (teaching assistants) at the University. Foreign as well as American students often depend on associate instructorships or other types of departmental aid to help them complete their educational goals. Within this realm, the increased use of non-native speakers of English has become a controversial issue in American higher education in the 1980's, to the point that it is regularly referred to as the "foreign TA problem."

During the past several years, IUB has taken measures to meet the demands of foreign students teaching classes, including the testing of language proficiency (a service of the Center for English Training [CELT]), and a language course offered to associate instructors and foreign students wishing to become AIs. In Spring, 1987, the IUB Faculty Council issued a mandate that all departments on campus provide training programs for associate instructors--not only foreign AIs--on campus.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The four-page questionnaire was designed to encompass the three main areas of concern: English proficiency, administration (hiring practices, etc.), and training. (The questionnaire is contained at the end of this article.) The main purpose of producing this questionnaire was to collect data that might serve as resource information for the possible establishment of a training program for foreign AIs. With the assistance of Dr. Harry Gradman, Professor of Linguistics and Director of CELT, and Susan Greer, Assistant Coordinator of CELT and director of AI testing, great pains were taken to make the questions non-threatening, general, and impersonal, yet to create a document that would produce comprehensible and useful information. The questions were kept general in order to allow the largest numbers of different departments to answer them and to provide as much information as possible.

Section One: Language Preparation. As can be seen, the questions in this section focus on the departments' policies and practices regarding awarding AIships before a student's language ability has been tested. This gives us some insight into whether the department uses AIships (or other types of assistantships) for recruitment purposes. Secondly, it was of interest to see the degree to which the departments depended on the proficiency examination administered by CELT for reliably assessing a student's ability. Questions 3, 5, and 8 were designed for this purpose. Question 7 was for the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of the proficiency examination for reducing the number of complaints regarding the English ability of foreign ATs. Since the students taking the examination usually ask to pass based on their belief that they will not get assistance unless they receive certification of proficiency, questions 4, 5, and 6 were designed to

test the veracity of these statements. Finally question 9 was added to explore the possibility of another office's conducting a survey among the undergraduate student population to asses their evaluation of the English ability of the foreign AIs. [Editor's Note: See Susan Greer, "The Development of a Questionnaire to Determine the Effectiveness of the Foreign Associate Instructor Examination at Indiana University" in this volume.]

Section Two: Administration. Questions regarding the administration of AIships and other forms of departmental assistance were for the purpose of ascertaining (1) the degree to which the English examination affected the award decision; (2) the qualifications and requirements for the awarding of AIs; and (3) the possible necessity of establishing a campus-wide orientation program and/or training program for incoming foreign AIs. In addition, it was hoped that some insight into the types of alternative assistance available to students who were not able to receive language certification would be gained. Question 12, while not a direct part of this study, was to test the awareness of the departments regarding possible problems that occur on campus regarding taxation of AI stipend checks.

Section Three: Pedagogy. This section was designed to also investigate the receptiveness of the departments for the possible establishment of a new position on campus for the training and supervision of foreign AIs only. The questions were based on three problem areas: language skills, teaching methodology, and personality and cultural differences (which might affect teaching methodology). Rather than ask for the opinions of the interviewees regarding what might be considered problem areas, their awareness and acknowledgement of them was being investigated. This is reflected in questions 1,3, and (indirectly) 5. Questions 3b and 4 were to ascertain the receptivity on the part of the departments of a training program were one established. Questions 5 and 8 were designed to get a general assessment of teaching experience and supervision. Finally, every respondent had an opportunity to express opinions or give further information s/he might have.

The following is the questionnaire and the results received from ten representative IUB departments.

Section One: Language Preparation

1. Do you require international students in your department to take the AI English proficiency examination administered by the Center for English Langauge Training (CELT)?

Yes, before they are hired: 4 Yes, after they are hired: 6

2. To what degree does the student's performance on the AI exam affect your hiring decision?

Totally: 2 Contributing factor: 4 No factor: 4

3. Does your department have a system for monitoring the English performance of an international AI?

Yes: 6 No: 4

4. Is the AI examination a prerequisite to a student's application for financial assistance from your department?

Usually: 1 Sometimes: 1 Never: 8

5. Does your department ever waive the AI English proficiency certification requirements?

Yes: 2 No: 8

6. What percentage of the international students who take the AI examination are given an assistantship?

Nearly all: 5 More than half: 0 Less than half: 1 Very Few: 3

7. Have complaints regarding international AIs been fewer since the implementation of the AI English proficiency certification requirement?

Yes: 2 No: 0 I don't know: 4 NA: 4

8. Do you think the prospective AIs with real classroom language problems are sufficiently eliminated by the language test?

Yes: 6 No: 2 I don't know: 1 NA: 1

9. Another department is considering a questionnaire for students in classes being taught by international AIs. Would you agree to such a questionnaire being given to students in your department?

Yes: 5 No: 5

Section Two: Administration

1. Does your department require an international student to have been on campus for at least a semester before awarding an AIship?

Yes: 1 No: 8 Sometimes: 1

2. Does your department ever award an assistantship to an international student who has not yet arrived in the United States?

Yes: 9 No: 1

3. What alternative types of departmental assistance are available to international students who are not certified by CELT?

The majority of departments made GAs, grading positions, and lab work available to those who could not receive language proficiency certification. However, several departments stated that there were no alternatives. These departments either found creative solutions or cancelled the award, since they had included the stipulation in the award letter that the student must receive language certification before the assistantship would be awarded. These cases were rare, however.

4. How does your department accommodate students who have been awarded an AI but don't receive CELT certification?

This question was a duplicate of question 3, although my initial intention had been to receive a detailed description of procedures and an insight into attitudes. This question did not serve that purpose, however.

5. What is the percentage of international AIs compared to American AIs in your department?

Average: 32%

This is an average of estimated percentages, and as such its reliability is questionable. The percentages ranged from 3 to 80, with varying percentages in all the departments.

6. What percentage of international students applying for assistance from your department are actually given assistance?
Almost all: 4 More than half: 2 Less than half: 3 Very few: 0 NA: 1

6a. How does this compare with American applicants?
Half of the respondents said that there was no difference between American and international students in giving awards. Several stated that the percentage was 50 to 75%. Only one department gave the percentage as lower.

7. Does your department have someone specifically assigned to assist IAIs?
Yes: 4 No: 6

8. Does your department have a limited number of years that a student may hold an AIship?
Yes: 7 No: 3 (MA: 2-4 years; Ph.D: 3-6 years)

9. Does your department encourage students to pursue assistantships (or assistance) from other departments where they might be qualified to teach?
Yes: 4 No: 3 Sometimes: 2 I don't know: 1

10. Does your department hire students from other departments:
Regularly: 2 Sometimes: 6 Never: 2

11. Do you have a job description for AIs in your department?
Yes: 5 No: 5

12. Does your department amend awards to accommodate students who are affected by the new tax law?
Yes: 0 No: 8 NA: 2

Section Three: Pedagogy

1. Does your department receive complaints about international AIs?
Yes: 4 No: 6

2. If you receive complaints, do they disproportionately reflect on international teachers more than American teachers? (Please consider the ratio of foreign nationals to Americans among your AIs when answering.)
Yes: 2 No: 3 NA: 5

3. Do you have a training program for all Associate Instructors in your department?
Yes: 8 No: 2

3a. Do you have a training program for international AIs only?
Yes: 0 No: 10

3b. Do you think there ought to be specialized training for only IAIs?
Yes: 0 No: 10

4. If a university-wide training program for international AIs were established, would your require your AIs to participate?
Yes: 1 No: 2 Probably: 3 Probably Not: 4

5. Does your department require previous teaching experience for all associate instructors?
Yes: 0 No: 9 Sometimes: 1

5a. For international AIs?
Yes: 0 No: 9 Sometimes: 1

6. What level courses are AIs in your department assigned to teach?
100-200: 6 All: 1 100 only: 1 100-300: 1 Undergraduate: 1

6a. Is this assignment based on
Teaching experience: 3 Schedule necessities: 1 Financial need: 1
Knowledge of field: 0 Major field: 1

7. Do you have a required method of teaching for all instructors in your department?
Yes: 3 No: 5 NA: 2

CONCLUSIONS

In general, the departments surveyed believed that any specific training program beyond the one language-oriented course offered by the English Improvement Program in CELT for both active and prospective AIs--which currently emphasizes pronunciation and speaking--would be discriminatory. They all considered their own training and supervision available to all AIs as sufficient. In this light, they would not be likely to require their AIs to participate in a campus-wide program or actively support such a program, were one established. In order to fully obtain the cooperation of the departments (which would be essential to a successful training program), therefore, it seems that any such program would have to be offered to all AIs, and not be mandatory. It would also have to be in conjunction with the individual departments and schools on campus in order not only to ensure their cooperation, but also to avoid conflicts with their own department-based orientations (should an orientation-type program be established), or training programs. It must be noted, however, that this is a response of a small sample of the many departments and schools on the Bloomington campus. Department chairmen, those responsible for supervising or training AIs in a department, secretaries or administrative assistants were interviewed. It would be very interesting to do a survey of the Associate Instructors themselves to fully assess the amount of cooperation such a program could count on and the degree to which the participants would deem it necessary.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A QUESTIONNAIRE TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FOREIGN ASSOCIATE INSTRUCTOR EXAMINATION AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Susan Greer
Indiana University

Introduction

The Center for English Language Training (CELT) at Indiana University has administered the Foreign Associate Instructor (FAI, same as FTA--Foreign Teaching Assistant) Examination since 1980. In recent years, no attempt has been made to determine the effectiveness or validity of that examination by an objective measure. As administrator of the examination since November 1986, I have become interested in determining if the standards for English proficiency we use for certification of FAIs are high enough to ensure that English is not a barrier to their effectiveness as teachers in the classroom. Pursuing the idea that the most direct measure might be a survey of undergraduate students who are taught by FAIs who have been certified by our examination, I undertook the design of a questionnaire that could be used in such a survey.

In this brief description of how the questionnaire was developed, I will first discuss preliminary considerations, then present the rationale behind the structure and content of the questionnaire, and finally refer to implementation of the questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire follows the description.

Preliminary Considerations

The best time for us to administer the questionnaire is at the same time faculty evaluation forms are used in classes at the end of each semester. This means that our questionnaire will be given in the same class period as the other form, and so brevity and simplicity are desirable. I therefore limited the questions to thirty-eight questions which can be used with computer-graded answer sheets. Also, it seemed best in most cases to offer only four possible answers, instead of five, to eliminate the possibility of students taking a neutral position.

Structure and Content of the Questionnaire

Following discussion at the 1987 Wyoming/NAFSA Institute with Barbara Plakans concerning a questionnaire she and Roberta Abraham developed at Iowa State University, I made three parts to this questionnaire: one focusing on the students' backgrounds, one focusing on the course itself, and the last focusing on the foreign AI.

Two types of information about the backgrounds of students at a large state university like Indiana University are relevant to the evaluation of the English proficiency of FAIs: their general level of experience and maturity, and their level of exposure to foreign cultures. Questions 2-8 address the first type, asking about factors such as age, number of years at the university, G.P.A., major, and size of hometown to provide information that will show the presence, or lack, or correlation between these

factors and evaluation of foreign associate instructors.

Regarding the second type of background information on students, I hypothesized that the greater the students' prior exposure to international countries, languages, cultures, and people, the more easily they would be able to understand non-native English. Questions 9-13, therefore, ask about their travel, previous international teachers, and foreign language education.

Part II of the questionnaire seeks certain information about the students' points of view toward the course, information that would affect how positively or negatively the student might be expected to receive the instructor, regardless of the instructors' background and ability in using English. Other questions test whether students have less patience with, and therefore less willingness to accept, such things as non-native English from instructors in required courses than in elective courses, and whether they are less patient and less tolerant of poor English when the subject matter is perceived as difficult than when it is perceived as easy.

The important pieces of information in section III of the questionnaire, which focuses on the FAI, include how aware the students are of the FAIs' nationalities and their responsibilities for the courses, as well as of their command of English. Questions 5 through 11 of this section are the most important to me as the FAI Examination administrator because they are the most direct evaluations of the AI's English proficiency. Questions 12 through 20 would give me information on whether there is a need to design and support an FAI training program which would focus on general classroom management and cultural differences, a program which has not been developed on the Bloomington campus.

Implementation of the Questionnaire

This questionnaire was conceived as part of a larger program of evaluation by CELT of its FAI proficiency exam. Step one of that program was implementation of another questionnaire by my colleague, Virginia Sue Martin, one designed to measure the attitudes and views of FTA advisors, secretaries, and departmental chairs. (See pp. 43-47 in this volume.) Her questionnaire results showed that there is considerable objection in various academic departments where foreign AIs are hired to undergraduates receiving a questionnaire such as the one I designed. Their responses indicated that there is, indeed, opposition to their international AIs being singled out concerning their language ability. The advisors, secretaries, and chairs do not want to cause waves on waters that seem to have quieted somewhat in recent years, having been rough in the past.

Therefore, my questionnaire remains unused to date. I await an opportunity to seem what kind of results it would produce and what kind of validation it might provide for our Indiana University Foreign Associate Instructor Examination.

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SECTION TWO

CROSS-CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

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CROSS-CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS IN DESIGNING A FOREIGN TA TRAINING PROGRAM

Lynne A. McNamara
Director, English Teacher Training Program
Fulbright, Cairo, Egypt

Introduction

Information that a foreign teaching assistant should have in a training program includes a comparative analysis of the American educational system and the FTA's experience in his or her country, an orientation to administrative technicalities necessary to run a classroom, a general orientation to the FTA's American campus, a discussion of how to interact with colleagues, general cultural issues, an understanding of the expectations of the American undergraduate, and ways to assist the American student in having a positive learning experience. The following will present some details covering each of these topics.

Comparative Education Component

One approach in teaching is to take the student from a familiar and understandable base to the new set of information. Thus, recognizing the educational system and background of the FTA will help trainers realize some of the issues that need to be discussed. Selecting specific situations in the classroom that are different between the FTA's culture and the American culture is the basis of a cross-cultural discussion. There can be major differences in the definitions of an undergraduate classroom, especially if the definition is based on the FTA's experience of that classroom in her or her country. Setting a common ground of understanding is essential to describing the experiences that the FTA will encounter.

Even if the FTAs have attended an American college or university, their ideas of how to teach an undergraduate class may be based on their countries' perspectives. When they were in the American classroom setting, they concentrated on being good students, not on being good teachers. Therefore, the more that we can describe the details, the more we can assist the TA in becoming knowledgeable about and thus comfortable in the American classroom teaching environment.

The issues listed below are defined differently in some cultures. The list may be expanded, depending on the cultures represented in the FTA group. It can serve as a basis of discussion and thus definition of some elements in the American classroom. Some issues are

Beginning/end of school year	Dress (teacher, student)
Before/after class time	Respect/formality
Arrival in class (teacher/student)	Discipline issues
Greetings	Attendance
Participation of students	Notetaking

---

[1] This paper was presented as a Background Session at the Institute.

Participation of students	Notetaking
Purchase of notes	Homework
Textbook usage	Memorization
Blackboard use	Lab use
Movement in classroom	Cheating
Grading	Size of classes
High school diploma equivalency	Socializing with students
Research (teacher/student)	Time (class, term)

Testing (How many, what types, what setting, repeating)
Study sessions (with partner, with FTA, with other teachers)
What is a good teacher? (Public speaker, publications, recognition)

Some general comparative statements might be made about the foreign TA's educational experience and the American experience. These statements could also serve as a basis of cross-cultural discussion.

OTHER SYSTEM	vs.	AMERICAN SYSTEM
Theoretical	vs.	Practical
Formal	vs.	Informal
Independent	vs.	Dependent
Memorization	vs.	Analysis/synthesis
Subjective	vs.	Objective

Orientation to Administrative Technicalities

The FTA is expected to follow particular procedures in the classroom. Some of these directives are issued by the university, some by the college, and some by the department. FTAs need to gain an understanding of these administrative technicalities in order to serve the needs of their students and to meet the requirements of the institution. An orientation training program could include definitions, explanations, and examples of these procedures. The following list offers some of the items that would be useful to discuss:

Drop/add	Section changing
Grade reporting	Standardized testing
Academic advising	Final exam scheduling
Office hours	Obligatory meetings
Typing/copying services	Departmental services

General Campus Orientation

The FTA can attend the orientation that is offered for all new student (graduate and foreign students) on campus. In addition, there should be an orientation from the focus of a new teacher on campus. A few of the areas to cover are audio-visual support services, library rooms and resources available, and the reserve book system.

Interaction with American Colleagues

If the FTA interacts with her or his colleagues, there should be better acceptance of the FTA among that group and, therefore, more support. Reaching out to Americans for information of a professional nature and socializing with the Americans both on and

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campus personnel. Those colleagues include other TAs, professorial superiors, secretaries, work-study students, and lab and research assistants. There may be others on a particular campus that can be identified as crucial in gaining professional and interpersonal support.

General Cultural Issues

If the foreign TA has never been in the U.S., general intercultural issues should be addressed in an orientation. With regard to the specific cultural situation of an American undergraduate classroom, the FTA should also be made aware of the impact of dress, body odors, touching, physical closeness, and male/female relationships.

Expectations of the American Undergraduate Student

Particular elements of a classroom setting can be identified as important to the American student and, thus, are points upon which the FTA will be judged as communicative and successful or not. Verbal and non-verbal language style, organizational style, boardwork, variety of presentation, and getting feedback are all significant to the American undergraduate student.

Verbal and non-verbal language skills of the teacher can show interest in the topic which, in turn, should involve the student more into the subject. The following are some of those skills:

VERBAL:
1. Variety of speed
2. Change of tone, emphasis of main points
3. Projection of voice, volume
4. Pauses to emphasize and get attention
5. Indicating quotes
6. Enunciating clearly

NON-VERBAL:
1. Eye contact
2. Facial expression
3. Standing up/sitting down
4. Moving around
5. Gestures
6. Smiling occasionally

Organizational style is another important demand of the American student. A presentation can be organized like a composition: Introduction, Body, and Conclusion. A common saying among teachers is relevant to the FTA in training: "Tell them what you're going to say. Say it. Tell them what you said." Summarizing occasionally, every 15 minutes approximately, will assist the students to follow the presentation. An FTA can also use outlining effectively to demonstrate organizational style. Outlining can be done verbally, on the board, or in a handout. Other handouts can present primary points covered, critical vocabulary, or types of test questions. The FTA can learn how to use visual organizational techniques: examples, demonstrations, analogies, pictures, and films. Review sessions are also appreciated by the American student. All of these organizational techniques assist the American to follow the presentation better and can give the student a sense that the FTA knows the material well.

If the FTA uses the board, it must be done with the audience in mind. Students want to read the writing, so it should be large and legible, preferably printed. Making bold body movements toward the audience and not continuously facing the blackboard will

bold body movements toward the audience and not continuously facing the blackboard will help keep the students' attention. The FTA could continue to speak while writing as well.

Variety of presentation will help hold the interest of the American student. Lecturing, demonstrations, films, field trips, small group discussions or projects, and team work activities are all ways to have some variety in the classroom.

Feedback is critical to understanding your audience. The FTA needs to get feedback from the students because the American interprets this technique as showing interest in the student. The FTA should ask the students wh-questions, which require more involvement of the students' mental processes, not yes/no questions, which require a simple yes or no answer. Wh-questions include the following words: what, where, when, who, why, which, how, how much/many. Another feedback technique is having the students restate, summarize, or predict with regard to the content that the FTA has just been discussing. Reading students' body language provides feedback to the FTA about continued interest in the topic. The FTA should observe wandering eyes, sloppy posture, restless legs, nervous hands and tapping pencils or pens, talking, and vague faces. All of this body language indicates that the FTA may have lost that student.

If the FTA understands the demands of the American student and is able to incorporate techniques which satisfy those demands, his or her classroom teaching experience will be more successful and, thus, more fruitful for both the FTA and the American student.

<u>Educating the American Student</u>

There are techniques that the American undergraduate student can use to improve his or her learning experience. Often times an FTA can encourage the Amer'can student to incorporate these techniques into the FTA's classroom. The following are such techniques:

1. Ask questions.
2. Restate main points.
3. Speak clearly and slowly.
4. Ask teacher to speak slower and to repeat ideas using different language.
5. Talk to teacher before/after class.
6. Use office hours.
7. Get specifics on tests
    a. Type of test
    b. Content
    c. Number of tests per semester and spacing
    d. Time allotted to take test
    e. Grading policy
    f. Weight of items on tests
8. Go over tests with teacher.
9. Get study partner.

The American student would also appreciate knowing the professional and educational background of the FTA. Credentials of the teacher give credence to content knowledge and show interest of the FTA.

To further assist the American student, the FTA could provide suggestions about ways the students might provide input to the FTA about langauge interference in teaching. The FTA might prefer a comment in private or an immediate correction in class. As long as the American student knows that the problem can be addressed, there is a sense of resolution.

<u>Conclusion</u>

The issues presented here identify cross-cultural elements in a particular setting: the American undergraduate classroom. The more the foreign teaching assistant is aware of the acceptable behaviors and procedures in this unique environment, the more secure he or she will feel and the more successful the FTA will be. Trainers can assist in the process through identification of the issues and through discussions and activities that help to integrate the new cultural patterns into the FTA's teaching identity.

PRE-DEPARTURE TA ORIENTATION WORKSHOP IN TAIWAN

CHEN, Fu-Yen
Foundation for Scholarly Exchange

This TA workshop will combine the expertise of American FTA trainers with resource persons in Taiwan under the administration of the Foundation for Scholarly Exchange (FSE). The purpose will be, by sharing their teaching experience to upgrade the preparation of TA's from Taiwan.

The main emphasis of this workshop is on the sociocultural and pedagogical factors involved in teaching on an American campus, which would be important for a TA from Taiwan to be aware of. Routine survival skills, the main component of the usual pre-departure orientation program, will not be emphasized.

The objectives of this workshop are:

- To compare the American and Chinese Higher Educational systems in terms of administrative and organizational structure.
- To provide an overview of the American undergraduate in terms of his(her) academic and social expectations and behavior.
- To clarify the major cultural differences in a classroom setting between American and Chinese students.
- To describe the academic and social support systems available to the Taiwanese TAs on the American university campus.
- To identify the common language mistakes made by Chinese students and provide practical methods by which such students can improve their English.

The workshop will consist of forty hours of orientation, and serve approximately fifty students who are preparing to be TAs at American universities. The workshop will take place during either the summer or winter school vacation period in Taiwan.

Below is an outline of the staff qualifications, participant requirements, and content of the syllabus:

I. Staff Qualifications

The following staff members are anticipated:

1. Lecturer: Experienced Foreign TA trainer with experience and/or education in ESL, Educational Methodology, and Cross-cultural Communications.
2. Speaker: Chinese professor, with a Ph.D. in Education, Linguistics or Communication, and with teaching experience in an American university.
3. Assistants: Two Chinese, with Master's degrees in TESOL from an American university.
4. Tutors: Two Americans, native English speakers with Bachelor degrees in English or Linguistics.

II. Participant Requirements

1. TOEFL of 550 or above.
2. Valid I-20 or IAP-66 form.

III. Outline of the syllabus

DAY 1

3:00-6:00 p.m. REGISTRATION AND ORAL PRODUCTION TEST

6:00-8:00 p.m. WELCOME PARTY

DAY 2

8:30-10:00 a.m. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION
OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

10:30-12:00 noon COMMON MISTAKES MADE BY CHINESE STUDENTS

Objectives: 1. Point out the common English mistakes made by Chinese students in terms of pronunciation, intonation, grammar, and stress.

	2. Provide practical methods by which students can practice in the class with assistants and tutors.
Staffing:	Lecturer/Foreign TA Trainer
1:30-3:00 p.m.	PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS NECESSARY FOR CLASSROOM TEACHING
Objectives:	1. Identify verbal and non-verbal techniques used in good public speaking.
	2. Provide good lecturing skills.
Staffing:	Lecturer
3:30-5:00 p.m.	SMALL GROUP LANGUAGE LEARNING EXERCISE
Methods:	Divide students into small groups and provide verbal and non-verbal practice in the specific language skills presented earlier by the lecturer.
Staffing:	Assistants and Tutors
7:00-9:00 p.m.	FILM; Individual English Tutorial

DAY 3

8:30-10:00 a.m.	WHAT IS THE AMERICAN CLASSROOM? WHAT IS THE AMERICAN STUDENT?
Objectives:	Present an overview of American undergraduate educational structure and a profile of undergraduate student characteristics.
Staffing:	Lecturer
10:30-12:00 noon	COMPARATIVE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS
Objectives:	1. Discussion of the similarities and differences between the American and Chinese higher educational systems.
	2. Discussion of how Chinese TAs can assist American students in gaining a better understanding of Chinese Culture.
Staffing:	Assistants and Tutors

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1:30-3:00 p.m.	MICRO-TEACHING
Objectives:	1. 5 minute videotaping of students' classroom presentation. 2. Critique of the videotaped micro-teaching demonstration.
Staffing:	Lecturer
7:00-9:00 p.m.	FILM; Individual English Tutorial

DAY 4

8:30-10:00 a.m.	CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION: Professional Relationships
Objectives:	Define the academic relationship between TAs and their supervising professors, colleagues, and students.
Staffing:	Lecturer
10:00-12:00 noon	CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION: Personal Relationships
Objectives:	1. Divide students into the following small groups: Computer Science, Engineering, Physical Sciences, Business, Social Sciences and Humanities. 2. Invite Chinese Professors who served as TAs in their fields to share their insights and experiences in teaching at American universities.
Staffing:	Resource Persons
3:30-5:00 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS ON A U.S. CAMPUS
Objectives:	Identify the academic and social support groups or alternative resources available to FT's.
Staffing:	Lecturer
7:00-9:00 p.m.	Disco Party; Individual English Tutorial

DAY 5

8:30-10:00 a.m.	VIDEOTAPED MICRO-TEACHING CRITIQUE
Objectives:	Follow-up evaluations of the teaching demonstration.

Staffing:	Lecturer
10:30-12:00 noon	THE LANGUAGE OBSTACLES OF CHINESE STUDENTS
Objectives:	1. Analyze language obstacles of Chinese students learning English. 2. Provide self-diagnosis and self-learning skills.
Staffing:	Speaker
1:30-3:00 p.m.	MICRO-TEACHING (Videotaped)
3:30-5:00 p.m.	LANGUAGE SKILLS: Questions and Answers
Objectives:	Improving the language skills of handling questions in the classroom.
Staffing:	Lecturer
7:00-9:00 p.m.	Individual English Tutorial

DAY 6

8:30-10:00 a.m.	INSTRUCTIONAL SKILLS
Objectives:	1. Give students a framework of teaching skills in the undergraduate classroom. 2. Discuss testing, grading and variety of presentation.
Staffing:	Lecturer
10:30-12:00 noon	TEACHING METHODOLOGY
Objectives:	Provide a theoretical concept of teaching activities.
Staffing:	Speaker
1:30-3:00 p.m.	SYNTHESIS AND MANAGING DISCUSSION
Objectives:	Review and discuss teaching strategies, such as, organization, synthesis, and managing discussion.
Staffing:	Lecturer
3:30-4:00 p.m.	DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION
4:00-6:00 p.m.	FAREWELL PARTY

FTA CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION SYLLABUS

Jacque S. Behrens
Texas Tech University

One does not cross a river without getting wet.
--Zulu Proverb

Rain beats a leopard's skin but it does not wash out the spots.
--Ashanti Proverb

The goals of successful intercultural adaptation should be to ensure that while the leopard gets wet crossing the river, he does not wash out his spots.
--A.E. Upodor

The purpose of this study is to assist the foreign teaching assistant (FTA) in examining the progressive maturation of self in movement from one culture to another. It is to examine the awareness process, the sequential change, and coping skills during the adjustment stages of identifying self in relation to home culture, self during the transition between home and host culture, and self in relation to host culture. In understanding oneself in these different environments, the FTA understands self and her/his students' attitudes and behavior.

The FTA workshop at Texas Tech University consists of three components: English skills, pedagogical, and cross-cultural. This syllabus covers the cross-cultural component of a thirty-hour FTA workshop for approximately twenty foreign students preparing to be a teaching assistant at Texas Tech University. The workshop takes place over a three-week period of time prior to the fall academic semester. Two hours per day are scheduled for this part. The overall objective is to increase the FTA's communication effectiveness which is inclusive of the following objectives:

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- to introduce FTAs to an overview of the University system in which they will work, especially University policies and student characteristics that will impinge directly on FTAs,

- to understand the role of attitudes and values on the FTA and students' behavior,

- to establish a comfortable learning atmosphere based on mutual respect,

- to increase awareness of cross-cultural differences/similarities between the American system of education and the FTA's system (e.g. procedures, types of students, attitudes of students, formality vs. informality) and to function adequately and acceptably in the American system,

- to identify cultural barriers and provide alternatives to overcome them,

- to provide information about American cultural traits as they pertain to cross-cultural communication in the classroom,

- to provide a frame of reference for understanding the process for interpersonal cross-cultural communication, e.g. culture, communication, perception, and value orientations.

Syllabus Overview of FTA Workshop
*Supplemental Material Following Syllabus

DAY 1

INTRODUCTION OF FTA PARTICIPANTS--NAME, COUNTRY, MAJOR.

*SM1 Participant Information Sheet
Questions used for oral introduction and discussion to break the ice.

Students may be divided into pairs and then suggest that they introduce one another to the group. This facilitates their practice in English.

DAYS 2 and 3

COMPARATIVE EDUCATIONAL COMPONENTS

*SM2 Comparative Educational Components
*SM3 List of Comparative Education Questions
*SM4 Chart of University Organizational Structure

Provide a general orientation to the university structure. Overview the roles of the vice presidents for academic affairs, student affairs and administration, identification of various colleges, student affairs and administrative offices, library, etc.

It is important to direct the students' thinking from a familiar and understandable environment to the new university classroom environment.

DAY 4

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

Definition of Culture: "behavior typical of a group", or according to one foreign student, "that which makes me feel strange". Is culture learned? Reference: Hall, Edward T., Beyond Culture, 1981, p. 16. Why does the foreign student feel strange? This definition provides a good discussion in identifying the familiar support system versus the unfamiliar system. Role of Communication in Culture: Reference Samovar et. al., Understanding Intercultural Communication, 1981.

*SM5 Berlo's Model of Communication
*SM6 Cultural Thought Patterns
Role of Perception in Understanding Culture: Reference Samovar, 1981, and Morris, 1975.
*SM7 What Do You See In This Picture?

DAY 5

ROLE OF VALUE ORIENTATIONS IN CULTURES

To lead into the discussion of values, the Priority Auction Exercise (SM8) is used at this point. The students make a purchase during the auction. Afterwards the purchase is translated into a value. The value key for the exercise follows:

1. justice
2. altruism
3. fame
4. achievement
5. pleasure
6. wisdom
7. honesty
8. autonomy
9. wealth/economics
10. power
11. love
12. esthetics
13. physical attraction
14. health
15. emotional health
16. knowledge
17. religion

For references on cultural orientation refer to:

Kluckhohn, Florence and Fred Strodtbeck. VARIATIONS IN VALUE ORIENTATIONS. Westpoint, CN: Greenwood Press, 1961.

Stewart, Edward C. AMERICAN CULTURAL PATTERNS: A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1972.

Condon, John C. and F. Yousef. AN INTRODUCTION TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION. New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1975.

The concept of value orientations was developed by Florence Kluckhohn and Fred Strodtbeck on the assumption that there are universal problems that people in all societies encounter and to which they must find solutions. Each of these possible solutions is called a values orientation--standards by which behavior is evaluated. Each society has its dominant profile as well as numerous variant profiles. In societies which are undergoing change, the ordering of preferences will not be clear-cut for some or even all of the value orientations. Values are referred to as guiding principles which determine behavior. Specifically, the primary value orientations as defined by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck are as follows:

-Human Nature Orientation: goodness, rationality, mutability. Whether innate human nature is basically evil, good and evil, rational or irrational, mutable or immutable, depends on the culture of the individual providing the response.

-Man-Nature (Supernature): relationship between human beings and nature -- subjugation to nature, harmony with nature, and mastery over nature.

-Time Orientation: A culture's concept of time is its philosophy toward the past, present, and future.

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-Activity Orientation: describes the form of human activity or the self expression of human beings in activity. Three common modes of activity are Being -- indulgence in existing desires; Being-in-Becoming -- control of desires by meanings of mediation and detachment; and Doing.

-Relational Orientation: concerned with man's relation to other men -- lineal, collateral, and individualistic.

*SM9 Condon and Yousef's Spheres
*SM10 Condon and Yousef's Value Orientation Concepts
*SM11 Values Assumptions Chart: An observation of American and international student behaviors and identification of which values are fairly acted out. FTAs use SM11 as homework and classroom discussion the following day.

DAYS 6 and 7

PARTICIPANT DISCUSSION OF VALUES ASSUMPTIONS CHART

This exercise is excellent to stimulate discussion about their home cultures. It is at this point that a cultural comparative frame of reference comes into focus.

DAY 8

CASE STUDIES

Students divide into groups to plan strategy and seek volunteers to role play, to evaluate the following situations between the FTA and an American student in his/her class. Case studies such as those in SM12-19 may be used here to stimulate discussion by having the participants enumerate their perceptions and behaviors in each situation. Each group reports later to the whole class. This section requires coordination between teachers of the FTA Workshop. The teacher of the pedagogical section may include these case studies in his/her presentation. If so, the role play exercises will be deleted from the cultural component portion of the Workshop.

*SM12 Role Play 1 Student not doing homework.
*SM13 Role Play 2 Student who received a "C" and needs a "B".
*SM14 Role Play 3 Two Students Suspected of cheating/plagiarism.
*SM15 Role Play 4 Student wants to make up work missed.

DAY 9

Again the students divide into small groups, review the case studies, select a group reporter to report small group discussion to total group/class.

*SM16 *SM17 *SM18 *SM19	Also, refer elsewhere in this volume to three case studies by Erik Christy and William Rittenberg.

DAY 10

A panel of FTAs from a previous FTA workshop who have been teaching this past year are invited into this session to share their perceptions and interactive experiences with the American students, fellow FTAs, departmental faculty and secretaries, and to field questions from the prospective FTAs.

NAFSA Films: "Cultural Variance and the Non-Native speaking Wrap-up and Evaluations--Teaching Assistant", John Gumperz's "Cross Talk"

Follow-up

Potluck Supper with faculty and students scheduled after the conclusion of the FTA Workshop.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS (SM)

The following supplemental materials are included as suggested classroom material (transparancies) for the subject of cultural and social adjustments. On the first day of the course, an introduction is given on the purpose of the course, subject matter covered, resource people for the course, and general overview.

These supplemental materials are included because the sessions are conducted so that participants are actively involved in experience-related learning situations.

*<u>SM1 Participant Information Sheet</u>

1. What is your full name? (family name, given name)
2. What name do you prefer to be called during the workshop?
3. What is your native language?
4. What other language(s) do you speak?
5. What is your own area of professional specialization?
6. Will you be teaching a course (or courses at TTU this year)? If so, what course(s)?
7. Are you a teacher or a university professor in your home country? If so, where do you teach and what subjects do you teach?
8. What are your strong points in English?
9. In what areas do you think your English could be improved?
10. What do you hope to gain from your participation in this workshop? (If you need additional space, please use the back of this page to answer the question.)

*<u>SM2 Comparative Educational Components</u>

Excerpt from chapter in this volume by Lynne A. McNamara, "Cross-Cultural Considerations in Designing a Foreign TA Training Program".

One approach in teaching is to take the student from a familiar and understandable base to the new set of information. Thus, recognizing the educational system and background of the FTA will help trainers realize some of the issues that need to be discussed. Selecting specific situations in the classroom that are different between the FTA's culture and American culture is the basis of a cross-cultural discussion. There can be major differences in the definitions of an undergraduate classroom, especially if the definition is based on the FTA's experience of that classroom in his/her country. Setting a common ground of understanding is essential to describing the experiences that the FTA will encounter.

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The issues listed below are defined differently in some cultures. The lists may be expanded, depending on the cultures represented in the FTA group. It can serve as a basis of discussion and, thus, definition of some elements in the American classroom. Some issues include:

Beginning/End of School Year	Dress (teacher/student)
Before/After Class Time	Respect/Formality
Arrival in Class (teacher/student)	Discipline Issues
Greetings	Attendance
Participation of Students	Notetaking
Purchase of Notes	Homework
Textbook Usage	Memorization
Blackboard Use	Lab Use
Movement in Classroom	Cheating
Grading	Size of Class
High School Diploma Equivalency	Mingling with Students
Research (teacher/students)	Time (class, semester)

Testing (how many, what types, what settings, repeating)
Study Sessions (with partner, with FTA, with other teachers)
What is a good teacher (public speaker, publications, recognition)

Some general comparative statements might be made about the foreign TA's educational experience and the American experience. These statements would also serve as a basis of cross-cultural discussion.

OTHER SYSTEM	VS	AMERICAN SYSTEM
Theoretical	vs	Practical
Formal	vs	Informal
Independent	vs	Dependent
Memorization	vs	Analysis/Synthesis
Subjective	vs	Objective

*SM3 List of Comparative Education Questions for Discussion/Impromptu Speeches

If time permits, request impromptu speeches from SM3. This provides additional practice in English. If time is a factor, this exercise may be deleted.

1. Describe the grading system in your country and compare it to what you know about the grading system in the United States.
2. Describe the relationship between professors and college students in your home country.
3. How important is it to have a college degree in your country? Why?
4. What are the major concerns (social, personal, academic, political) of students in your home country?
5. What are your early impressions of the students in the department you are visiting this year?
6. What is your idea of an educated person? Have you ever met anyone who didn't go to high school but whom you considered to be educated? (Explain.)
7. How is your academic life here different from the way it was in your home country?
8. Should it be the professor's responsibility to motivate students at the university level? Why or why not?
9. Should effort and attendance be taken into consideration in the students' final grades in university classes? How would you grade a student who put forth a great deal of effort and attended every class but failed the final examination?
10. What professional or academic experience do you hope to gain in your host department this year?
11. How can the research facilities in your host department and at this university in general be of help to you in your own area of specialization?
12. How is the physical layout of your host department (for example, the office space, the classrooms, the surrounding areas) similar to or different from your department at your home university?

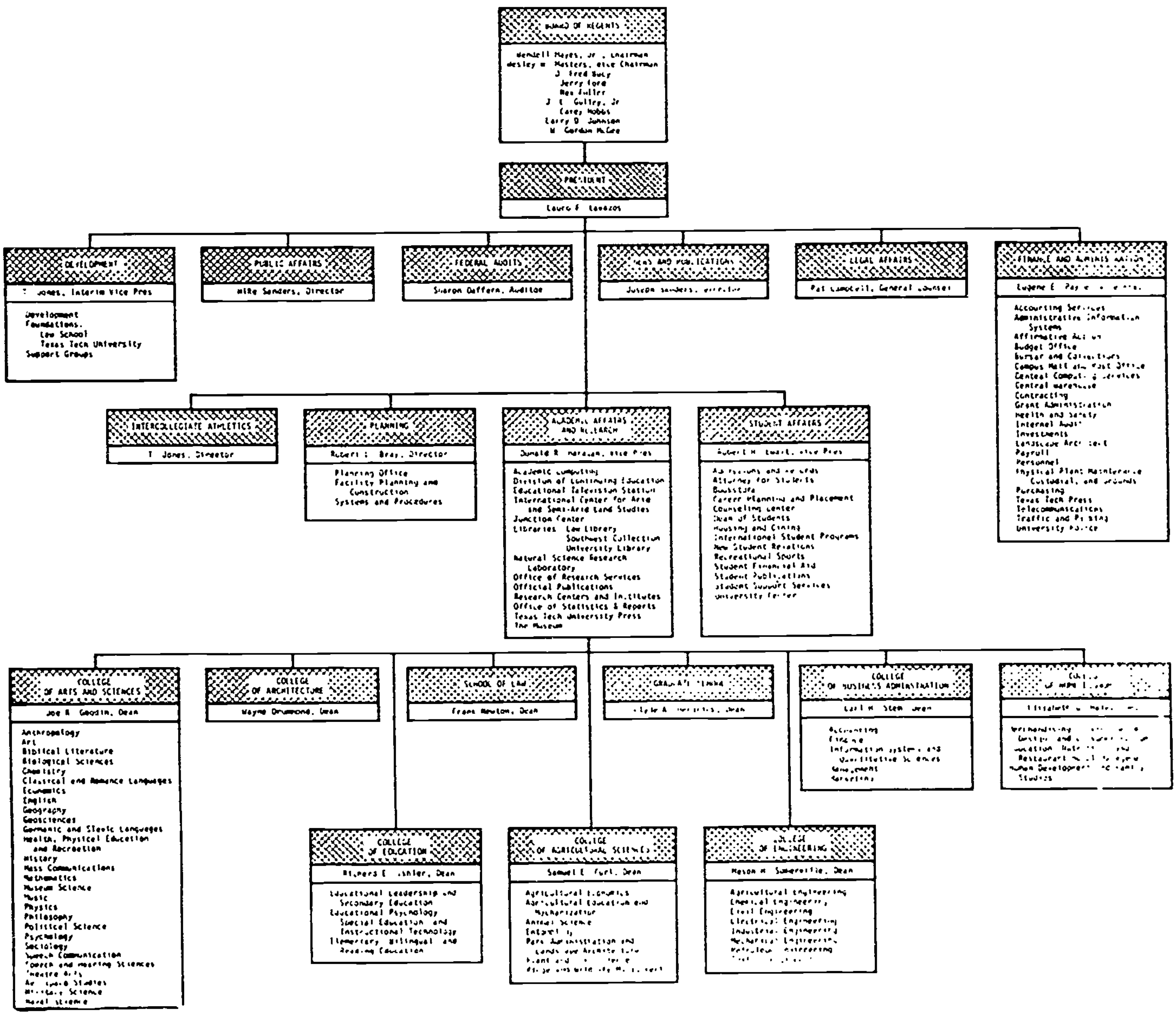
Credit: Bailey, Kathleen and Frances B. Hinofotis, "A One-day Workshop in Oral Communication Skill" in Bailey, Kathleen M., Frank Pialorsi, and Jean Zukoweki/Faust, eds. in FOREIGN TEACHING ASSISTANTS in U.S. UNIVERSITIES, Washington D.C.: NAFSA, 1984, p. 57.

*SM4 Chart Of University Structure

ADMINISTRATION ORGANIZATION CHART

Texas Tech University

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center



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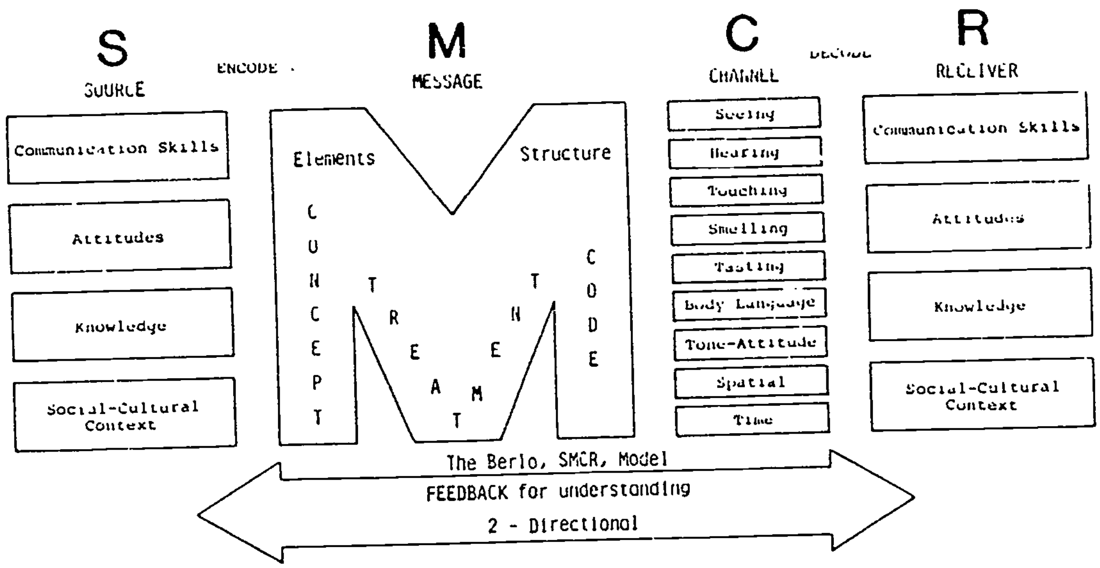
*SM5 Berlo's Communication Model



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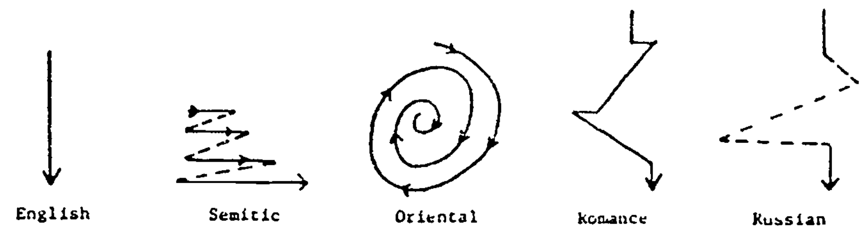
Understanding of intercultural communication also includes recognizing the meaning of both verbal and non-verbal communication, decoding culture to obtain meaning, and using "feedback" as a means to increase communication skills in cross-cultural relationships. Even though the verbal process is the primary mode for the exchange of thoughts, non-verbal communication such as gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, body posture and movement, touch, smell, and dress, silence, space, time, and paralanguage plays a significant role, consciously and subconsciously, intentionally and unintentionally, in sending and receiving messages (Samovar, 1981).

*SM6 Cultural Thought Patterns

Kaplan (1966) illustrates the form of text construction prevalent in a society, and the way text is organized is a reflection of the way

logical patterns are perceived. It is important to remember that cultural influences impact one's pattern of writing, and these are reflections of one's pattern of thinking.

The form of text construction.



Kaplan, Robert B., "Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education," in Language Learning, (1966) XVI, 1-2 p. 15.

According to Samovar, et al. (1981), a culture's thought patterns determine the way individuals in that culture communicate, which in turn affects the way people respond to individuals from other cultures. Being able to perceive that these various thought patterns exist is the first step in learning to facilitate cross-cultural communication.

At this point the prospective FTAs are asked to draw the thought patterns of their cultures. They draw these patterns on the board and explain why they drew their thought patterns the way they did.

*SM7 What Do You See In This Picture?

Perception in Culture: Individual behavior is the result of the way individuals perceive their world; these behaviors are learned as a part of normal cultural experiences. Understanding the process of perception can help the individual understand how to eliminate some perceptual errors made in communication. This is important because poor perception leads to poor communication. (Morris, 1975)

The problem lies in the fact that people know the world through their senses, but the senses are not always capable of seeing the world accurately. Certainly, one cannot perceive the entire world because perception requires selection. What one person selects will never be exactly the same as that which another selects. The picture of the "old/young" woman below (Boring, 1930) demonstrates the idea that two or more persons may look at the same image but perceive and communicate a different message.

An ambiguous figure.

Please answer the following:

Is she young or old? ______________________

Does she have any outstanding facial features? ______________

Is she reasonably attractive or downright ugly? ______________

First used for psychological purposes by E.G. Boring, "A New Ambiguous Figure," American Journal of Psychology, 1930, page 444. (Originally drawn by W.E. Hill; it appeared in Puck, 6 November 1905.)

Perception is interaction, that is, what is perceived is partly determined by the subject's expectations, language and background (Morris, 1975). For the sojourner, understanding perception as perceived by home and host cultures can help in adopting a strategy which can increase personal effectiveness in communication.

*SM8 Priorities Auction Exercise

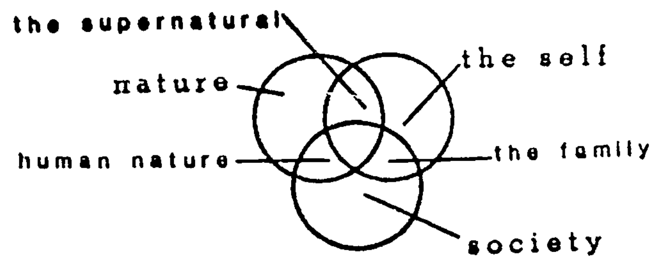
AN EXPERIENCE IN CHOOSING SELF PRIORITIES

DIRECTIONS:
You have been given an abritrary amount of $1,000 to spend on items to be auctioned for sale. You may spend any amount or none up to your $1,000, but you may not exceed this amount. Divide into three or more groups (less with a smaller class) and compete in the bidding with your own group members. One or more auctioneers will conduct the auction of "self priorities".

Item to be Auctioned	Amount Budgeted	Highest Amount Bid	Won?
1. A chance to rid the world of prejudice	______	______	___
2. A chance to serve the sick and needy	______	______	___
3. A chance to become a famous figure (movie star, baseball hero, astronaut, etc.)	______	______	___
4. A proposal that will triple your company's earnings this year	______	______	___
5. A year of daily massage and the world's finest cuisine from the world's best chef	______	______	___
6. A chance to know the meaning of life	______	______	___
7. A vaccine to make all persons incapable of graft or lying	______	______	___
8. A chance to set your own working conditions	______	______	___
9. To be the richest person in the world	______	______	___
10. The Presidency	______	______	___
11. The perfect love relationship	______	______	___
12. A house overlooking the most beautiful view in the world, in which you may keep 40 of your favorite works of art	______	______	___
13. A chance to be the most attractive person in the world	______	______	___
14. A chance to live to 100 with no illness	______	______	___
15. Free psychoanalysis with a genius analyst	______	______	___
16. A complete facsimile of the New York Public Library for your private use.	______	______	___
17. An audience with the leader of your faith	______	______	___

*SM9 Condon and Yousef's Spheres

Interrelated spheres of self, society and nature.



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To conceptualize the range of values, Condon and Yousef (1981) demonstrate three interesting spheres: self, society, and nature. Their intersections create three other categories: family (between self and society), human nature (between society and nature), and the supernatural (between nature and self).

System of Five Value Orientations: What distinguishes one culture from another is the way one culture responds to how people view themselves, their relations with others, and their relations to their world. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) have another phrase for these responses--value orientations. And according to Hall (1981), the value system of any culture is significant in that it is learned, interrelated, and shared by all the people of that culture. Specifically, the primary value orientations are as follows:

Human Nature
Time Orientation
Relational Orientation
Man-Nature (Supernature)
Activity Orientation

Using Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1961) basic concept of the five value orientations, Condon and Yousef (1981) added twenty to make a total of twenty-five sets, plus they retained the three variations to each set, thereby providing seventy-five sets of value orientations. The following table provides a guidance to a sojourner for understanding the cultural patterns of one's home culture, one's host culture, and of self in adapting to different cultures. Cultural patterns are learned, and it is important for sojourners to recognize variations as they move from one culture to another. Condon and Yousef (1981) state that "all variations may exist in any one society".

The orientations in the left-hand column of the table following are primarily attributed to the United States as a culture, and this outline is not definitive or exhaustive in recognition of the variations within culture.

The transitional experience of sojourners begins with the encounter of another culture when their values are challenged. Being aware of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1961) five value orientations during the transitional experience, an FTA in the classroom or returnee will have a broader understanding of the range of cultural variations, and therefore, is better equipped for "role learning" and developing "coping strategy" (Peterson, 1981) and for self-actualization in a host culture.

*SM10 Condon and Yusof's Value Orientation Concepts Chart

Value orientation concepts for the sojourner.

SELF			
Individualism—interdependence	1. individualism	2. individuality	3. interdependence
Age	1. youth	2. the middle years	3. old age
Sex	1. equality of sexes	2. female superiority	3. male superiority
Activity	1. doing	2. being-in becoming	3. being
THE FAMILY			
Relational orientations	1. individualistic	2. collateral	3. lineal
Authority	1. democratic	2. authority-centered	3. authoritarian
Positional role behavior	1. open	2. general	3. specific
Mobility	1. high mobility	2. phasic mobility	3. low mobility, stasis
SOCIETY			
Social reciprocity	1. independence	2. symmetrical-obligatory	3. complementary-obligatory
Group membership	1. many groups, brief identification, subordination of group to individual	2. balance of 1 and 3	3. few groups, prolonged identification, subordination of the member to the group
Intermediaries	1. no intermediaries (directness)	2. specialist intermediaries only	3. essential intermediaries
Formality	1. informality	2. selective formality	3. pervasive formality
Property	1. private	2. utilitarian	3. community
HUMAN NATURE			
Rationality	1. rational	2. intuitive	3. irrational
Good and evil	1. good	2. mixture of good and evil	3. evil
Happiness, pleasure	1. happiness as goal	2. inextricable bond of happiness and sadness	3. life is mostly sadness
Mutability	1. change, growth, learning	2. some change	3. unchanging
NATURE			
Relationship of man and nature	1. man dominating nature	2. man in harmony with nature	3. nature dominating man
Ways of knowing nature	1. abstract	2. circle of induction-deduction	3. specific
Structure of nature	1. mechanistic	2. spiritual	3. organic
Concept of time	1. future	2. present	3. past
THE SUPERNATURAL			
Relationship of man and the supernatural	1. man as god	2. pantheism	3. man controlled by the supernatural
Meaning of life	1. physical, material goals	2. intellectual goals	3. spiritual goals
Providence	1. good in life is unlimited	2. balance of good and misfortune	3. good in life is limited
Knowledge of the cosmic order	1. order is comprehensible	2. faith and reason	3. mysterious and unknowable

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After studying the Five Value Orientations, the participants are asked to identify the value orientations in America, their home country, and themselves as they relate to the concepts outlined in the chart in SM11. The participants find it difficult to do this because they sometimes see a mixture of these values. For example, the rural area would be more traditional (non-western); whereas, the cities might be more westernized. They, themselves, react in the traditional mode in one situation and the Western mode in another. The chart in SM11 is drafted from Stewart (1972) and Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961).

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*SM11 Values and Assumptions Chart

ASSUMPTIONS AND VALUES IN AMERICAN CULTURE AND ANOTHER CULTURE

	American Culture	Another Culture	Your Culture
I. PERCEPTION OF THE SELF			
A. Concept of oneself	An individual unit whose behavior is aimed at individual goals	A member of a family whose behavior is aimed at smooth interpersonal relationships	
B. How one should act	Solve own problems, develop own opinions, self-reliance	Dependence on others, encouraged to strengthen relationships among people	
II. PERCEPTION OF THE WORLD			
A. Man's relation to nature	Man is separate from nature and must change and master environment to suit his needs	Man is part of nature and must integrate with and adapt to environment	
B. Concept of time	Moves quickly, one must keep up with it; time as a moving river	Moves slowly, no need to hurry; time as a still pool	
III. MOTIVATION			
A. Concept of Achievement	Fulfillment in personal achievement which is largely a matter of individual determination	Fulfillment in smooth interpersonal relationships, with man's place in society largely a matter of fate	
B. Psychology of motivation	Competition is primary method of motivation	Communal feelings toward one another exclude the incentive to excel others	
IV. FORM OF RELATIONS TO OTHERS			
A. Nature of personality	Personality can be fragmented; one need not accept totality of another person in order to be able to work with him	Personalities reacted to their entirety; tendency to accept or reject person completely	

B. Status in personal relationship	Egalitarian ideal--treat the other person as equal	Hierarchical pattern--treat other person according to his position in society
C. Resolution of "differenced	American - face confrontation	Confrontation through an intermediary to avoid "losing face"
V. FORM OF ACTIVITY		
A. Importance of "doing"	"Doing" and being active are highly valued; what a person does is important	"Doing" not emphasized as much; it is just as important to take it easy; what a person is is important
B. Work and play	Time for work, time for play separated	Work and social life are not separated
C. Time orientation	Stress on future	Stress on present and past; life is lived from day to day

This Chart is drafted from Stewart (1972) and Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961).

SM12 Role Play #1 - Student Not Doing Homework

Student: You have been called into your TA's office and you suspect it's because you haven't handed in any homework. You would rather not approach the issue of not handing in homework, and you intend to continue not handing it in. If pressed, you will tell your TA you are too busy trying to catch up in other classes that are important for your major while dealing with some heavy responsibilities during fraternity/sorority rush. In short, this class isn't a priority.

TA: A student in your section has not been handing in homework assignments. You notice this, confront the student by calling him/her into your office, and respond to what s/he tells you. Homework is not a "throw-away" part of your class. It is regularly collected and graded as an important part of your course. You feel a responsibility to your students to make sure they don't jeopardize their progress in your class by not doing it--and you are particularly concerned by this student who has not handed it in since the first week of the course. Your concern is how to approach the student and react to what s/he has to say. (The student has just arrived. It is up to you to tell her/him why s/he is here.)

Discussion:

- How did the TA approach the student? (Summary of what participants did as others saw it.) How else might s/he have acted? Or, are there any things you might have done differently?

- How did the TA react to the student's contention that s/he just doesn't have any time to do the homework? How else might s/he have acted?

- Where does the TA's responsibility end in this situation? Should s/he have approached the student at all? Does his or her responsibility end once the student has been warned? Why or why not?

CREDIT: Black, Beverly. Coordinator, TA Training Center, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1986.

*SM 13 Role Play #2 - Student Who Received a "C" and NEEDS a "B"

Student: You have just received a "C" in a course and you needed a "B" to keep from going on academic probation, which means you will lose financial support and have to withdraw from the University. This is a crisis situation for you; you're not making this up. You feel you genuinely need to be given a chance to stay in school, and it's not fair that this one course should cost you that opportunity. You are visibly upset as you approach the TA. You are willing to do some work over again if need be in order to raise your grade. You plan to plead with the TA to have a heart, stress the issue of fairness and emphasis that your last chance rests with what the TA decides. (You have just arrived in the TA's office.)

TA: You have figured your final grades. A student to whom you have given a "C" comes to your office and tells you that s/he MUST have a "B" in your course or s/he will be on academic probation, which means losing financial support, meaning s/he will have to withdraw from the University. You are aware that everyone has a good argument for asking for a higher grade and that this student is confronting you in good faith. You also know that s/he did "C" work and by all objectives deserves no higher grade. Yet, you also feel this student's desperation, sympathize, and need to respond on the spot. (The student has just arrived in your office.)

Discussion:

- How did the TA handle the problem in the simulation? (Summary of what participant did as others saw it.) How else might s/he have acted? (Or, are there any things you might have done differently?) <u>If TA raised the grade</u>: Who would have kept the grade intact? Why? <u>If TA did not raise the grade</u>: Who would have raised the grade? Why?

- What do you think about the student's argument that <u>your</u> class made <u>the</u> difference in her/his academic advancement?

- To what extent do you consider the grades of <u>other</u> students (i.e. those who <u>did not</u> ask for a higher grade) in your decision to raise or not to raise this student's grade? In other words, how

- important is the issue of fairness to other students in your decision? Remember, there's no doubt in your mind that this student had done "C" work.

- Can you imagine other reasons why students might ask you to raise their course grades? Do you consider any of these reasons to be valid excuses for doing so?

CREDIT: Black, Beverly. Coordinator, TA Training Center, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1986.

*<u>SM14 Role Play #3 Two Students Suspected of Cheating/Plagiarism</u>

Student: You and your friend have been called into the TA's office because you are suspected of copying each other's homework. You sit together in class and are very close to one another. You both deny that you are cheating on your assignments (even if you have). You position is that it is just a coincidence. There is a similarity between your work, but it is because you think alike. You deny even thinking of cheating--in fact, you are a bit offended that your TA suggests it. (You have just arrived at your TA's office.)

TA: You suspect two students in your section have been copying each other's homework assignments. You have no proof--but you suspect this. Since the students are graded on these assignments and have been warned against cheating, you decide to confront them. You call them both into your office. You are careful not to accuse, but the similarities between their assignments are striking. You realize that it may be coincidence; but if it's purposeful, you feel responsible for stopping it. (The students have just arrived at your office.)

- How did th TA handle the problem in the simulation? (Summary of what participant did as others saw it) How else might s/he have acted? Or, are there any things you might have done differently?

- Did the TA in the simulation respond to the students without accusing them of cheating? What are the potential benefits of taking a stronger approach? A lighter approach? Specifically, what form might these alternatives take?

Let's assume the situation was a bit different--say the issue is plagiarism, and you have proof that a student has been copying from a published text and claiming that the published words are his/her own. Would you approach the student in a different manner? If so, how? Why?

CREDIT: Black, Beverly. Coordinator, TA Training Center, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1986.

*SM15 Role Play #4 - Student Wants To Make Up Work Missed

Student: You are attending a course for the first time on the fifth class meeting. You signed up for the course knowing that you would be out of town for a couple of weeks at the very start of the class because of an extended vacation. Now you want to make up the work missed, and you feel you should be given a chance to be on an equal footing with everyone in the class. You turn to the TA for help, feeling it is his/her responsibility to see that you are compensated for what you missed. (You approached the TA after class and s/he asked you to come to his/her office. You have just arrived.)

TA: A student who is enrolled in your course appears for the first time at your fifth class meeting and asks you how s/he can make up the work s/he has missed from the beginning. You feel the student will be at a semester-long disadvantage because of the work s/he has already missed. Simply getting the notes cannot compensate for the carefully planned background material you have presented in the early class session. You feel it is not appropriate to give the student your notes on the missed classes, and you can't afford to spend hours alone in personal consultation. You feel the student should be responsible for the consequences of knowingly missing initial class sessions. (The student approached you after class and you asked her/him to come to your office. S/he has just arrived.)

Discussion:

- How did the TA handle the problem in the simulation? (Summary of what participant did as others saw it.) How else might s/he have acted? (Or, are there any things you might have done differently?) Should the TA insist that the student drop the course? Why?

- Did the TA sacrifice too much of his/her own time to help the student, or did the TA not do enough? Why?

- In general, how should a TA act when s/he is confronted with a problem largely of a student's own creation? How do you strike a balance between being sympathetic and letting the student experience the consequences of her/his actions?

- A related situation involves overrides: students will try to get into your class even after it is full. Too many overrides may mean a class so large that everyone suffers from a less optimal learning environment. Yet, everyone who wants an override is bound to have a good excuse. How do you draw the line? When is it appropriate to let in "just one more" person? When do you say "no"?

CREDIT: Black, Beverly. Coordinator, TA Training Center, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1986.

*SM 16

You are an instructor. Your students want to know if you give pop quizzes, makeups, standardized tests, open-book exams, and department exams. Explain your philosophy on testing to the student.

*SM 17

You are an instructor. You have explicitly given the directions for an assignment. On the date it's due, one student says, "But, teacher, I didn't understand the assignment; therefore, I didn't do it!" Respond to him very politely but firmly. Give him a deadline or negative alternatives if s/he doesn't do the assignment.

*SM18

You are an instructor. You have just announced a quiz for Friday. Several students ask "What is it going to be about?" "How long is the test?" "What kind of test is it?" "What should we study?" Explain to the students that the test questions will be taken right from the book (but don't use the word "book"), that they will select a, b, or c as the correct answer (don't say "a, b, or c"). Answer all their questions in less than 2 minutes.

*<u>SM19</u>

You are an instructor. One of your students made you so angry that you hit the roof, felt you have had it up to here, gave him fair warning and told him that he'd better be up to his ears in studying if he expects to pass. Say all of these things in a very polite, but emphatic manner.

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INTEGRATING CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES INTO THE SOCIAL SUPPORT COMPONENT OF AN FTA TRAINING PROGRAM

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The purpose of this paper is to assist Foreign Teaching Assistant (FTA) Trainers in establishing contact with and utilizing the expertise of campus and community resources in the social support component of an FTA training program. As with any major university program, the FTA training program should, whenever possible, make use of every possible resource for the success of the program. This is particularly important for an FTA program because of the sensitivity of the issue and the increased potential for success when campus and community groups are drawn into the solution.

In the establishment of an FTA program, regardless of length, one of the primary considerations should be the social adjustment that FTAs must endure in addition to all of the other academic and professional concerns that s/he has. Campus and community resources can provide vital assistance in resolving these problems if they are integrated into the FTA program. An important factor in integrating the resources of these groups into the program is the fact that these new FTAs are a combination of many things; they are graduate students, international visitors, and teachers-in-training. This unique combination of roles to play makes them both important users of resources and important resources themselves. Implicit in the involvement of any of these resource groups is the fact that someone from the FTA program must take the time to provide initial orientation and continued guidance to these groups.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

I. Campus Ombudsperson. A primary resource that all TA training programs should identify on campus is a TA Ombudsperson. This person should be someone that is not a part of an academic unit, but rather a member of a campus-wide organization. This person could be a member of the Graduate School or a campus instructional development office. When there is a separate individual for FTAs, it might be the case that one of the above individuals or someone in the international student office or the ESL program could serve as the ombudsperson. The importance of having such an individual is that this is a person who could help the TA resolve an academic or other professional dispute with a reduced fear of some repercussion in the student's academic program. This person would also have a broader campus perspective for the resolution of any problem. It is also assumed that this individual could be useful in assisting the FTAs adjust to their new culture.

II. Departmental TA Coordinator. TA trainers should seek to establish departmental TA coordinators whenever possible. The importance of this is two-fold: first, it will help the TAs to make personal contact in their academic unit; and second, it will help the TA training program politically by giving the program a direct contact person in the department and, therefore, reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings between units, particularly with regard to the goals of the program. This coordinator would be a good resource for the teacher new to the system, particularly since many of the bureaucratic

intricacies of the university vary from department to department. However, an issue of some concern in this situation is that the student may be somewhat reluctant to go to this individual for help because of the fear of academic/employment repercussions within the department.

III. Peer Mentor Program. TA trainers should attempt to establish a peer mentoring program at their institution. This program could be as simple as encouraging departments to informally pair up an experienced TA with an incoming TA. Wherever possible and for cultural reasons, it would be advisable for this experienced TA to be an American, in the hope of fostering more than just academic assistance. The importance of a peer mentoring program goes beyond the professional development aspects that should be readily understood. This program could be crucially important for the new FTA to better understand his/her new cultural milieu and new academic subculture through such a new friendship.

IV. Graduate Student Organization. When such an organization does not exist on campus, the general Student Association should be able to provide this same resource. This organization could provide assistance in the early stages of the FTAs' stay at an institution. Assistance in locating housing, conveying information about ethnic groups on campus and in the community, and generally socializing the students into their new environment are services that these campus organizations can provide. They have great people-power resources and generally a great interest in the resolution of the FTAs' problems in order that the FTAs might become better instructors. A caution with respect to using ethnic student organizations is that there is a potential for students to then gather in their respective language groups and not get sufficiently involved in the American educational community to gain an understanding of it for classroom use.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

I. Faculty and Other University Related Organizations. There are a number of organizations that are loosely related to the university that could be tapped as sources of cross-cultural assistance. Spouses' groups could be asked to help put on lunches or dinners during an orientation session. These same groups could be used as resource people to assist the spouses and families of FTAs; these provide an often ignored but important concern for FTAs. They might also be used as volunteers in cross-cultural simulations, classroom simulations, or other activities for which the FTA training program might require additional people-power.

II. Ethnic Groups. If approached in a careful matter, community ethnic groups can be a useful resource. Such groups are often a part of an umbrella organization that might well provide other resources for FTAs (like home-stays, speakers' bureau, social services, etc.). With some screening, to avoid possible political conflicts, and on-going consultations, these groups could provide welcoming activities for FTAs that will assist them in feeling more at home.

III. Business and Professional Organizations. Organizations like a local world trade association, Rotary, or Kiwanis club could be tapped for additional professional integration into the new cultural environment of the FTA. This could be accomplished through simply sharing information on programs that are being planned or it could entail more in-depth programming like a business person/FTA work-sharing program.

IV. Religious Organizations. If this is handled with the utmost care, a consortium of

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local religious organizations could be a useful resource. If it is clear from the first contact that this must be a non-denominational (and non-evangelistic) consortial group, a large pool of cross-cultural consultants could be available through this resource. Picnics, dinners, and other social activities could be much more successful if the pool of Americans involved were larger.

V. Host Family Program. For an institution that has a host family program, it would be very useful for them to be involved in an FTA program. For example, they might well enjoy hosting TAs instead of undergrads during a brief, pre-session orientation program. They might also provide an already trained (or at least experienced) pool of cross-cultural consultants.

VI. Speakers' Bureau. For an institution that has a speakers' bureau, it might provide a way for FTAs to get out in the community and meet people. FTAs may have been chosen for their assistantship in part because they are leaders in their home country; as a result they probably would enjoy the opportunity to speak to groups of Americans (whether professional organizations or school children). The caution here is that the FTA's time is already under heavy demand and, therefore, additional demands on his/her time could be detrimental.

INTEGRATION INTO THE PROGRAM

I. Orientation. Before any individuals or organizations could be used as a resource, an in-depth orientation would have to take place. One goal of this orientation would be to explain the role an FTA plays in the university setting. It is important that all concerned understand that FTAs are in the process of working on a number of things: learning a new cultural environment, expanding knowledge in a discipline, and becoming a teacher. It would be important to stress the importance of being a TA and the additional demands that an FTA may be under. It would also be of significant value to give a group orientation to the organizations that have been listed as potentials for problems.

II. Continued Monitoring. In order to ensure that the integration of these resources continues to run smoothly, there would need to be a monitoring process established. With the majority of these organizations, that would merely be a phone call/office visit check. However, with some of the organizations it would require a constant monitoring system. This system should include student evaluations, student interviews, and visits to the functions that the organization hold for the FTAs.

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WRITING ACROSS CULTURES:
CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION IN THE WRITING CLASS

Bruce Leeds
Indiana University

The curricula for composition courses on American campuses have traditionally separated the foreign student from his American counterpart. This is certainly understandable when the foreign student is going through the long process of developing the basic skills that will later enable him to express his ideas with the clarity and coherence that are demanded of him in a university setting. But once the foreign student has reached a certain level in the use of English, a specialized class separating the foreign student from his American classmates removes him from his American cultural experience at a university and places him in an international classroom context which deprives him of important interaction and the exchange of ideas with native English speakers. It also deprives the American student of the opportunity to learn from the particular and often "fresh" way of viewing language and ideas that the foreign student can contribute to the classroom. I would like to develop a writing course on the Indiana University campus that would encourage American and foreign students alike to develop writing skills that would cut across not only the curricula of various disciplines, but national boundaries as well.

While conventions and standard writing styles and procedures differ from country to country, whether English is the student's native or acquired language, the writing process that the foreign student must learn for the American curriculum is basically the same. Foreign students have often complained to me that they are being judged in their academic courses in terms of a particular writing style which they have learned in their native schools. They try to translate that same basic style to English; and one of the purposes of such a cross-cultural writing course would be to help the foreign student to understand that it is not only the English language which he must master, but that he must reach across cultures in finding his own voice while utilizing a style that reflects standard English. The foreign student would not be the only party to benefit from such a cross-cultural writing experience, however, since the American student must also learn that clear communication is a process that goes beyond the limits we often place upon ourselves in terms of cultural boundaries.

Many students leave the university with knowledge about many complex ideas, but with little integration between their own ideas and the ones they have learned. No teacher wants to presume that he teaches the student how to think, certainly, but one of the most important things that a student can gain from an education is to think critically, as regards the thought and ideas of others, and especially of his own ideas. And one of the best ways in which to teach the student to think critically is through writing. It has been my general experience that students are reluctant to view their own writing critically, and are prone to think that one teacher simply does not like their "style" while another teacher may find it quite acceptable. Yet both the foreign and American student must learn that independence in writing which allows them to examine their own thought and beliefs, not as an adjunct of style, but rather as a foundation of style. By placing the American and foreign student in a working environment in which each is challenged by ideas outside the area of his usual interaction, the teacher provides him with the opportunity to question the basis for his own beliefs more deeply than he

otherwise might, thus taking full advantage of a classroom situation that is shared by American and foreign students.

The idea of creating an international context for a writing class presents the teacher with some very fascinating possibilities for the design of the material. Discussions and essays, for example, could cut across national boundaries. In Intercultural Communication: A Reader (New York: Wadsworth, 1981), Larry Samovar and Richard Porter outline major cultural variables which affect communication. A discussion of these variables would provide an excellent framework for a writing class that would emphasize the significant role which culture plays in communication. Briefly, those variables are as follows:

ATTITUDES Attitudes such as ethnocentrism, stereotyping, and prejudice strongly affect intercultural communication.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION The way people organize themselves socially, the administration of legal systems, for example, can result in radically different interpretations of daily events and consequently affect our ability to communicate with others.

PATTERNS OF THOUGHT Basic assumptions about the nature of reality (an attitude of dependence upon or independence from nature, for example) are intimately tied to our intercultural communication abilities.

ROLES AND ROLE PERCEPTION Role expectations vary culturally and can result in the failure or success of intercultural communication.

LANGUAGE Language and culture are deeply related; and, to communicate effectively across cultures, we have to look beyond language to the cultural significance of the words we use.

USE AND ORGANIZATION OF SPACE The way man uses and organizes space, in his interpersonal distances, for example, is closely tied to culture and influences perception and communication.

TIME CONCEPTUALIZATION The way in which we conceptualize time varies from culture to culture and often determines the perceived appropriateness of the behavior of others.

NONVERBAL EXPRESSION Culture determines the form and significance of nonverbal messages, which are extremely influential in helping us to understand our verbal messages.

I have found that reading and discussion are very closely tied to one's writing ability, and I would like to structure a writing course for American and foreign students so that the arts of speaking, reading, and writing are seen to be various expressions of the ability to think clearly and freely. Such a class, containing students from diverse backgrounds, would provide the perfect opportunity to create a forum for the discussion of ideas that cluster around the basic cultural variables described by Samovar and Porter. We are living in a changing and expanding world, one which paradoxically grows smaller daily, and there is a growing need for the free exchange of ideas in the international context that a cross-cultural writing class would provide.

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SECTION THREE

ACADEMIC/PEDAGOGY
AND
LANGUAGE CONSIDERATIONS

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QUESTIONS TO GUIDE THINKING
ABOUT PEDAGOGY AND LANGUAGE IN FTA TRAINING [1]

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When planning the training of non-native speakers of English who are to be teachers of U.S. undergraduates, a number of issues need to be considered that cut across the boundaries between cross-cultural communication, communication in English, and pedagogical skill. The following series of thirteen questions was used to guide the discussion of linguistic and pedagogical background issues at the Second Annual University of Wyoming Institute on the Training of FTAs.

This discussion drew first from the work of Eble (for example, Eble 1983, among many others), Lowman (1984), McKeachie (1978) and others (see the Jossey-Bass series on higher education) who have analyzed teaching to U.S. undergraduates in terms of content, public speaking skills, and human relations skills. Content means something like "knowing your stuff." Public speaking skills involve the use of language to communicate appropriately in the classroom context. Human relations skills grow out of teacher demonstration of interest in the content of the course and in the students--including such actions as eye contact, using questioning techniques to involve students, calling on the students by name, and appearing enthusiastic and energetic.

1. <u>What does it mean "to teach U.S. undergraduates"? What skills are involved? How do we know (if we ourselves are not teachers of U.S. undergraduates)?</u>

Numerous complexities and difficulties are hidden behind the words <u>teach</u> and <u>undergraduate</u>. Teaching assistants are assigned to many different responsibilities that are all labeled <u>teaching</u>: review sections, problem-solving sections, lecture classes, and more are conducted by TAs. The language, content, and human-relations skills are significantly different for these quite different activities. Lecturing to large groups, for example, requires different speaking skills from working in small groups or individually with students in problem-solving sessions. The human-relations skills necessary for effective lecturing are quite different from those needed in one-to-one contact with students. Moreover, different disciplines have different traditions and requirements for the teaching that will receive student (as well as faculty supervisior) approval. For example, the teaching of mathematics at the undergraduate level focuses on problem-solving with teacher board work; the teaching of management focuses on explication of concepts and methods with lecturing and discussion (and perhaps some use of case studies).

From institution to institution, the meaning of <u>undergraduate</u> can change. At an urban institution such as Georgia State University, many undergraduates are older than the traditional undergraduate--and more experienced in life and work. On the other hand, many universities still have student bodies made up predominantly of the traditional 18-to 21-year-old students.

To solve their problems with FTAs, universities are turning to two major sources--

1 This paper was presented as a Background Session at the Institute.

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ESL programs and improvement-of-instruction programs. While ESL faculty have knowledge of language teaching and cross-cultural communication, few are currently teaching U.S. undergraduates. Thus, they must inform themselves about the characteristics of appropriate instruction of U.S. undergraduates (Constantinides and Byrd 1986, Byrd 1987). On the other hand, trainers in improvement-of-instruction programs have knowledge about undergraduate instruction but usually do not have education in language teaching or cross-cultural communication. Another area of potential difficulty for these trainers is their dedication to improving the teaching skills of academics: FTAs are already quite enough different from their peers and supervisiors; it would make them even less a part of their departments if they were taught to use teaching methods not approved of in their disciplines. The experience of those who have developed FTA training programs shows that the FTA trainers need much in-service training themselves in cross-cultural communication, in the teaching of spoken English, and in understanding of the teaching methods approved of by the FTAs' academic disciplines. One source of information is the literature on the teaching of undergraduates mentioned above; another is close observation of the teaching of faculty in the academic disciplines of the FTAs. Neither source is adequate by itself, for the literature is overgeneralized while observation takes much too long and has the potential for hasty generalization.

2. <u>If pedagogical skills are defined in terms of the communicative competence model, what useful categories emerge? What categories are missed?</u>

The communicative competence model (Hymes 1972, Bailey 1982, Savignon 1983), analyzes communication in terms of

linguistic competence,
sociolinguistic competence,
discourse competence, and
strategic competence.

Briefly, <u>linguistic competence</u> is the basic ability in the language's grammar, sound system, vocabulary, etc., needed for successful communication. <u>Sociolinguistic competence</u> is the ability to use the language appropriately according to the social and cultural rules of the situation in which the communication occurs. <u>Discourse competence</u> involves being able to put together whole stretches of communication in the language, as in writing an essay, telling a story, etc. <u>Strategic competence</u> is having methods to supplement use of the language to make up for limits in other skills and additionally having strategies for repairing communication when mistakes are made.

This model can usefully be reinterpreted to define <u>pedagogical competence</u>. That is, what are the characteristics of linguistic competence for the classroom teacher? How is sociolinguistic competence manifested in the classroom? What is pedagogical discourse competence? What strategies does the classroom teacher need for successful classroom communication?

<u>Linguistic Pedagogical Competence</u>. Before considering linguistic pedagogical competence, it is necessary to note that some non-native speakers of English have such limited ability in spoken English that they do not have the basic linguistic skill needed for personal interaction at the conversational level. These students cannot benefit from the training program in cultural and pedagogical skills because they cannot communicate well enough in English yet to participate in the high level of communication involved in the FTA training program. Many programs have found that these students must be required to take courses in spoken English and pronunciation prior to being admitted to the training program itself.

Linguistic pedagogical competence is the ability to use English appropriately to carry out the duties involved in a particular teaching assignment. The teacher must be

able to speak comprehensibly, to understand the spoken English of the students, to read the materials upon which the course is based and any materials presented to the class through reading, and to write in the appropriate size, script, language when using the chalkboard, the overhead--or writing on student papers.

To be linguistically competent in many academic environments, the teacher of undergraduates must have skill at talking and listening during the moments prior to and just after the class itself. This pre-and post-class "chitchat" has serious purposes in establishing the human relationships between teacher and students. In addition, the pre-class period can involve return of homework or test papers for individual talk about the work. The period immediately after class is commonly used by students to ask questions about the presentation, other assignments, appointments, etc.

Teacher-talk puts another burden on the non-native speaker of English because of the American expectation that the teacher will learn at least the first names of the students (even in quite large sections). Just as the American undergraduates are having trouble pronouncing the names of their FTAs, so too are the FTAs finding American names difficult to say.

Sociolinguistic Pedagogical Skills. The undergraduate classroom as a cultural setting places demands on students and teachers alike for appropriate communicative behavior. Included here are appropriate body language (including appropriate use of eye contact, gestures, movement around the classroom, etc.) as well as culturally appropriate use of language (use of names, calling of roll, organization of lecture, use of questions, etc.)

Discourse Pedagogical Skills. Teachers have to be able to organize whole things in culturally appropriate ways. Not only should lectures and presentations have the correct order and content, but other features of a course must be suitably organized--tests, research assignments, for example. Indeed, the teacher is expected to plan a course that itself has a beginning, middle, and end and that fits within the institution's academic calendar.

Strategic Pedagogical Skills. Skilled, experienced teachers have developed strategies for dealing with failures in communication and for supplementing the spoken word. Teachers learn to watch students' faces for signs of incomprehension and confusion; then various methods are used to find out what is troubling the students so that communication can be re-established. Teachers learn to use various types of media to supplement the spoken word with written language and with visual images that help in the explanation and in the learning of the content. For many FTAs, instruction will be necessary to learn strategies that are culturally appropriate for teaching U.S. undergraduates in their particular disciplines.

Personality Types and Learning Styles. As helpful as the communicative competence model is, it does not yield categories to include two of the most significant factors in teaching success--personality types and learning styles. While there surely must be in this world an anthropologist with the soul of an engineer, such a creature is difficult to imagine. As much as we like to think of ourselves as individuals, human beings can be divided into personality clusters based on factors such as introversion or extroversion. We also seem to subdivide into groups based on preferred learning styles (Reid 1987). Certain personalities seem to be drawn to certain professions. Undergraduates seem to prefer certain personality traits in their teachers to others. Poor communication might easily be the result of a bad mix of personalities, for example, an introverted mathematician who prefers to learn by reading who is assigned to teach a business calculus class made up of extroverted business majors who prefer to learn by listening.

3. What aspects of content are our responsibility?

As mentioned above, discussions of skillful teaching of undergraduates usually focus on content, public speaking, and human relations. Training programs are generally planned to help the FTAs develop the knowledge and skills associated with public

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speaking and human relations in the context of teaching undergraduates. The assumption is that being sure that the FTAs "know their stuff" is the responsibility of the academic department.

Some knowledge of the content of the courses to be taught by the FTA is essential, however, because most trainers have found that the FTAs have trouble getting to a low enough content level for the introductory courses they will teach. That is, in order to help the FTAs understand the content to be taught their students, the trainer will need to develop some knowledge of that content. Happily this content is at such a low level that most trainers have found it easy to deal with.

4. Why does teacher training make regular faculty so uncomfortable?

At the research institutions where FTAs are to be found, the academic faculty, while acknowledging the importance of teaching undergraduates, are rewarded not for their teaching but for their research, publication, and grant-getting achievements. Such faculty members do not talk with each other, for example, about the teaching of economics; they talk about economics. The relatively low status of Colleges of Education point out this same feature of research universities: education is not something the faculty are comfortable talking about.

As importantly, graduate faculty members want the best possible researchers as their graduate students. That the FTA is an excellent teacher might be gratifying, but it will not advance the academic career of either the FTA or the faculty advisor. Graduate faculty have generally been able to select graduate students on the basis of professional potential rather than language proficiency or teaching skill. A system that interferes with the traditional interests and powers of the graduate faculty will naturally make many members of that faculty uneasy if not hostile.

Faculty have expressed concern that the FTA training program will take on content issues which are seen as the territory of the departments. Control of curricular issues is, of course, a jealously guarded faculty power. It has frequently been necessary to state clearly the limits of the FTA training. In response to such considerations, some institutions have developed a two-tiered system that supplements the basic FTA training with departmental orientation.

5. What culture-based differences about teaching methods and teacher-student use of language do FTAs bring to their teaching assignments?

FTA training programs usually include a strong segment of comparative education to help the FTAs understand more about their own backgrounds and about the expectations of the new system that they are entering. FTA trainers have observed that most FTAs come from educational systems that are built around an all-knowing teacher who presents content to passively receptive students. Such an education system has as its purpose the passing of a stable body of content from generation to generation (Boorstin 1983). FTAs who come from such systems must learn, among other things, that asking questions does not indicate that they are incompetent and that being asked questions by students does not indicate a lack of respect.

FTA training programs typically work with FTAs from many different backgrounds; thus it is unlikely that a trainer will have detailed knowledge about the cultural backgrounds of all the FTAs. In this situation, the trainer can have the FTAs analyze for themselves the characteristics of the system they have come from while the trainer provides information about the U.S. system. The discussion of any differences can lead to better understanding by the FTAs about the expectations and behavior of their undergraduate students.

6. What differences in pedagogical and linguistic backgrounds distinguish the un-trained U.S. TA from the un-trained FTA?

Some university faculty and administrators have wondered if FTAs need any training that is different from that provided for U.S. TAs. After all, they reason, the American

does not know much about teaching undergraduates either.

While FTAs can certainly benefit from many of the aspects of training provided for American TAs, especially those that provide information about the particular content to be taught and the specific institutional rules and expections of the university in which they will teach, the FTAs, as outsiders to the U.S. educational system and as non-native speakers of English, have needs that are significantly different from those of American TAs.

7. What are the linguistic implications of putting "talking" at the center of the act of teaching?

When researchers and FTA trainers realized that cultural and pedagogical factors were involved in the poor communication between FTAs and undergraduates, there was an attempt to educate the general public as well as the academic audience (of students, faculty, and administrators) that the problem was not solely one of pronunciation. However, since speaking well is seen as a central act for the skillful teacher, improvement in the use of spoken English remains a major feature of FTA training--and the most time-consuming one. Although FTAs can learn quickly about the educational system of the U.S. and about culture-based differences in teaching/learning styles, they can take months to improve their comprehensibility. Those who are severely dysfunctional may never learn to speak understandably.

The linguistic implications are that researchers and materials developers have much to do to provide FTA training programs with the most efficient materials and methods for improving the FTAs' spoken English. Since the teaching of accuracy in spoken English has not been fashionable for well over ten years, ESL has to recover information and skills that we have neglected and to develop on that basis the specialized training needed for FTAs.

In addition to the linguistic and pedgagogical implications, putting "talking" at the center of the act of teaching has political and economic implications. We cannot promise our institutions that we will perform miracles and transform graduate students from China into native speakers of English. In fact, many excellent researchers will remain only marginally understandable to those who are not specialists in their areas of research. Changes can be made by most FTAs but at the cost of training that will need to occur over months rather than days.

In sum, the "pronunciation" segment of the FTA training program is a vitally important one that will usually take longer and cost more to achieve than any other aspect of the training. It will be the area most fraught with difficulty and most likely to fail.

8. What are the characteristics of "teacher-talk" in contrast to conversation skills?

As defined above, linguistic pedagogical competence is the use of English in ways that are considered appropriate and effective for the teaching of U.S. undergraduates. Classroom teacher-talk has features that make it much different from the conversational skills focused on in most ESL/EFL courses. Eight characteristics of classroom talk can be identified:

(a) Organization. Teachers are expected to have organized presentations with beginnings, middles, and ends. They are responsible for planning the organization, for making it clear to the students, and for carrying it out during the time limits for the class. In conversation, this organization is usually shared with the other participants.

(b) Control of Topic. Teachers set the topic for the class. Students can frequently raise issues that fit the topic, but they can seldom set the overall content for a class. (Even in problem-solving sessions, the class works within a range of possible problems set by the teacher.) In conversation, control of topic is shared by the participants.

(c) Control of Voice. The teaching voice is usually quite different from the conversational voice. Teachers talk louder and use a more formal vocabulary than is

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usual in conversations--even in conversations between a student and a teacher. Many successful lecturers talk with more emphasis, more variety in tone, and even more slowly than they would in conversational use of English.

(d) Control of Turn Taking. The teacher has the power to control who gets to talk. In addition, teachers usually save the longest turns for themselves. In conversation, control shifts among participants.

(e) Talking while Writing. In most disciplines, teachers are expected to be able to write on the chalkboard (or overhead transparency) while talking about what is being written--or about the meaning or significance of what is being written; for example, writing a formula while talking about the importance or meaning of the formula rather than simply narrating what is being written. In this situation, the teacher is using at least two language tracks at once--and might very well be thinking about student reactions at the same time. Conversation usually does not combine talking and writing.

(f) Reading Aloud from Written Materials. Teachers often read short stretches from textbooks or other sources during presentations. For example, a mathematics professor might read a problem aloud from the textbook before beginning to work it on the board; or a management professor might read from a popular book that has an apt quotation. Reading aloud well is a learned skill that involves looking down at the text to get a set of words in mind, looking up to regain eye contact while speaking those words, and repeating the process. Conversation seldom requires reading.

(g) Use of Media. Teacher-talk is often reinforced by use of the chalkboard or other media. Conversation, of course, is seldom supplemented with overhead transparencies.

(h) Use of Questioning and Summarizing. Teachers can use questions to probe student knowledge and understanding in ways that would seem offensive in conversation partners. In addition, teacher-talk includes frequent use of summarizing language to check the comprehension of students and to indicate that one of the sections of the presentation is coming to a close. Questions and summaries in conversation are used for different purposes and are often "framed" differently.

9. What linguistic differences exist between lecturing and leading a discussion? directing lab/review/problem sessions?

We do not yet have detailed descriptions of these differences. Experience suggests a few: discussion leaders must know how to use question to guide students to participate in the discussion; discussion leaders need to know the language used to guide turn taking ("Thanks, Jack; Susie, what do you think of that analysis of the problem?"); discussion leaders probably need better listening skills than lecturers do.

10. How are the basic features of academic teaching realized in different disciplines?

We are only at the beginnings of knowledge about the differences among the various disciplines taught by FTAs. More work such as Rounds (1985) is needed to make clear the pedagogical and linguistic features of teaching in different disciplines and in different teaching assignments within one discipline.[1]

11. In light of the answers to #1-#10, what are appropriate pedagogical and language goals for FTA training?

The basic answer is "it depends." Each institution will have to set standards for FTA performance based on its own needs and on the particular use to which FTAs are put by its departments. The answer also depends on the research that is done to answer the above questions and the experiences our institutions have with the FTAs who have completed the training programs.

12. What methods and materials are available to achieve these goals? Because FTA training programs had to be developed before complete answers were available to the basic questions, each program has been forced to develop its own materials and

methods. This process has, as one would expect, led to much duplication of effort. As new programs develop now, they can turn to the more experienced ones for help in materials and curriculum design. Resources for information include sessions at TESOL and NAFSA conferences, the University of Wyoming Summer Institute, the FTA Clearinghouse (at the English Department, University of Wyoming), and published textbooks that will soon be available.[2]

13. In light of the answers to #1-#12, what are some of the problems with using TSE (SPEAK) as an exit exam?

At least these four answers are suggested: (1) SPEAK tests one-on-one speaking ability more like that of a conversation than teacher-talk. (2) SPEAK tests passive ability to listen and respond (student skills) rather than the ability to initiate teacher-talk. (3) SPEAK does not test for cultural understanding. (4) SPEAK does not test for ability to use English appropriately in the classroom setting. (5) SPEAK does not test for strategies used to compensate for limited English or to repair failed communication.

These questions point the way to the research, investigations, and projects which need to be undertaken. Many of the following projects and investigations resulted from their discussion during the Institute.

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NOTES

1. For examples of what is being done, see the Table of Contents section in this volume. In addition, other research projects are in progress, including two reported on at TESOL 88: "Saying It Right: Key Vocabulary and the FTA," and "The Language of Mathematics" by Janet C. Constantinides and Patricia Byrd.

2. One such text is The Foreign Teaching Assistant's Manual, by Patricia Byrd, Janet C. Constantinides, and Martha Pennington (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1989).

SOME TYPICAL PROBLEMS IN THE TRAINING OF CHINESE TEACHING ASSISTANTS: THREE CASE STUDIES

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INTRODUCTION

From an analysis of three case studies, this paper describes some of the most frequent, culturally-derived pedagogical problems and misunderstandings encountered by Chinese teaching assistants in American universities. While the emphasis is upon the Chinese TA, many of these problems are also fairly typical of other Asian personnel. An examination of the issues presented in these three cases may help foreign teaching assistant coordinators and other university educators in anticipating and preparing strategies in advance to assist Chinese in reducing the consequential effects these problems and misunderstandings have upon their performance as TAs in the American university classroom.

The data for each of these cases was derived from accounts of experienced foreign TA trainers participating in the 1987 Institute on Foreign TA Training held at the University of Wyoming from the 25th to the 31st of July A simple case study report form was designed and distributed to those trainers who have had over five years experience in formal university academic programs for foreign teaching assistants Additionally, each of these trainers have acquired extensive experience in recognizing cross-cultural issues and in designing appropriate intervening strategies to overcome difficulties experienced by the foreign TA in the classroom. Each respondent was asked to identify one foreign teaching assistant who had had a classroom teaching problem of sufficient magnitude to require outside intervention. Specifically, the respondents were asked:

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1. To provide a brief description of the classroom problem.

2. What specific strategies or actions were used to respond to the problem?

3. What specific cultural factors contributed to the problem?

Upon examining the data provided from each of these case studies, the authors have analyzed the major issues involved and sought to provide useful interpretations based upon their own extensive experience with Chinese teaching assistants. From experience with other similar situations, the instructional problems presented in these case studies typify those often found in the performance of the Chinese teaching assistant. An analysis of the main cultural ramifications of the issues involved in each case will also be presented.

CASE I

Description of the Problem

The first case concerned Qiong-ying, a female Chinese TA in business from Taiwan who was assisting in an Introduction to Management course. Toward the end of the quarter, her students complained that Qiong-ying could not be understood. Although the complaints were significant, the quarter had almost ended before they had become frequent. Nevertheless the Coordinator of the Foreign TA Training Program decided to intervene to identify and correct the most obvious causes of the complaints.

Intervention Responses

The Coordinator visited the classroom to make an assessment of the situation. She reported Qiong-ying:

1. Demonstrated inadequate voice projection.

2. Made no attempts at eye contact.

3. Had no knowledge of student names

Additionally, the Coordinator added that "Qiong-ying appeared to have no sense of how to organize a presentation on a textbook chapter."

As an immediate response to these problems, the Coordinator met with Qiong-ying to suggest better methods of organizing lessons based on the class text. Subsequently Qiong-ying was required to take the university's TA training course before returning to the classroom to resume her teaching responsibilities.

Contributing Cultural Factors

At least two problems typical of Chinese TAs in the classroom are represented here. First, the lack of knowledge of their American students' names, combined with the reported minimal eye contact and soft voice, suggest the existence of social distance and a lack of personal engagement between the TA and her students. The Chinese TA was not relating directly to her students as individuals. Second, the lack of voice projection and Qiong-ying's poor organization of textbook lessons suggest a relative absence of concern for assuring an accurate understanding of the subject-matter and for maintaining a more open and personal communication with her students.

Apparent social distance and lack of interest in achieving successful communication, however, are surface patterns without obvious cultural content. What connection might they have had to Qiong-ying's cultural background? It will be found that the cultural patterns derived from Qiong-ying's classroom behavior will be manifested in subsequent case studies. Hopefully, this will help to establish a pattern of predictable cultural prognosis for the increasingly more complex cases to follow.

Distance between teacher and student is a generally prescribed phenomenon in Asian society. It is particularly strong in Chinese educational relations. Also sanctioned is a pattern of hierarchical relationship in social

relations. Education traditions dictate distance between the learned and the learner. Social tradition demands barriers between those with higher and lower status. In educational relations, the meaning of distance prescribes both the method of delivering information as well as the choice of information to be presented.

Given these cultural prescriptions, Qiong-ying's classroom behavior is better understood. Confucian standards of hierarchy assign higher status to the teacher than to the student. While modern Chinese social and political communist theory on the mainland has attempted to restructure this pattern, its essence, in practice, remains extremely strong. By virtue of her assumed responsbilities, Qiong-ying considers herself solely responsible for both the method and content of her classroom presentation. Still obviously unfamiliar with the far less-structured and more informally prescribed patterns characteristic of American teacher-student relations and in the absence of any earlier university intervention to familiarize her with them, Qiong-ying has sought to implement her responsibilities in the manner culturally prescribed in traditional Chinese educational relations.

Qiong-ying's lack of eye contact and apparent disinterest in learning her students' names are social manifestations of her hierarchical educational relations. While other components of Chinese educational and social tradition contain patterns of deep fondness, loyalty and respect between student and teacher within the parameters of alumni relationships, such traits are not automatically developed within the classroom environment itself. Rather, they derive from a long process of mentorship on the part of the student to his or her teacher's viewpoints, methods and approaches toward the subject matter. Here, time is of the essence, and the initial burden of effort to initiate these communications lies with the student, not the teacher. Given these considerations of time and mentorship in human relationships we would suggest that Qiong-ying might have felt no obligation during the relatively short period of her first quarter exposure to her students to

make any unsubstantiated or informal effort at closer student contact. On the contrary, Qiong-ying feels the students should be independently responsible for determining what parts of their assigned texts are important. Moreover, she most likely assumes that if her students truly wish to establish a loyal and respectful relationship with her, they should take responsiblity for learning the content of the textbook on their own. Sanctioned by her educational and social status as an educated person, and given her own cultural concepts toward the tradition of time involved with establishing good teacher-student relationships, Qiong-ying believes her students must learn to identify and adopt their knowledge along lines of her own classroom methodology and choice of emphases. The American student's freedom to judge the relevance and effectiveness of the teacher's pedagogical style and to assume an early-shown informal, friendly interchange of information is not part of traditional Chinese educational relations in the classroom.

CASE II

Description of Problem

Mr. Chou is a teaching assistant in mathematics from the PRC. At his American university, all new foreign TAs are required to participate in a three week program of evaluation and training before teaching. This training includes making simulated video-taped classroom presentations in the TA's subject area. Each of the presentations are made to an audience of the TA's peers.

Chou chose to make his presentations about aspects of differential equations. On reviewing the video-recording, the TA Coordinator found definite problems in Chou's performance. First, he appeared to demonstrate annoyance at any of his students' questions which indicated their lack of mathematical knowledge below the level of differential equations. It appeared that he did not recognize or accept that his students might need explanations of elementary mathematical points of background in order to understand the topic. Second,

Chou's tape revealed extensive problems with non-verbal communications skills. The Coordinator observed that Chou:

1. Wrote on the blackboard without narration of explanation.

2. Used no gestures.

3. Made no eye contact..

4. Lacked voice projection.

The Coordinator reported that the cumulative effect of such behavior portrayed Chou as being "flat" and "expressionless" to his audience.

Intervention Responses

From past experience with other foreign TA classroom difficulties, the Program Coordinator anticipated that Chou would have severe problems in his own actual classroom instruction. She, therefore, decided to probibit him from teaching in his first semester, establishing a plan to help Chou improve his communication skills Chou was initially unwilling to accept that his patterns of non-verbal communication constituted important problems in his classroom teaching.

The Coordinator's first step was to assign Chou to observe the teaching of a mathematics faculty member. Then, after a period of observation, Chou was assigned to teach one single part of a lesson in the same faculty member's class. The students in the class gave written evaluations of Chou's performance, and the results were discussed with the Program Coordinator. Continuing this training process, the Coordinator had Chou teach progressively more complex points in the same lesson, culminating in the teaching of an entire unit to the class. After each of Chou's presentations, the class evaluated his performance.

This intervention strategy was successful. The

class's evaluations of Chou's performance improved over time as did Chou's attitude toward non-verbal communication skills, the importance of which he had earlier denied. As his training unfolded, Chou also recognized the need for a broader, more flexible treatment of background material necessary for assisting the class with proper understanding of the mathematical points and content then being presented.

Contributing Cultural Factors

Many of the overt difficulties reported in Chou's teaching behavior are similar to those of Qiong-ying. Chou's flat or "expressionless" style suggest a similar distance from his students. Similarly, his practice of writing on the board without narrative or explanation, and his unwillingness to provide background explanations about simple points, showed a related reluctance to take responsibility for his students' understanding of the subject material.

Again, we suggest that deep-set Chinese values probably were at work contributing to these surface manifestations of "trouble" in the communication process. The questions of distance and student initiative associated with the traditional pattern of Confucian hierarchical educational and social relations reappear in Chou's case. This time, however, these traditional orientations were interpreted as aloofness or arrogance.

Another operational orientation of Chinese, as well as other Asian students, is to place more importance in educational and social relations upon group processes and values than upon those of individual performance. Body language is the expression of individuality. In Chou's case, it is suggested that the gesturing and other commonly-used physical expressions initially recommended to him as being important parts of American classroom instruction, may have been considered by Chou as having initially appeared theatrical, possibly even childish. Additionally, Chou may well have felt such physical articulations represented an affectation more likely to

unnecessarily draw greater attention to his physical presence in the classroom than to the quality of his intellectual expression and the respectful sophistication of his character. It is suggested, therefore, that to employ body language in support of instructional tasks may have been considered quite inappropriate to Chou's conceptions of his primary role-model responsibilities as a teacher.

In the context of group over individual values, Chou's conduct at the blackboard deserves further analysis. As we noted in Qiong-ying's case, the degree to which knowledge presented in the classroom is correctly understood and interpreted depends, in the Chinese view, upon the extent to which the students take responsibility for mentoring their instructor's emphasis and approach toward the subject. This may often result in a greater use of investigatory inference than is normally the case in the American classroom where clarity, explicitness and review are, among others, held as components of good instruction. In this context, Chou's alledged lack of skill with the blackboard may take on a further manifestation of cultural assumption rather than simply poor pedagogical technique. Knowledge gained through long study and effort is considered presentable only to the extent desired or considered necessary by the learned. Implicit in this assumption is the notion that knowledge gained can be rightfully protected. Given the Chinese tradition of mentoring,it is, once again, the duty of the student to discover and fill-in the explicit details. Wisdom and understanding do not, for the most part, consist of only that which is simply placed before the student's eyes. Rather, such achievements may best be derived from wrestling with incompletness and recognizing that if one is to gain as much knowledge as the mentor, one must accept the need to piece it together for oneself through collective effort with one's peers.

It is unknown, of course, the degree to which this approach on the part of Chou was truly well-meaning. To most outsiders, the performance and classroom behavior of oriental stude ts is criticized as being rote and

unexploratory in nature. We suggest that much of this external behavior is a manifestation of respect for and the process of mentorship, and should not be automatically considered empty of intellectual discovery. It is probably true that Chinese and other Asian teachers may be protected from actual incompetence by this tradition. We have no evidence this was the case with Chou. What is being suggested, however, is that prior to learning about the differing standards considered appropriate in the American classroom, Chou was not willing to simply change a traditionally conceptualized process which provided the only secure reference point in his mind for proper instructional behavior. Chou may have considered the blackboard as a tool for his own implicit expression, not one through which he felt obligated under educational tradition to provide a great deal of explicit information to his students.

CASE III

Description of Problem

This case concerns Mr. Chung, a male TA from the PRC, who had been an English teacher in China. Chung's English was basically sound, although he had some accent problems and the typical trouble with "th." At his American university, he began his graduate studies in English, but eventually changed to mathematics. His "crisis" occurred as a TA in mathematics.

As with Mr. Chou in Case II, Chung's university required that all new foreign TAs participate in a three week program of evaluation and training before being cleared for teaching. The program occurs each August before the Fall Semester. Those TAs who do not meet the standards of evaluation are prohibited from teaching and, subsequently, referred to special classes to develop their skills. They may be re-evaluated later to determine if they meet university standards.

TAs who pass the initial evaluation are cleared for teaching. However during their first semester as

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teachers, they are still required to concurrently participate in a credit class in which their instructor observes and evaluates their actual classroom performance as TAs. The instructor also meets with them personally to give feedback on areas for improvement.

When Mr. Chung was evaluated in August, the Program Coordinator found that his English was "reasonably good," but his "interpersonal skills were virtually non-existent." Among the problems were "arrogance," poor grooming and dress. The coordinator prohibited Chung from teaching. To improve his skills, he was assigned to a special ESL class taught by the Coordinator.

Regardless of some progress made in the Coordinator's class, Chung again failed in the evaluations and was, subsequently, prohibited for a second time from teaching in the regular classroom. Again, Chung was assigned to the Coordinator's Foreign TA-ESL course. The Coordinator said Chung was "incredibly incensed" to be prevented from teaching for two years. The fact that he had been an English teacher in China added to his embarrassment.

A year later, Chung participated in his third August training and evaluation program. This time he came prepared. He had several American friends give testimonials to the Coordinator about how hard he had worked on his English. He took pains with his pronunciation during his presentations, paying special attention to accurately forming his "th." Chung's dress improved, including the elimination of a heretofore consistently unzipped pant fly. The Coordinator said he was able to make "reasonably good presentations." In fact, she said with a certain amount of surprise, his final video-taped presentation was "actually pretty good." The Coordinator still had reservations about Chung's interpersonal skills. However, feeling that her responsibilities for his classroom skills had been extended to the limit, the Coordinator cleared Chung for teaching. He was assigned a regular math class at the university.

Like other new foreign TAs at the university, Chung's

classroom performance was observed and evaluated repeatedly during his first fully-certified teaching semester. Chung had problems. There was one formal complaint from a student who said he couldn't understand Chung, and a few other students seemed put off by Chung's behavior. More importantly, the Coordinator and several of the math department faculty found his performance inadequate.

Overall, the Coordinator felt "it was as though he hadn't heard a word she had said" in the lengthy training to improve Chung's teaching performance. The Coordinator observed that Chung's personal appearance deteriorated to what it had been before. His pronunciation regressed as he relaxed attention to correctness. His pedagogy was "terrible." He seemed unable to work some of the math problems in class. The Coordinator also observed signs of his previous arrogance. For example, in what was often interpreted as a condescending attitude toward his students, Chung would remark, "Oh, this is real easy. You had this in high school. There's no time to go over it now." In addition, Chung often had a habit of prefacing his instructional examples with a "well, in China..." habit which had become increasingly conspicuous. Some students thought this repeated phrase was funny. Others found it irritating, and some even mocked Chung for it. Additionally Chung repeatedly aired his views about Chinese politics and the misdeeds of The Gang of Four during class. The Coordinator felt that the frequency with which Chung began incorporating these Chinese political and methodological examples into his instructional style was inappropriate for a math class.

Intervention Responses

After discovering these classroom difficulties, the Program Coordinator approached the Math Department Chair. She told the Chair, "I knew it would happen. In my opinion, " continued the Coordinator, "intervention was required." She and the Math Chair discussed whether they could "do anything to salvage" the situation.

The Chair sent the Graduate Advisor and a senior TA to

observe Chung in the classroom. They, too, found difficulties. They spoke with Chung and impressed upon him the need for greater class preparation. Eventually, the Coordinator reported that the situation had improved. Chung made substantial enough progress to prevent his removal from the classroom. Given her long association with and efforts to reduce Chung's wide array of problems, a main issue in this case was, as the Coordinator expressed it, "at what point do such problems cease to be my business?" In this instance, after two years and a semester of intensive involvement with Chung, the Coordinator decided Chung's continued classroom and interpersonal difficulties had become a problem for the Math Department. The Coordinator reported that, in fact, "the Math Department eventually dealt with it, keeping Chung at work."

Contributing Cultural Factors

In relating the events and details of Chung's difficulties, the Coordinator wasn't completely certain about how to categorize their sources. She wasn't sure they were entirely cultural. She thought they had multiple causes, "some cultural, some pedagogical and some content."

In the previous two cases involving Qiong-ying and Chou, it was suggested that their classroom difficulties were culturally derived from a combination of hierarchical distancing, coupled with an academic disengagement from attention to individual needs and explicit instruction. Mr. Chung's problems, however, appear to have involved a more active and trouble-inviting behavior that was interpreted by some of his students as offensive. Moreover, in Chung's case, our data is richer than for the two preceeding cases. This allows us to suggest other problems often associated with Chinese teaching personnel as sources for Chung's behavior. Chung's reported defensiveness, references to China in the classroom, and alleged lack of preparation will be seen against several Chinese cultural themes which we suggest may have contributed to his difficulties.

First, is the notion of survival networking. To most international students on American campuses, networking provides a support base of information and personal contact upon which to procedurally function under unfamiliar circumstances. Asian students are primary users of this operational and procedural phenomenon. In the context of culturally-derived behavior, networking involves the gathering as well as dissemination of those kinds of information among peers which are considered by the group to be apparently essential to the academic and operationai survival of the student in an unfamiliar campus and social environment. We use the word "appparently" because what is considered essential information to be placed into the network is also culturally determined. This means that the Chinese student, for example, who we have already described within traditional educational contexts as being group-oriented, mentor-prone and accustomed to expect learning and the processing of knowledge to progress along implicit rather than explicit lines of cooperative inquiry and methodology, will select similarly- constructed aspects of foreign information for attention. Thus, they will hesitate to openly ask questions or directly seek information, but will rather gather information indirectly through their friends, ethnic student associations or personal contacts. The student will then circulate those aspects of the gathered information considered important or accurate among ethnic peers, friends and associates.

The Chinese student will then attempt to act upon the information received, and will do so in a manner his or her network contacts have advised or perceived as being essential for conforming to the operational characteristics and requirements of the new environment. What often occurs, however, is that in many instances, the implicit nature of this Asian behavioral process, combined with the usual indirect methods used to gather information, results in the selection of lesser important or unrelated aspects of bits and pieces of information rather than an integrated understanding of the data in its entirety. What occurs, then, is that only a partial, fragmentary understanding of the message, requirement, policy or procedure being addressed within the context of the new

environment is actually obtained. Likewise, only a partially accurate performance or implementation toward the whole intent of the information on the part of the foreign student is achieved.

To benefit from the large amount of information, technique, methodology and psychological insight generally found in the curricula of many foreign TA training programs on American campuses, a socio-cultural adjustment on the part of the international student is often required. While the importance of good performance in the TA training workshops to securing graduate assistantships is generally well known among network members, we suggest that the foreign student's real training success will be at least partially determined by how accurately and completely he or she is able to adjust traditional Chinese classroom conduct and student relations to fit American teaching standards. The degree to which Chinese network members take these required adjustments seriously is problematic or, at best, uneven. Certainly, this appears to have been the case with Mr. Chung. While there is no background evidence indicating the possible extent to which he may have received early network assistance in overcoming his behavioral and performance problems, it appears from our data that such assistance was either not available or not offered. What are some of the cultural factors that may have influenced this situation?

The role of network peers in providing procedural and informational explanations to newcomers represents a third major characteristic of the networking system. An active emphasis is placed upon maintaining a united cultural response toward new conditions, thereby also providing all network members with the means to track one another's welfare and progress within an alien environment. The problems of one usually become the problems of all, where solutions are sought from network associates, or through the advise of a single, elder or otherwise respected member of the hierarchy who is looked to as a primary source of information on behavior and procedure in the new environment. Solving the member's problem through the network's culturally-defined means tends to contribute to

maintaining the general well-being, collective security, and the academic and social behavior of the ethnic group as a whole. Simultaneously, this process also validates the importance of the network itself. Conversely, in cases where problems or occurrences affecting the well-being or status of network members are interpreted as having fallen beyond the network's tracking system or outside the normal parameters of the group's culturally-prescribed patterns of behavior, the network can withhold assistance or even condemn as easily as it sanctions.

A fourth aspect of implicit information constantly included within the Chinese and other Asian networks is the method by which good relations with authority are maintained. Here, we refer first to the maintenance of good internal authority among network members as this relates to good personal relations and behavior within the cultural group itself. Second, the network provides assistance in establishing external relations with those perceived to have authority in the new environment. How to deal with these locii of authority is closely tied to whether the network contains senior members knowledgeable on the question of authority from both Chinese and non-Chinese perspectives.

For purposes of our analysis of Mr. Chung's problems, a close corollary to the issue of network authority in general is the nature of specific authority - that which is often given to specific network members, namely, educators. There is a presumption of honor and respect for teachers and professors in Chinese society. Within an alien environment, such persons often serve as authoritative models for behavioral standards. Equally true is the ability of Chinese educators to project their own authority to the extent culturally-permissible.

Chung's classroom and personal behavior seem to have reflected these networking characteristics. We suggest his difficulties also represented a reaction to the dual pressures under which he operated. First, we suggest that as a teacher, Chung occupied a position of authority within the Chinese network. Based upon the same traditional

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concepts of hierarchical status and privilege we have identified in earlier cases, Chung perceived his own teaching style as being normal and acceptable. The Chinese network's apparent lack of reaction to Chung's position illustrates how its culturally-prescribed operations often result in a disservice to its membership. We suggest that Chung's status as a teacher prevented any early assistance being provided to him by other, possibly less senior network members, individuals who may have more successfully bridged the gap between traditional concepts of Chinese education and American classroom standards. While under cultural pressure to maintain his status as a Chinese teacher, Chung was also being forced to alter or, at least, adjust many of his traditionally-perceived bases for his legitimacy in the classroom in order to fit criteria for performance in another educational environment. For other younger or less professional Chinese to have approached Chung with respect to his TA problems would have been considered insulting and presumptuous. We have no evidence to suggest the presence of an older and more experienced Chinese colleague who might more appropriately have intervened. The fact that Chung, himself, was an English teacher made his position even more delicate. Thus, because of his authoritative position as an educator within the network hierarchy, it appears Chung was left virtually alone in dealing with the adjustments being required of him for successful teaching in the American classroom.

When it became clear to Chung that the recommendations and authority of the TA Training Coordinator would, without some changes on Chung's part, result in a perpetual denial of a regular teaching assignment, Chung superficially and temporarily suppressed his culturally-based educational authority and tried to adjust his instructional behavior to American standards. Nothing available in Chung's background data indicates why he changed his field from English to mathematics. However, his lack of classroom preparation might well have been due to the mentorship principle and the function of implicitness in Chinese classroom relations. While Chung's regression in his math class teaching performance and his references to Chinese politics could have simply reflected his training, basic

preference for and orientation toward the social sciences. it is more accurate to suggest that both affectations certainly appeared to serve as indirect manifestations of a subliminal rejection of the pressures being made upon him to meet American standards. It is further suggested that Chung's alleged arrogance was also symptomatic of his struggle to maintain traditional perceptions of his authoritative classroom role in the face of directed change from foreign authority. Finally, we believe that throughout his long TA training period, Chung's position within the Chinese network seemed to have worked against whatever recommendations its younger members might have been able to offer in helping Chung to more successfully meet the teaching standards required of a foreign TA in the American classroom.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have sketched three cases of difficulties between Chinese teaching assistants and their American students. Comparatively, we can see that the symptoms of difficulty in these cases shared significant commonalities. In all three instances. the TAs behaved in ways, such as minimizing eye contact with student and speaking in a monotonous voice, that fostered social distance from their students. The TAs were seemingly unwilling to present material at their students' level. At times, the TAs' behavior appeared almost aloof or even arrogant.. The TAs also tended to appear inflexible about adjusting their instructional technique and classroom behavior to fit suggested American standards.

It is important to note that this shared pattern occurred in different academic disciplines at diverse universities. Is this a coincidence, or are there similar causes at work producing the apparent pattern? In our analysis, we have suggested that certain Chinese cultural patterns probably operated in all cases. In particular, we suggest that traditional Chinese cultural assumptions about hierarchy, teacher-student mentorship, and the appropriate ways of transmitting information and learning through a culturally-defined network helped contribute to the problem

area similarities in each of the three cases. We believe that similar cases will occur repeatedly in other American classrooms.

If this expectation is correct, what intervention strategies can TA trainers use to respond to such problems? We offer three suggestions, all of which are based on the principle that in dealing with such problems, the TA trainer must make an effort to set aside American perceptions of the Chinese TA's "troublesome" classroom behavior and try to understand the behavior's meaning within the TA's own cultural world.

First, when a Chinese TA behaves in ways which seem to cause classroom difficulties, the TA trainer should begin by hypothesizing that the specific behaviors which seem to be a problem may actually be quite acceptable from a Chinese cultural standpoint. In other words, we should consider that in a Chinese classroom situation, behaviors such as `minimal eye contact with students,' `monotonous voice inflection,' or `apparent disinterest in helping students understand an explanation' may be considered acceptable rather than problematic. Our first suggestion, therefore, is that the TA trainer try to speculate on what Chinese cultural values might make such behavior acceptable and appropriate even though, from an American viewpoint, this behavior is troublesome.

Our second suggestion is a corollary to the first. It is that the TA trainer should adopt a very tentative attitude about his/her interpretation of the situation. The trainer must recognize that as an American having limited familiarity with Chinese culture, mistakes might easily be made in perceiving what `troublesome' behavior may mean from a Chinese cultural standpoint. One must also be aware of the inevitable tendency in such situations to judge the supposed `Chinese values' negatively while such values are attributed by the TA trainer as a cause of the negative classroom situation. Does this mean the trainer should abandon a cultural interpretation? Not at all. The point is to make the effort to understand the situation from the Chinese cultural viewpoint while remaining

tentative about the initial causes. Being tentative - in other words, genuinely trying to understand the TA's Chinese perspective while, at the same time, treating an interpretation as speculation and not fact, and being careful to suspend negative judgments if they arise - leaves the TA trainer OPEN to the TA.

In the context of this respectful openness to the possibility that the TA is different in ways the TA trainer does not understand, and that these unknown differences contribute to the classroom trouble, the trainer can try to undertake cooperative problem-solving with the TA. This might consist of a series of discussions in which the trainer attempts (a) to elicit the TA's actual perceptions of the problematic classroom behavior, (b) to make the TA aware how these perceptions about the classroom behavior may differ from those of American students, (c) to explore how the differences in cultural perception may contribute to the classroom trouble, (d) to discuss with the TA ways of dealing with the difference which could help minimize the trouble. In these discussions, it would be essential to use a very tactful approach toward the TA, one which avoids the implication that the trainer's role is to assign blame and correct mistakes, and one which emphasizes, instead, the trainer's genuine and respectful interest in understanding the TA's views and in clarifying how cultural differences, for which neither the TA or the students are responsible, contribute to the difficulties.

In other words, we advocate the necessity for TA trainers to consider, while forming their interventions, not just the behavioral symptoms and apparent American meaning of the foreign TA's difficulties, but also the meaning of the behavior of the Chinese TAs within the context of their own culture. The trainer's willingness to deal with the TA's difficulty in terms of his/her own cultural framework and expectations will persuade the TA of the trainer's rspect for the TA's efforts. This atttitude will also engage the TA's cooperation, and permit discovery of solutions to the difficulties which are more meaningful, acceptable and effective to the TA as he/she attempts, with the trainer's help, to bridge the gap between Chinese and

American classroom relations, standards and responsibilities.

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Focusing on Specifics:
Strategies for Improving FTA Lectures

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Most training programs for foreign teaching assistants utilize some form of micro-teaching--short videotaped presentations in which the student presents some material from his field. Even if the videotape is not used, these "mini-lectures" are a common vehicle for training the TA in such skills as using the blackboard logically, projecting the voice, maintaining eye contact with the class, organizing lecture notes, or interacting with students.

We ESL teachers involved in TA training feel fairly comfortable helping the FTA with these teaching strategies, but we may feel justifiably uncertain about correcting the students on matters of lecture content. After all, we know little or nothing about oxidation-reduction reactions or the second law of thermodynamics, and the FTAs come to us as experts in their fields. Surely they will know best how to explain these technical concepts once they can pronounce key vocabulary and can feel comfortable in the culture of the American classroom.

The FTAs do bring content area knowledge to the pedagogy class, but I am more and more convinced that we can and should help guide them to find ways of making that content understandable to American undergraduates. I would like to make a case for paying some attention to subject area "content" in the FTA course.

The common focus on helping the FTAs organize their talks is a helpful start in looking at content. A focused introduction, clear and explicit transitions from idea to idea and summary statements are extremely helpful to any audience, and these discourse elements are reasonably easy to teach in the context of an FTA class. Many FTA courses teach outlining or discuss the use of lecture notes to help the TA organize content. However, clear transitions that lead from one vague or unintelligible section of a talk to another cannot compensate for weaknesses in content

sections. If the FTA is having trouble presenting the "body" of his talk, we should be able to help him find ways to improve it. This paper focuses on one strategy: the use of concrete specific detail, example, or application.

A recent experience made me aware of a need for training of this sort. I was involved in some research which required me to work with an FTA in constructing a lecture in his major, economics. The FTA's talk was theoretical and abstract, so I pointed out places in the lecture transcription that were confusing to me and asked him to provide more specific information and examples. When he tried to give me examples, however, he did so in an abstract way. For instance, to give an example of the sentence, "In an elastic market, demand dominates price," he said, "In an elastic market for apples, demand dominates price." Even when I asked him how the elastic market would affect the person who wanted to sell or buy apples, he still remained vague: "For the apple consumer in an elastic market, demand dominates price." The FTA understood that I needed more explanation and that I was asking for an example, but the "examples" he supplied were really no more concrete or specific than the theoretical statements they were illustrating. That is, they were couched in the very abstract and technical language of the rest of the talk. An American TA, on the other hand, could easily supply an everyday example in terms that a novice could understand.

In our FTA course, I have often noticed that the FTAs' presentations tend to be abstract and theoretical, but I have attributed this to the fact that they were not gearing their talks for a freshman audience. I supposed that the FTAs were assuming knowledge that the uninitiated in their fields did not have. It certainly is important to make the FTA aware of the ability level of freshman and sophomore students, but I believe that the TAs are also having trouble explaining because of cultural expectations about what a good lecture should entail. My economics FTA commented that Korean students didn't want to have their teachers provide specific examples, and that they preferred to memorize theoretical explanations. Once again, the lines between pedagogical technique and cultural awareness are blurred,

just as they are when we talk about appropriate body language for lecturing or the desirability of involving one's students in a class.

The Korean TA's approach may have been very successful in Korea, but in the American classroom, students would have different expectations. American students do have definite expectations about what methods of teaching are appropriate. Rounds (1985) observed that students expected their mathematics teachers to use very standardized language when working through problems, and that students had definite expectations about the way a teacher should organize the material in a class session. Feldman (1976) and Marques, Lane and Dorfman (1976) both cite the ability to develop explanations as a skill that students expected of teachers. Students feel uncomfortable when their teachers deviate from what they expect.

Much anecdotal evidence points to the fact that American students do expect their teachers--American and foreign--to provide ample concrete evidence in the form of examples, applications, and illustrations. At a meeting discussing the results of an evaluation of TAs teaching at Iowa State University, the chairman of the statistics department said that students often complain on departmental teaching evaluations that their teachers do not provide enough examples. If students feel this need with American teachers, how much more likely is it that they need specific explanations from their foreign teachers. When I have American students visit my FTA class to provide feedback to the FTAs, they often comment on the FTAs use of examples. "Good specific details" or "I need some examples" are frequent comments. Lowman (1984) notes some studies suggest that "frequent use of concrete examples is associated with the ability to present material understandably."

Given the expectations and needs of the students and the apparent difficulty that some FTAs have in providing specific examples, what are techniques that FTA trainers can use to improve the quality of FTA teaching?

The approach to teaching the use of example is threefold. First, I am convinced that a TA trainer does need to "make a case" for the specific example. We cannot automatically assume that the FTA will see the need for examples or even understand what "being specific" means. Discussing the culture of the American university is important in helping the FTAs understand this. General concepts usually covered in FTA courses lay the groundwork: the expectation of many American students that teachers will "spoon-feed" the content of the course; the general low ability level of the students in math and science due to the lenient admission standards of many state universities; the tendency of Americans to want direct, rather than oblique explanations; the valuing of practicality. All these are reasons for a teacher to be concrete and specific.

In addition, because appropriateness is often dependent on culture, we need to pay some attention to helping the TA choose appropriate examples. We cannot expect the FTA to give the same sort of example that an American graduate student might use--to discuss velocity in terms of the cop chasing the speeding college student or to explain probability in terms of the blackjack table in Las Vegas. It is necessary , however, for the FTA to be aware of the expectations of the students in his class, and especially to understand that with meager examples and illustrations, many American students will have trouble understanding abstract concepts.

After the TA has been convinced of the necessity of using examples, the use of examples in a technical lecture can be demonstrated. The FTA trainer could give a technical lecture on a topic unfamiliar to the FTAs in the class, leaving out specific explanations to show how difficult it can be to follow an abstract talk in an unfamiliar field. Imagine a talk on punctuating relative clauses which contains no sentence examples, or one on figuring standard deviation which does not illustrate the process with an example about test scores, for example, or the various heights of students in a class. The trainer could demonstrate such a lecture, asking the FTAs to take notes, and then discuss the problems they had in understanding the concepts. She could follow

this with a second version of the lecture, examples included. In addition, showing a videotape of real TAs using effective specific examples to illustrate general concepts can be very helpful in convincing the FTAs that real teachers do use this technique.

An analysis of a chapter from a low level textbook in the FTA's field is another appropriate method for identifying the kinds of examples that an FTA might use. The TA can be given an assignment to examine a freshman level text in her field, and to choose a segment that defines a general concept or explains a basic process. The student should notice whether the text provides specific examples to illustrate the concept or process.

After students have brought in their examples, the TA trainer can elicit discussion about the differences in kinds of examples which are appropriate in different disciplines. Examples in mathematics usually take the form of equations or problems or applications of the theoretical concepts. Examples in physics and chemistry may be equations or problems, but may also place the theoretical concept in an everyday context--the use of salt in de-icing sidewalks to discuss melting point, for instance. Examples in statistics or economics are often highly specific and concrete: theoretical concepts are explained in terms of the mean number of light bulbs or the demand schedule for gasoline.

[Appendix A contains a number of paragraphs from texts in several fields which might be analyzed to focus on the levels of specification, the language used to introduce examples, the contrast of technical with everyday examples, and the technique of presenting unfamiliar information in the context of the familiar. See discussion questions following the excerpts.]

After students become aware of the importance of using specifics, then they can begin the third step: to practice using examples themselves. Small groups can work with a theoretical paragraph, perhaps an excerpt from a text in their subject area, and try to think of examples which would be appropriate in explaining the text. [See Appendix B for

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a sample assignment which requires the TA to think of specific examples to replace those that have been omitted from an original text.] The FTA training class can focus on the appropriate placement of the examples, as well as the sort of transitional language that can introduce such illustrations. Finally, students could be shown the actual paragraph as it appeared in the original text. Another activity that can be done in subject area small groups is brainstorming for ideas for examples. Each group might try coming up with three examples or applications for a general concept, theory, or definition that is taught in low-level courses. They could present these to the whole class and then general discussion could focus on the appropriateness and helpfulness of the examples in explaining the concepts.

Finally, having the students incorporate the use of specific examples into microteaching or minilecture sessions is good reinforcement. Listeners in the audience, whether they be other FTAs, American students, or the trainer can help the presenter discover whether his examples are appropriate and effective. If the example does not provide enough information, is not specific enough, or is somehow inappropriate, the members of the audience will indicate this by asking for more information. This, of course, is the real key to improving the FTAs' presentations. A real audience can make the FTA aware whether or not his explanations are understandable and clear.

The goal of the FTA course is to help the FTAs improve their ability to teach American students. One way to help them achieve this objective is to pay some attention to "content," at least in regard to the effectiveness of the TA's development of explanations.

APPENDIX A

Focusing on Examples

PHYSICS

A quantity that has both size and direction, as force does, is a vector quantity, or simply a vector. One that has size only is a scaler quantity. For instance, distance is usually treated as a scaler quantity. An automobile can be said to have traveled a distance of 15 miles regardless of the direction in which it was traveling.

On the other hand, under certain conditions direction does make a difference when it is combined with the size of the distance. If town B is 15 miles north of town A, then it is not enough to direct a motorist to travel 15 miles to reach town B. The direction must be specified. If he travels 15 miles north, he will get there; if he travels 15 miles east (or any direction other than north), he will not. If we call a combination of size and direction of distance traveled displacement, then we can say that displacement is a vector. (Asimov, p. 27)

1. What general concepts are being explained in these two examples?

2. What specific examples illustrate the concepts?

3. Can you provide other specific examples that would also illustrate these concepts?

CHEMISTRY

Molecular Motion

The ceaseless random motion, or thermal agitation, of the molecules is really heat itself, or, rather, the kinetic energy of this random motion of the molecules is heat. A great many effects of various sorts find their explanation in terms of this heat motion. For instance, the tendency of a gas to spread, or diffuse, is attributed to the moving molecules darting here and there. The molecules travel at high velocity, like bullets, in straight lines except when they strike the walls of the containing vessel or bump into one another and bounce off like billiard balls. The pressure of a gas against the containing walls is the result of a continuous bombardment of the walls by the moving molecules, just as the flying fists of a fighter in the prize ring push his opponent back against the ropes. The number of collisions depends upon the rapidity of the bombardment--the number of collisions with the walls occurring in unit time--and the force with which the molecules strike.
(Garrett, p.247)

4. Can you find more than one level of specification in this example? Which sentences provide the most general information and which phrases provide the most specific? Which examples would you consider "technical" and which examples would you consider "common" or "familiar"?

A formula represents the composition of a substance using symbols for the elements present in the substance. Thus NaCl is the formula for sodium chloride (common table salt) and identifies the elements sodium (Na) and chlorine (Cl) as its constituents. Subscripts are used to indicate the relative numbers of atoms of each type in the compound but only if more than one atom of a given element is present. For example, the formula for water, H2O, indicates that each

molecule contains two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen. The formula of sodium chloride, NaCl, indicates the presence of equal numbers of atoms of the elements sodium and chlorine. (Nebergall, Holtzclaw, Robinson, p.30)

5. This explanation appears near the beginning of the text. What is the advantage of using the formula for sodium chloride and for water rather than less common compounds?

6. What words are used to introduce the examples in this selection? Can you think of any other phrases that would work to introduce an example?

BIOLOGY

Diffusion

The molecules in a gas or a liquid are in constant motion. These molecular motions are responsible for the familiar phenomenon known as diffusion. As you know, if a drop of perfume evaporates in one corner of a room, the entire room is soon equally permeated with scent. The volatile molecules of the perfume are dispersed by their own random movements and by the bombardment of other molecules. Similarly, a teaspoonful of salt in a saucepan of water will diffuse throughout the water so that every drop is equally salty. In moving from an area of greater concentration of perfume or salt molecules to an area of lesser concentration, the substances are said to move along a concentration gradient.

In cells, substances diffuse through the cytoplasmic fluid or the surrounding medium. Diffusion of some of these substances is limited by the outer cell membrane or by the membranes within the cell, just as the walls of the room may limit the diffusion of the perfume. Other substances pass back and forth through the membrane. Diffusion through a nonliving membrane generally depends on the size the pores in the membrane, with smaller molecules sifting through and larger ones being excluded. In the case of the cell

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membrane, however, the size of the molecules does not seem to be the only governing factor. Only a few substances, including oxygen, carbon dioxide, and water, pass through all cell membranes. Most other molecules may or may not diffuse through, depending on the type of cell and on its physiological condition. A membrane such as the cell membrane is said to be selectively permeable. (Curtis, p. 41)

7. In this selection, the writer uses familiar "every day" examples to explain a general concept, then applies this concept to a technical explanation. How does this approach help the student understand the technical explanation?

ECONOMICS

Why is the price elasticity of demand high for some goods and low for others? The most important factor in the elasticity of demand for a good is the availability of substitutes or complements. If a good has close substitutes, demand for it tends to be elastic, since when its price rises, people can switch to the substitute. For example, the demand for olive oil is more elastic than it would be if other salad oils could not be substituted for it. Likewise, the demand for cars is less elastic than it would be if public transportation were available everywhere, since cars and public transportation can be substituted for each other. On the other hand, if something is a minor complement to an important good, its demand tends to be inelastic. For example, the demand for motor oil tends to be inelastic because it is a complement to a more important good-- gasoline. The price of gasoline has more of an effect on the amount of driving a person does than the price of oil.

Elasticity is also influenced by the portion of a person's budget spent on a good. Matches, for example, are not a necessity, and there are good substitutes for them. Yet the demand for matches is very inelastic because people spend so little on them that they hardly notice a price change. In contrast, the demand for things like housing and transportation is not perfectly inelastic, even though these

things are necessities. Since they account for a large part of people's budgets, changes in the prices cannot be ignored. (Dolan, p.492-493)

8. This selection uses examples to support several general ideas. Underline the general ideas and put brackets [ ] around the examples. Are the examples "technical" or "common" and "familiar"? What words introduce each example?

STATISTICS

Measures of Correlation

Usually managers want to know not only the sales or advertising costs but also the relationship between sales and advertising. They want to find the relationship between the successful completion of training courses and productivity or between bonuses and job satisfaction.

In many cases researchers may know intuitively that certain phenomena are related. For example, it makes sense that relationships exist between the number of finished houses and the sale of appliances and carpeting, between the birth of new babies and the sale of baby food, and between hot weather and the consumption of soft drinks. They usually do not know, however, how strong or weak the relationships are. Most people do not care about the details of correlation, but in the business situation observation or intuition is not enough. Business people must know the nature and the strength of the relationship to gauge future product planning, marketing campaigns, expansion projects, and personnel forecasts. (Varner, p. 239)

9. Put all the examples in brackets [ ], so that you can see how much space is given to providing illustrations. Would the selection be understandable without these examples?

APPENDIX B

Many of the specific examples which appeared in this selection from a chemistry textbook have been left out. Can you provide examples which would work?

Combustion

Combustion is a chemical reaction that is accompanied by the evolution of light and heat. The burning of wood, natural gas, and magnesium in air are examples of combustion. Combustion can also take place in other atmospheres; for example, hydrogen will burn in an atmosphere of chlorine, forming hydrogen chloride....

Before combustion can take place, the substance involved must be heated to the kindling temperature, which is the temperature at which the reaction is rapid enough to proceed without further addition of heat from the outside. The kindling temperature for many substances, especially solids, is not fixed, but depends on how finely divided the substance is. [example?]

When the heat evolved during a slow reaction remains and raises the temperature of the heating substances to the kindling temperature, spontaneous combustion may occur. [example?]

The heat of reaction may accumulate and raise the temperature of the system above the kindling temperature. Many costly and disastrous fires have been started by spontaneous combustion. [example?]

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Whenever combustion takes place very rapidly the heat of reaction is liberated almost instantly and usually a large increase in gaseous volume results (gases expand when heated). An explosion may result if the gases cannot escape. [example?]

Any process that leads to a sudden, large increase in gas pressure in a confined space can create an explosion. (Nebergall, Holtzclaw, Robinson, p.221-222)

Below find the complete original version of this selection.

Combustion

Combustion is a chemical reaction that is accompanied by the evolution of light and heat. The burning of wood, natural gas, and magnesium in air are examples of combustion. Combustion can also take place in other atmospheres; for example, hydrogen will burn in an atmosphere of chlorine, forming hydrogen chloride....

Before combustion can take place, the substance involved must be heated to the kindling temperature, which is the temperature at which the reaction is rapid enough to proceed without further addition of heat from the outside. The kindling temperature for many substances, especially solids, is not fixed, but depends on how finely divided the substance is. [For example, a fine iron wire will burn readily when heated and then placed in pure oxygen, but an iron rod a few millimeters in diameter will not.]

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When the heat evolved during a slow reaction remains and raises the temperature of the heating substances to the kindling temperature, spontaneous combustion may occur. [For example, linseed oil unites with oxygen at ordinary temperatures in an exothermic reaction. Rags soaked with linseed oil and stored without enough circulation of air to carry off the heat produced by slow oxidation may ignite spontaneously;] that is, the heat of reaction may accumulate and raise the temperature of the system above the kindling temperature. Many costly and disastrous fires have been started by spontaneous combustion [of such materials as coal in large piles, uncured hay stored in unventilated barns, and rags containing paints or drying oils.]

Whenever combustion takes place very rapidly the heat of reaction is liberated almost instantly and usually a large increase in gaseous volume results (gases expand when heated). An explosion may result if the gases cannot escape. [The mixture of gasoline vapors and air in the cylinder of an automobile engine explodes when ignited by a spark. Disastrous explosions sometimes occur in flour mills, grain elevators and coal mines when finely divided particles are ignited.] Any process that leads to a sudden, large increase in gas pressure in a confined space can create an explosion. (Nebergall, Holtzclaw, Robinson, p.221-222)

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Oral Communication Training: a Bridge to Teaching Effectiveness

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INTRODUCTION

FTA's are screened primarily on the basis of language proficiency, but facilitating clarity of fluent spoken English does not insure a training job well done if pedagogy is ignored. While research and consolidation of data is proceeding on the kinds of teaching favored by different academic disciplines, FTAs should, in the meantime, be encouraged to develop certain known and preferred teaching attitudes.

WHAT IS A GOOD TEACHER?

The FTA naturally arrives with the answer to that question couched in terms of his/her native culture. Thus, the initial issue is introduction to what might very well be the cultural contrast of a U.S. undergraduate classroom. According to Lowman (1984), quality instruction at the college level results from a working partnership of (1) intellectual excitement and (2) positive rapport with students. These two capacities operate independently: but when combined, they create academic satisfaction for both teacher and student. Essential aspects of the two dimensions constituting masterful teaching follow.

DIMENSION I - INTELLECTUAL EXCITEMENT

	TEACHER ACTION	STUDENT ACTION
1.1	Content is well-organized and presented in clear language.	Students follow the thinking readily, able to distinguish main points from details.
1.2	Relationships among concepts and application to new situations are stressed.	Students see connections among concepts and can apply them to new situations.
1.3	Content is presented with enthusiasm reflecting a genuine involvement with the the material.	Students accept the ideas as reasonable, experiencing little confusion. They "catch" some of the excitement.

DIMENSION II - INTERPERSONAL RAPPORT

	TEACHER ACTION	STUDENT ACTION
2.1	The teacher appears to have a strong interest in the students as individuals.	Students feel that the teacher knows who they are and cares about their learning.
2.2	The teacher polls student preferences on some matters and encourages questions or expressions of personal point os view.	Students believe the teacher has confidence that they can learn and think independently.
2.3	The teacher communicates that the students' understanding of the materials is important.	Students are motivated to do well, partly to meet the teacher's expectation.
2.4	The teacher encourages creativity.	Students have little fear or anxiety about the teacher or their ability to perform in class.

(adapted from Lowman, 1984:13,17)

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

What can an FTA training course offer in the form of insight into or practice with teaching techniques that satisfy these expectations of students in a U.S. college classroom? The following collection of FTA class assignments presupposes that performing a meaningful task demanding oral communication could lead toward desired teacher actions such as those identified as Dimensions I and II.

DIMENSION I/II OBJECTIVES
WITH RELATED TRAINING ASSIGNMENTS

1.11 Well-organized content

Presentation practice with rhetorical patterns of comparison/contrast, generalization/support, time sequence, process sequence, classification, etc. on the topic of what constitutes the best educational background for beginning a major in the field of ________. (Simulation setting: advise a student in your class who is considering additional or advanced work in that field.)

1.12 Clear language

In-class presentation. Explain a key concept to the class including a justification of its significance. At some point a class member requests a clarification which can take the form of an example, an application, or a paraphrase. Listeners must be able to identify which clarification mode was used.

Audio tape for review. Record definitions or brief explanations of 10-12 key terms from a specific discipline after in-class group study of the structure of definition and the formation of extended definitions. The trainer is given the list and must be able to understand the language heard on the tape.

1.2 Relationships among concepts and application to new situations

Presentation with question/answer practice. Xerox the table of contents of a standard text in the department or the main text from the course being taught to use as an outline. Explain the logic of the sequence of chapters. (Reality additive: A class member is designated to interrupt at a given point to ask "How does that apply to ________?" "Could you give an example of how that is used?"

1.3 Enthusiastic tone and manner

In-class dyad exercise. Interview a classmate on his/her favorite sport, hobby, place to travel, or anything that person really likes to do. Report that information to the group to establish normal factual tones. Select several statements to restate in enthusiastic tones. The trainer collects the practice statements to form a drill sheet which can be marked with stress and intonation indicators for lab practice as a follow-up.

Lab exercise. (Simulation: Your department has asked you to address a faculty advisory committee on ways to improve the facilities used by your department. If what you say is convincing, they will implement the changes. Be as enthusiastic as possible.) The trainer listens to the exercise and makes suggestions for listening practice in multiple play-backs to become comfortably acquainted with the sound of this enhanced vocal style.

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2.1 Interest in students as individuals

Audio tape for review. Practice a list of common American names or a class roster, recording the problematic ones. The trainer reviews the tape, following by a copy of the list on which to make corrections.

In-class dyad practice of informal topics typical of the five minutes before or after class. Pool the list of topics and discuss suitability. Compile a chart showing the logical setting in which to discuss certain "course management" topics. Compile a list of academic small talk topics. Contrast them with taboo topics.

2.2 Encouraging questions, eliciting reactions to other speakers

In-class brainstorming. Collect useful phrases, i.e. "That's an interesting point." "(name), would you tend to agree with that?" Hold a series of discussions on current issues in academia to practice discussion leadership and good group discussion participation.

2.3 Compliments re-enforcing comprehension, questions adjusting misinformation or omission.

In-class discussion. Class suggests a menu of possible questions for a mid-term student evaluation to distribute in their classes. Implement the evaluation and share selected results.

2.4 Encouraging creativity

Audio tape practice of warm supportive tones in simulations of hospitality. The trainer facilitates transference of that vocal climate to a variety of phrases inviting students to utilize the office hours for further discussion. Videotaping body language, especially facial expression in reaction to various student responses. (Audio can be turned off to interpret the content of a dialogue.)

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CONCLUSION

It is obvious that approaching meaningful oral communication practice for FTA's largely from the view point of student satisfaction has a "dictatorship of the consumer" bias in its reasoning. As the various academic disciplines define their pedagogical values and objectives to provide general TA training on campuses, the emphasis on intellectual excitement and interpersonal rapport can easily be merged with discipline-specific aspects of good teaching.

Lowman, Joseph. Mastering Techniques of Teaching. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1984.2

Training Undergraduates to Help in FTA Training

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

As the use of foreign TAs increases and the need for foreign teaching assistant (FTA) training becomes more evident, those of us involved in FTA training need to look around and make the best use of our resources. This is a proposal to make use of one of our most abundant resources - **undergraduates** -in the FTA training process.

UNDERGRADUATES AND FTAs AT CARNEGIE MELLON

At Carnegie Mellon, we have been experimenting for the past two years with the use of undergraduate tutors in our ESL program. This program has been designed to accommodate our very busy student population; at Carnegie Mellon, the majority of ESL students are enrolled full-time in demanding graduate programs such as Physics, Math, Computer Science, and Engineering. The ESL Center provides individual tutoring which involves one appointment weekly for each foreign student. Those with special problems can get more appointments. Tutoring allows people to make the most efficient use of the few hours each week they are free to devote to ESL. Specially selected and trained undergraduates staff the tutoring

center. Non-credit classes (several hours each week), taught by regular ESL teachers, are also offered by the Center.

FTA TESTING AND CLASSES

Our foreign graduate students must pass a test before they can become TAs. If they score below a certain grade on the Speak Test and in an oral interview/ teaching simulation, they must continue to do ESL work concurrent with their teaching assignment. To this end, we offer a TA course that meets for one and a half hours each week throughout the semester. However, the skills needed to be a good TA cannot really be mastered **solely** by attending a FTA class. Even with time allowed for role-playing and teaching simulations, the foreign graduate student does not get much time to practice the myriad of skills involved in being a teacher. Practice, after all, does make perfect. How can we provide opportunites for the FTA, and especially for the prospective FTA who has no class to practice with, and will not get one until he or she can reach an acceptable level of competence? One answer seems to be to have **individual tutoring sessions** with trained undergraduate tutors.

The use of undergraduate tutors is not meant to replace, but to **supplement** FTA training courses taught by qualified teachers. In order to understand the need for this supplement, we need to look at what is involved in FTA training. For the FTA to become an "acceptable American style teacher," he or she must consciously study the differences not only in language, but also in the area of pedagodical techniques and cross-cultural factors such as body-language, gestures, tone, volume, and levels of formality.

In their paper, Teaching Matters: Skills and Strategies for International Teaching Assistants, Barnes, Finger and Pica state:

> If nonnative TAs do not lack English as such, they often lack communicative skills associated with teaching in English. Their most common problem is a failure to reinforce content through techniques such as repetition of key ideas, re-phrasing, and the use of handouts or the blackboard. Other communicative strategies they often miss include framing important statements, linking the presentation to ideas presented earlier, setting a class agenda, signaling transtions or regressions, using appropriate intonation, labeling...., pausing at critical moments, and accompanying words with gestures.

The above mentioned skills can only be learned through practice, and this is what individual tutoring provides.

THE PROCESS OF TRAINING UNDERGRADUATES

SELECTING AND HIRING THE UNDERGRADUATES

The criteria for hiring undergraduates to staff the tutoring center is partly subjective and partly objective. Subjectively, we look for students who give the feeling that they are empathetic, nurturing, and able to handle themselves professionally with older graduate students. Objectively, we look for students who

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have experience with foreign languages or other cultures. Specifically, we want people who :

a. have studied another language (fluency is not necessary; it is more important to have an understanding of the frustrations involved in trying to learn a new language)

b. have spent time abroad

c. come from a family where another language is spoken

It has been useful for us to have tutors from all disciplines, especially the physical sciences, so that we can match them with FTAs from the same fields. The majority of our FTAs are in fields like Math, Physics, Computer Science, etc.

Most of our tutors are work study students. This makes it financially possible to provide individual contact hours for all of the foreign graduate students.

TRAINING THE TUTORS

The following is a suggested list of training points and materials to use with the undergraduate tutors. Many of these materials are the same as those used for our FTA training courses. Obviously, before a tutor can work with foreign students, a tutor must become aware, at a conscious level, of the skills which the FTA must master.

1. <u>Cross-Cultural Component</u>

Even the more sophisticated undergraduate who has perhaps been abroad is probably unaware of all the ramifications of cultural differences. As part of the training, tutors will need to be made conscious of the many levels of cross-cultural differences. These levels include such things as eye-contact, facial expressions (or lack of them), gestures, wait-time, levels of formality, use of titles, and such language items as volume, speed, stress, and organizing principles.

As a way to begin this section of the training, I recommend the game **BaFa BaFa**: A Cross Cultural Simulation. (This game is available through SIETAR International/ Georgetown University)

Another suggestion is to use the <u>Culture Gram</u> series published by Brigham Young University (1984). This series presents detailed handouts about the culture, religion and government of various countries. We had each undergraduate report on one of the cultures found within our FTA group.

More Resources:

Aaron, Wolfgang, "The Teacher and Non-verbal Behavior in the Multicultural Classroom," <u>Non-Verbal Behavior: Applications and Cultural Implications.</u>

Condon, John C. and Fathi Yousef. <u>An Introduction to Intercultural Communication.</u>

Hall, Edward, 1969 . <u>The Hidden Dimension.</u> New York: Anchor Books.

2. Video Tapes of FTAs in the Classroom

We showed the undergraduate tutors video tapes of FTAs in actual classroom situations. The analysis came from the undergraduates themselves and was aimed at isolating specific behaviors that would be taught. For example, it was not enough to realize that pronunciation is a problem; the tutors needed to look at the particular components of pronunciation that caused the most difficulty, ie., segmentation, stress and intonation, speed, lack of wait time, and so forth.

Resources:

Jean Zukowski/Faust, "Problems and Strategies: An extended Training Program for Foreign Teaching Assistants," Foreign Teaching Assistants in U.S. Universities.

Constantinides, Janet, and Pat Byrd, "Foreign TAs; What's the Big Problem," Journal of International Student Personnel, Vol. III, no. 1 (Nov. 1986).

Barnes, G, A. Finger, T. Pica, Teaching Matters: Skills and Strategies for International Teaching Assistants, preliminary edition, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1986.

3. Training tutors to teach pronunciation:

Undergraduates need specific training before they can handle pronunciation problems, both segmental and supersegmental. We give them training in basic phonology, place and manner of articulation, and techniques to use for teaching someone to recognize and produce specific sounds such as /l/-/r/, /v/-/b/, etc. Tutors also learn to be consciously aware of the importance and use of stress in English (a skill which FTAs need to teach clearly). The following books have been very useful:

Esarey, Gary, Pronunciation, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977.

Gilbert, Judy, Clear Speech, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Trager, E. and Henderson, S.C., The PD's: Pronunciation Drills, Culver City, CA: ESL Publications, 1956.

THE TUTORING SESSIONS

At the ESL Center, we have found that tutoring provides the practice time that FTAs need in order to perfect their teaching skills. FTAs and prospective FTAs come in each week prepared to deliver a mini-lesson. Two types of foreign students use the FTA tutoring at our Center; 1) those who have passed the TA test (an oral interview/teaching simulation) and are teaching, but want to have more help, and 2) those who are preparing themselves to take the TA test. The tutoring sessions follow this basic plan:

•Tutor gives a topic for a mini-lesson, or FTA comes already prepared from the previous week. Topics are simple: ie, explain a derivative, magnetism, micro vs. macro economics, etc.

•FTA presents lesson, (using blackboard in the center), while the tutor acts as the "class" (asking questions, taking notes, etc.)

•The lesson is often tape-recorded.

•Tutor gives feedback, pointing out what was done right, as well as problem areas: volume, speed, organization, pronunciation and stress errors, misunderstood questions, faulty blackboard techniques, non-verbal gestures, lack of student participation.

•Tutor and FTA listen to tape; FTA can pinpoint his own mistakes.

•Tutor does further work, drills, explanations of problem areas: pronunciation drills, modeling better ways to explain, blackboard work, pronunciation of vocabulary from the field.

CONCLUSION:

The program has been extremely sucessful at Carnegie Mellon. It fits the self-motivated and over worked graduate student population that we have. We are also lucky to have a pool of highly talented undergraduates from which to choose. The number of FTAs using the service has increased each semester. More FTAs seem to be willing to come in voluntarily for tutoring rather than attend a formal TA class; perhaps there is less loss of face in doing so.

In addition to providing increased opportunities for each FTA to practice teaching, it has given the undergraduate tutor a chance to work with and become more tolerant of other teaching styles. It also provides the FTA with much needed contact with American undergraduates.

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PROPOSAL FOR A UNIVERSITY WIDE TA ORIENTATION PROGRAM

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Arizona State University

ABSTRACT

The quality of undergraduate instruction and the benefits that would accrue from a university-wide program of coordination and support for teaching assistants is the subject of this proposal. The proposal outlines a program whereby Arizona State University (ASU) centrally provides leadership, coordination, support, data collection, and standards in an effort to support and enhance current departmental teaching assistant training programs. There are three interrelated aspects to the proposal. First, a University Committee on Teaching Assistant Support and Standards is recommended to work with departments to provide leadership and input in establishing quality teaching assistant instruction and to set standards. Second, a university-wide Teaching Assistant Orientation Program is recommended prior to the beginning of each semester. Third, a Teaching Assistant Coordinator for the University at large is recommended. Issues of funding are discussed in general terms.

RATIONALE

A major factor affecting lower division undergraduate education at research/teaching institutions is the teaching ability of the graduate teaching assistant (TA). Typically at research/teaching institutions, teaching assistants account for 45 to 50% of the overall faculty count, and over 25% of undergraduate instruction generally (Nyquist & Wulff, 1987). At Arizona State University, 48% of lower division undergraduate classes are taught by teaching assistants (Davey, 1987). Teaching assistants are a critical link in the quality of undergraduate education because of their presence in teaching lower division courses

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throughout the university. They are a critical link in graduate programs as well, comprising a substantial portion of the graduate student population. TA preparedness and competence to take on the task of instructing a large number of undergraduates has a major impact on undergraduates in general and freshmen in particular. Given their important dual role, critical at two points in the education system, teaching assistants deserve the attention and support of both the individual departments and the institution at large.

Do the teaching assistants at Arizona State University receive the attention and support they deserve from the institution and individual departments? Most departments have done an adequate job of providing training and monitoring performance with few resources and little support. However, lack of a coherent institutional policy of support and standards for teaching assistants has resulted in patchwork training programs and varying standards of instruction throughout the university.

The international teaching assistant (ITA) issue is a case in point. The substantial increase of ITAs in the late 1970s and early 1980s led to a massive increase in complaints from students regarding the quality of instruction they were receiving. These complaints focused primarily on the lack of adequate speaking proficiency of international teaching assistants. This national trend has been reported in the Chronicle of Higher Education and elsewhere (Bailey et al., 1984). The Florida legislature recently passed a law requiring that instructors at state universities demonstrate proficiency in spoken English. A number of other states (including Arizona) followed suit, introducing legislation attempting to monitor the overall proficiency of teaching assistants at state institutions of higher education.

Arizona State University implemented a rigorous program of language screening the year before the Arizona legislation was introduced. Under the new program approximately 33% of those tested failed to meet the minimum requirements and another 30% were certified for only limited teaching

responsibilities. The 63% of ITAs who did not meet the university standard for language proficiency came from a variety of departments, despite individual department denials of any significant ITA problems. Departmental screening, training, and monitoring programs varied widely.

The language screening procedure was an initial attempt to examine the source of the student complaints. Additional areas of concern appeared to be cultural education issues and teaching strategies. However, there were no hard data to assess these issues. While sound policy eventually emerged, it was after a period of student anxiety and department frustration. This example highlights the problems of dealing with instructional difficulties without institutional standards.

The same type of problem can happen with TAs in general if sound institutional planning is not implemented. There are several issues regarding TA training to be isolated. First, research concerning TA training appears to be incomplete and is often based largely on anecdotal information. Exactly how many TAs are there and in which colleges and departments are they teaching? How many of these are ITAs? How do their student evaluations compare with various groups and what is done to ensure adequate follow through? How is the teaching performance of TAs monitored? What do TAs perceive as problems?

Second there is no university-wide coordinating capacity for TA training and supervision. This lack of a coordinating function means that there is no centralized location for resources and no centralized trouble-shooting capacity. Most importantly, lack of coordination implies a lack of institutional concern and interest and may be interpreted as such by TAs.

Third, there is no institutional monitoring capacity for problems regarding TAs. While departments should have the capacity to monitor instruction within their units, the TAs and the students they teach should have recourse to a centralized standard.

TA orientation and training programs have been widely discussed in the higher education literature (Chism, 1987; Bailey, 1984). The low value given to teaching, the low status of TAs, and the role ambiguity (teacher/student) experienced by TAs as well as inadequate preparation, support, and evaluation of TAs has led to increased concern that TAs are considered to be a teaching "underclass" (Eble, 1987).

The following proposal addresses the critical need for institutional leadership, support, and standards. Teaching assistants are important to the institution as the university's first step in quality undergraduate education, as employees with special problems and concerns, as a significant portion of the graduate student population, and as an influence on the university's public relations. The program outlined in this proposal is another step in ASU's stated commitment to ensure that quality instruction is the rule rather than the exception.

PROPOSAL

Currently, the American Language and Culture Program (ALCP) is responsible for on-site oral proficiency testing of TAs whose native language is not English. ALCP is also responsible for the semester-long ITA Training Seminar. The Graduate College is responsible for monitoring ITA oral English proficiency via the Test of Spoken English, the ITA Training Seminar, or specific exemptions. This proposal supports continuation of these efforts, but also recommends coordinated support for general TA orientation and training, of which ITA orientation and training would be one component.

The three main facets of this proposal are mutually supporting. The first facet is a University Committee on Teaching Assistant Support and Standards. The second facet is to conduct university-wide orientation and training for TAs. The third facet is to select a TA Coordinator.

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING ASSISTANT SUPPORT AND STANDARDS: Without the broad support and input of the

entire university community, the proposed orientation program cannot operate effectively. Leadership, coordination, standards, evaluation, and the success of this proposal depend on the university community and, most particularly, the academic departments. It is therefore proposed that the committee be constituted of the following representatives:

* one from each of the colleges with TA instructors
* one from the Graduate College
* one from the American Language and Culture Program
* two from the undergraduate student body
* two from the teaching assistants
* the TA Coordinator (discussed below)

It is recommended that this committee be constituted as soon as possible and empowered to investigate and recommend a proposal for action on:

1. TA/ITA Orientation Programs: the design and approval of the following program or the adoption of an alternate program.

2. Funding: a determination of funding needs and possibilities and proposal of a concrete budget.

3. TA Coordinator: job description, time frame, administrative location.

It is also recommended that this committee be a standing university committee to address such needs as:

* the quality of TA instruction
* instructional standards
* recognition of outstanding TA instruction
* a TA handbook
* general TA needs
* needs specific to ITAs
* data collection and analysis
* TA-related research and publication
* stipends and workloads

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* the status of TAs and TA rights
* TAs as future teachers

UNIVERSITY-WIDE TA ORIENTATION: While it is important to address the needs of all TAs, the international TAs have specific, additional areas of concern that must be treated separately. For this reason, a week-long ITA Orientation Program to address the specific needs of instructors from other cultures is proposed. ITAs would have the opportunity to meet American undergraduate students prior to teaching; language testing and compensatory strategies would be addressed; ITAs would be instructed in some of the fundamental do's and don'ts of teaching and would have the opportunity to rehearse and be evaluated on videotape. In addition to increasing skills and self-confidence, ITAs would have the opportunity build rapport among themselves.

The two-day general TA Orientation Program (which includes international TAs as well as those whose native language is English) would address universal needs and concerns: professionalism, administrative procedures, generic teaching modules, university grievance procedures, instructional and campus resources. These two days would be followed by three days of departmental TA Orientation and Training. In this way, individual departments can continue to provide whatever specific training needs their own TAs may have.

THE TA COORDINATOR Arizona State University has 1645 TAs (including 420 ITAs) in virtually all colleges and academic departments. In order to provide effective, efficient management of this program, a full-time coordinator with outstanding skills and an understanding of the complex issues involved is necessary. The TA Coordinator would work with the University TA Committee to establish and implement policy. The TA Coordinator would coordinate data collection, program implementation, and problem resolution. Further, the TA Coordinator could act as an inter-university as well as an intra-university link. The Coordinator should have the necessary support staff and equipment to do the job properly. Logical locations for the TA Coordinator include the Graduate College or the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, among others.

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FUNDING

Quality usually costs money, and this proposal, which is really about quality, is no exception. This proposal recommends a quantum leap forward in the way that we, as an institution, handle TAs and undergraduates they teach. The hundreds of instructors and thousands of students involved deserve more than they are getting and are not appeased by the research done by full-time faculty or the many millions spent on simultaneous construction projects, important though these may be. Studies of retention of freshman are for naught unless concrete action is taken to address their findings.

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The Orientation of American Undergraduate Students to Foreign TAs: A Videotape Preparation Survey

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Introduction: There has been an increasing awareness nationwide of the problems and benefits associated with the use of FTAs in American universities. Most of the work done so far focuses on training program development, testing and evaluation, and development of materials for use in training programs; indeed, there is still much to be done in many of these areas. However, little has been done to modify the perceptions and attitudes of American students to FTAs. Many universities have student bodies that are largely from their region and, in many cases, from rural or sparsely populated areas. Students have had little exposure to foreigners and often find it difficult to understand them and to relate to them. Their lack of understanding is frequently translated into negative attitudes and outright rejection. When this happens in the classroom, the learning process is often impeded by the less than optimal environment. As one response to this situation, the author is preparing a videotape designed to orient American students to FTAs. [See Editors Note at end.] Participants in the Wyoming workshop were asked to provide input to help determine the most important items to include in the tape.

Method: Participants in the workshop completed a survey questionnaire at the concluding session. Eleven responses were received. The questionnaire solicited the following information:

1. Our university provides an orientation which relates to foreign TAs and is directed to U.S. undergraduate students.

   YES NO

2. Please describe any videotaped materials that you use in this orientation.

3. The most important issues or items to include in a videotaped orientation for American students are: (Please rank order)

   A. educational background or credentials of FTAs

   B. general learning/study techniques for undergraduates (e.g., getting a study partner, etc.)

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C. strategies for communicating with the FTA in class (e.g., speaking slowly and clearly, asking for repetition, etc.)

D. description of FTA training/evaluation

E. what to do in case of a problem with a foreign TA

F. FTA reactions to American students/classes

G. reasons for increase in number of foreign TAs

H. other issues

4. Comments

Results: The results of the questionnaire are as follows:

1. Ten respondents indicated that no special orientation to FTAs was provided to American students. The one positive response to this question did not provide any information about the nature of the orientation.

2. No responses were recorded.

3. The responses to the seven topics given in the questionnaire were assigned a numerical value. A response that was rank ordered #1 received 7 points, #2--6 points, #3--5 points, #4--4 points, #5--3 points, #6--2 points, and #7--1 point. On that basis, the topics received the following scores:

C--45 points Strategies for communicating with the FTA in class

A--44 points Educational background or credentials of FTAs

G--41 points Reasons for increase in number of foreign TAs

D--33 points Description of FTA training and/or evaluation

E--33 points What to do in case of a problem with foreign TA

F--27 points FTA reactions to American students/classes

B--15 points General learning/study techniques for undergraduates

One respondent did not rank order the topics, but suggested the following order of presentation: G, A, D, B, C. Four other issues were suggested for inclusion: 1) "culture shock" facing FTAs; 2) advantage of having foreign students in U.S. classrooms; 3) problems American students might have with FTAs, and 4) valuable learning experience of having other cultures as resources.

4. The following comments were received:

"a good idea"
"I'd think such a tape would be valuable"

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"a great idea"

"Good idea. First tell them that they [the FTAs] are here because they are talented and how important it is for the world to get along--then hit them with problem strategies."

"I wish we had such a program."

Discussion: Based on the results of the questionnaire and other discussions with colleagues, items C, A, G, and E have been targeted for inclusion in the tape. One version of the tape will be prepared omitting section D (description of FTA training and/or evaluation), which should make the tape suitable for use at many universities. Another version that will describe very briefly the TTU training program will be prepared for use on the Texas Tech campus.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The videotape described above has been produced and is available on loan from The National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA), 1860 19th Street NW, Washington, D.C. The tape was funded in part by a grant from NAFSA's Field Service, supported by a grant from USIA.]

VIDEO USE IN FTA TRAINING PROGRAMS: A SURVEY

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Early in the week here at the Institute, it became apparent that this group of people had, in their collective expertise, a gold mine of information on a variety of topics relating to foreign TAs. As the week progressed and I began to hear more from people in presentations and conversation, I began to be more and more intrigued with the variety of uses being made of video technology in the FTA training programs represented here.

In order to organize the acquisition of information on this topic, I devised a very simple questionnaire (Appendix 1) and, in this paper, I will attempt to summarize and digest what I learned from this extended "brain picking."[1]

It was no surprise that the use of video varied as widely as the range of different kinds of FTA training programs. Short "orientation" contrasted with ionger "pre-session" programs and the semester long "concurrent" programs[2] were able to make the most varied use of the medium. Responses to the general question of how video is used were fairly evenly divided between uses that involved recording the FTAs in action and uses of pre-recorded tapes as teaching tools to demonstrate or illustrate particular features of teaching.

RECORDING - TESTING

There are two main uses of recording FTA performances on videotape. The first is to provide a record of a screening or placement test. This tape can then be reviewed and evaluated repeatedly and/or at a later time to ensure that an accurate judgement is made of the FTA's performance. It also provides documented evidence of a performance should an appeal be made.

The performances that are recorded are of several types. More commonly,some kind of simulated classroom procedure is taped. Often, an audience of some kind is present to add realism to the event. When this recording is used as part of a screening procedure, the make-up of this audience/rating panel showed interesting variation over many of the programs. Several felt it was important to involve people from different levels of the university, deans, department chairs, as well as language and education specialists. Others involved undergraduates to more closely simulate the classroom atmosphere. There is also a range of variation in the allowing for preparation and the manner in which topics are chosen. One of the most interesting used the presentation of the rating system and its rationale to illustrate good technique and to help the FTAs understand on what kinds of things they would be evaluated.

RECORDING - INSTRUCTIONAL

The second use of such recordings of an FTA is to provide samples that can be examined and critiqued with feedback to help the FTA improve his/her classroom performance. Here, the programs that have more time are able to make use of repeated performances which are evaluated and reviewed over the length of the course. The frequency of this taping varied from a single recording in many of the shorter programs to daily tapings over the course of one of the three-week "pre-sessions." Opinions on

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how the reviewing should be done were divided between those that favored doing it in the class setting with the FTA's peers and those that preferred a private conference with the instructor. Constraints of time and staffing obviously play a part here.

PRE-RECORDED VIDEO

Several programs make use of pre-recorded video-taped materials for illustrative and demonstrative purposes. The use of these materials varies widely. In one program, tapes made from earlier groups of FTAs are simply discussed in class. Others make tapes of "good" instructors which are then viewed and analyzed with the FTAs. A few have been able to create elaborately edited materials where specific points on the training curriculum are illustrated with segments from recorded performances and accompanying materials are provided to aid in the analysis of the taped segments.

The use of taped materials from sources outside the particular program was mentioned in a number of instances. The most common source for these was the NAFSA publications brochure.[3]

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Appendix I

Video Use in FTA Training Programs: A Survey

To determine variety of usage of video technology in FTA training programs among the participants of this Institute.

Name:____

University:______________________________________

I. What type of program do you have?

A. Orientation B. Pre-session C. Concurrent D. Other

II. How do you use video technology in your training program?

A. Recording - Testing/Teaching
B. Demo - Teaching
c. Other

III. Recording

A. What is recorded?

1. Teaching simulation
2. Mini-lecture
3. Oral interview
4. Other

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B. Schedule? (During program)

C. What is done with the recordings?
1. Evaluated? by whom? for what purpose?

2. How evaluated?

IV Demo - Teaching

A. Materials used

1. Commercial?

2. Prepared in house?

3. Accompanying handouts? Observation instrument?

B. Manner of use

1. Analysis by participants?
2. Illustrate points of the Training Program curriculum?
3. Setting?

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NOTES

1. My debt is great to all these people who provided me with information, either directly or indirectly, during the five days of the Institute, in particular

Ingrid Arnesen, Cornell University
Sally Brett, Duke University
Pat Byrd, Georgia State University
Tom Grigsby, Oregon State University
Daryl Kinney, Arizona State University
Cindy Meyer, Iowa State University
Bill Rittenberg, Michigan State University
Lorraine Sarhage, Rutgers University
Rosslyn Smith, Texas Tech University
David Stewart, University of Missouri-Kansas City
Mary Anne Wieferich, Michigan State University

2. For an explanation of these terms, see Janet C. Constantinides, "A Typology of FTA Training Programs," Nancy Chism, ed., Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of teaching Assistants (Columbus, Ohio: Center for Teaching Excellence, Instructional Development and Evaluation, 1986).

3. For a copy, contact the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs, 1860 19th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.

THE LANGUAGE AND PURPOSE OF QUESTIONS IN TEACHER:
A DRAFT

David Stewart
University of Missouri-Kansas City

One of the pleasures of developing foreign TA training programs comes from the searching of one' own experience as an undergraduate to identify those qualities and mental power of the professors who profoundly changed one's understanding and perhaps even changed the whole direction of one's life.

My most vivid recollection is of Professor Nelick--he would not permit us to call him doctor because, as he said, he had some pride--who came to British Literature I one mild winter day and immediately asked, "What are your questions about Keats' odes?" No one raised a hand, so Professor Nelick rephrased the question: "Do you have any questions about the meaning of the line 'My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains my sense'?" Again, no response, except for some uncomfortable shifting in the seats. Once more he inquired, "How can we interpret the meaning of a numbness that pains?" Complete silence. Complete stillness. And suddenly--"If you have no questions," he thundered, "then I have no students. Please leave the classroom. If sometime this semester you wonder about something, I'll be in my office, and on Tuesdays and Thursday's I'll be here." He then waited at the front of the room with a disarming stare until all forty of his "former" students had departed.

The next class session, I noticed that our numbers had dwindled to twenty. After several minutes of listening to the kind of questions students who have spent several days in the library, searching every book ever written on John Keats, will ask, he told us to get out and not to return until we had "real" question. This episode was repeated several more sessions, and life for those of us who continued to return quickly became a dreadful nightmare. I believe he would have continued until the end of the semester, but someone finally said, "Professor Nelick, I don't understand. . . ." And suddenly, Nelick smiled, "Well, I guess I finally have a student." Then he glared at the rest of us. "I must regretfully ask the rest of you kind people to leave because my student and I have some QUEST-ions to explore." We left, but the next session he allowed even those of us who could no longer lift our heads to remain.

For the past twenty years, many others have told me warm and amusing stories about the professor who praised his students more for quality of the questions they asked than for the depth of the answers they gave. In fact, several years after my class with Nelick, a friend of mine walked into his Ph.D. comps, and the good professor informed him that the committee did not plan to ask him a single question. He would pass or fail based on whether the questions he asked them demonstrated that he knew something worthwhile about literature and thus was fit to be a scholar and a teacher. (Fortunately, my friend passed.)

I offer these stories because they represent for me the origin of my interest in writing about how to teach the use of questions, real ones, that is, to foreign TAs. I want to constantly remind myself that questioning techniques are central not simply to teaching but to the whole purpose of learning.

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What follows is an outline for an investigation into the area of questions and questioning as a teaching technique.

I. Origins
   a. Socratic method
   b. Development of scientific inquiry
   c. John Dewey

II. Questioning as a mode of knowing
   a. Contemporary heuristics in teaching thinking and writing
   b. Use of modified heuristic in FTA training

III.Study of heuristics to introduce cross-cultural differences in education
   a. Memorization models
   b. Discovery models

IV. Appropriate forms of questions for undergraduates
   a. Complexity
   b. Context
   c. Language

V. Differences in pedagogical questions among the disciplines
   a. Humanities
   b. Social Sciences
   c. Science
   d. Engineering

VI. Questioning and intellectual development
   a. Method of evaluation
   b. Method of self-inquiry
   c. Method of research and scholarship

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PRONUNCIATION, GRAMMAR, AND WHAT ELSE?

Darlene Larson
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In the past decade, NAFSAns and TESOL specialists have quite properly become involved in designing and implementing support programs for foreign teaching assistants (FTAs). The knowledge, techniques, and materials of language learning, especially English language learning, are central to the needs of FTAs. It has become clear, nevertheless, that we need to consult the work of other disciplines in order to equip these scholars from other education systems, other cultures, for their roles in the academic departments of U.S. institutions of higher education. It goes without saying that those who are not acquainted with the field of TESOL should look there for materials and theories about developing English language competence. But, in addition, people involved in helping FTAs will need to consult a variety of disciplines. Just a few sources are suggested here.

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30. Hynes, Maureen. 1981. LETTERS FROM CHINA. Toronto: Women's Educational Press.

31. Levine, Deena R., Jim Baxter, Piper McNulty. 1987. THE CULTURE PUZZLE. New York: Prentice-Hall.

32. Maley, Alan. 1986. Xanadu--'A miracle of rare device': The teaching of English in China. In Joyce Merrill Valdes, ed., CULTURE BOUND: BRIDGING THE CULTURAL GAP IN LANGUAGE TEACHING. New York: Cambridge University Press.

33. Robinson, Gail L. Nemetz. 1985. CROSSCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING; PROCESSES AND APPROACHES FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE, ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE AND BILINGUAL EDUCATORS. New York: Pergamon Press.

34. Sakamoto, Nancy, and Reiko Naotsuka. 1982. POLITE FICTIONS: WHY AMERICAN AND JAPANESE SEEM RUDE TO EACH OTHER. Tokyo: Kinseido Press.

35. Weeks, William H., Paul B. Pedersen, and Richard W. Brislin. 1985. A MANUAL OF STRUCTURED EXPERIENCES FOR CROSS CULTURAL LEARNING. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

H. From aspects of teaching as shown on videotapes, available from the video center, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois:

36. Creamer, Carol A. USING QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION and LECTURING, THE FIRST FEW MINUTES.

37. Menges, Robert J. ASSIGNMENTS, DEMONSTRATING LEARNING, RESPONDING TO STUDENT QUESTIONS, and TEACHING STYLES.

38. Rotundo, Virginia. ATTENTIVENESS TO LECTURES and NONVERBAL CUES.

I. From those who write of teaching and observing teaching:

39. Beegle, Charles W., and Richard M. Brandt, eds. 1973. OBSERVATIONAL METHODS IN CLASSROOMS. Washington: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
Papers presented at Southeast Regional Conference of ASCD.

40. Bellack, et. al. 1966. THE LANGUAGE OF THE CLASSROOM. New York: Teachers College Press.

41. Carkhuff, Robert F,. David H. Berenson, and Richard M. Pierce. 1977. THE SKILLS OF TEACHING. Amherst, Mass: Human Resources Development Press. Many commonly subjective topics appear to be defined in concrete steps. The authors divide American education into two spheres: Sphere 1 is somewhat artificial, including psychologists, philosophers, economists, sociologists, anthropologists, humanists, and futurists. They seem to reside in institutions of higher education. Sphere 2 has children, parents, and teachers. It works at education and receives confusing messages from Sphere 1. The book appears to be aimed at elementary teachers, but it is, nevertheless, compelling.

42. THE CLASSROOM INTERACTION NEWSLETTER. Philadelphia: Temple University.
Articles on teacher effectiveness factors, research using Flanders observation systems, teacher-pupil relationships, lists of references on same. Studies from India, Great Britain, Nigeria, Latin America.

43. THE JOURNAL OF CLASSROOM INTERACTION. University of Houston.
Topics include measurement of teacher behavior, nonverbal behavior of teachers, supervision, individualized vs. traditional strategies, evaluating teacher clarity.

44. Green, Judith L., and Cynthia Wallat, eds. 1981. ETHNOGRAPHY AND LANGUAGE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS. Norwood, N.J.: ABLEX Publishing. Volume 5 in their series on advances in discourse processes. Focused on work with children.

45. Hennings, Dorothy Grant. 1975. MASTERING CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION: WHAT INTERACTION ANALYSIS TELLS THE TEACHER. Pacific Palisades, CA: Goodyear Publishing Co.
Each module provides not only a discussion of basic principles but also observational and try-out exercises. Heavy on the nonverbal messages of the teacher-student relationship. Many specific examples accompany every point; many systems and schemata for analyzing teaching. Possible source of paradigms for observing and analyzing student-teacher moves.

46. Hills, P.J. 1986. TEACHING, LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION. London; Dover, N.H.: Croom Helm.
Communication section doesn't compare with Hennings.

47. van Manen, Max. 1986. THE TONE OF TEACHING. New York: Heinemann. Attempts to deal with the subtle differences of communication. Takes up the fact that knowledge does not necessarily make us more thoughtful or tactful in our day-to-day relations with students. Sections include: Children teach possibility. Pedagogy Is Child-watching. Every Child Needs to Be Seen. Atmosphere Is a Way of Knowing. van Manen was educated in the Netherlands, then to OISE, now at the University of Alberta. He is the founding editor of Phenomenology + Pedagogy: A Human Science Journal.

48. Ober, Richard L., Ernest L. Bentley, and Edith Miller. 1971. SYSTEMATIC OBSERVATION OF TEACHING: AN INTERACTION ANALYSIS-INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY APPROACH. New York: Prentice-Hall.
This book builds on the work of Bellack, Flanders, Bruner, Gagne, and utilizes Sanders' work on questions as well as incorporating the authors' previous research. Early chapters provide a solid framework for critiquing observation of teaching.

J. From the special field of English for academic purposes, there is a wealth of material which considers language use in various content areas. In just one issue of the following journal, several articles appear relevant to our work:

49. Johns, Ann M., and John Swales, eds. ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES. Pergamon Journals, Ltd.

See, for example, Vol 5 (2) for the following:

50. Flowerdew, John. Cognitive style and specific-purpose course design. Pp. 121-29.

51. Hall, David, et. al. Patterns of thought in scientific writing: A course in information structuring for engineering students. Pp. 147-60.

52. Horowitz, Daniel. Essay examination prompts and the teaching of academic writing. Pp. 107-20.

53. Jacobson, Wayne H. An assessment of the communication needs of non-native speakers of english in an undergraduate physics lab. Pp. 173-87.

THE TEACHING OF PHYSICS
AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

Mary Anne Wieferich
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In order to improve the training of our FTAs, there needs to be more research into the kind of methods and procedures used in the various disciplines in our universities. Toward this end, I have begun a bibliography of some of the literature that deals with the teaching of physics.

Books

Balzar, A.L., T.P. Evans, and P.E. Blosser. 1973. A REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON TEACHING BEHAVIOR. New York: Association for the Education of Teachers of Science.
Studies conducted on teacher classroom behavior, teacher training and behavior.

Meiners, H.F. 1970. PHYSICS DEMONSTRATION EXPERIMENTS. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
Deals with demonstration and lecture techniques and the communication skills necessary for both.

National Association for Research in Science and Teaching. 1979. ABSTRACTS OF PRESENTED PAPERS: NARST 1979. ERIC Clearinghouse for Science, Math and Environmental Education.
Abstracts of papers delivered at the above conference in 1979. Includes abstracts on comparative studies of instructor and student behavior and the role of the instructor in the lab and introductory college level physics courses.

Nuffeld Foundation. 1966. PHYSICS TEACHERS GUIDES (3 vol); PHYSICS GUIDE TO EXPERIMENTS (2 vol); PHYSICS QUESTIONS BOOK (4 vol). Middlesex: Penguin Books.
Guides to the explanations of physics experiments.

TRAINING OF COLLEGE PHYSICS LAB ASSISTANTS CONFERENCE AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY, JUNE 25-26, 1954. 1954. Evanston: Northwestern University.
Collection of papers from the conference ranging from the discussion of TA training procedures to the interaction of the lab instructors and students and the handling of common problems in the lab. It is a very old collection, but may be useful as a starting point.

Dissertation

Ohm, Kenneth R. 1972. An analytical study of the preparation of community college physics teachers. Dissertation. University of Wyoming.
Very useful study.

ERIC

Journals

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PHYSICS. American Institute of Physics, New York. Monthly publication.

THE AMERICAN PHYSICS TEACHER. American Institute of Physics, New York. Monthly publication with the exception of June, July, and August.

APPLIED OPTICS. Optical Society of American, New York. Semi-monthly publication.

NEW TRENDS IN TEACHING PHYSICS. UNESCO, Paris.

PHYSICS EDUCATION. Institute of Physics and Physical Society, London. Bi-monthly.

PHYSICS TODAY. American Association of Physics Teachers, College Park, Maryland. Monthly publication.

Abstract Listings

CURRENT PHYSICS INDEX. New York: American Institute of Physics.
This is a quarterly publication containing 4000 abstracts. Cumulative subject and author indexes are also published separately. These include listings of all the articles published in the primary journals during the year.

PHYSICS ABSTRACTS. Piscataway: Institute of Electrical Engineers (INSPEC).
Published twice monthly. The information is taken from a variety of sources, including journals, reports, books, dissertations and conference papers. It is published in all countries in all languages of the world. Subject indexes are also published twice yearly.

Preliminary Bibliography
Discourse Level Strategies in Teaching
University Biology, Chemistry, and Engineering

Rosslyn Smith
Texas Tech University

As it has become increasingly apparent that we need more information about what is considered adequate or good teaching in the various disciplines, we have begun to look at what material on teaching is available. This bibliography focuses on the areas of biology, chemistry, and engineering; another project will explore materials on the teaching of physics.[1] The following titles were selected as being of greatest interest; they will be studied for references to discipline-specific discourse strategies or instructional techniques that would help the FTAs in their teaching. Revisions and additions to the list will be made as appropriate as an annotated form of the bibliography is developed.

Brawer, F. B. (Ed.) 1980. Teaching the sciences. New directions for community colleges, number 31. NEW DIRECTIONS FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES, 8.

CHEMISTRY IN THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE, Volume XVIII. 1977. Easton, PA, American Chemical Society, Division of Chemical Education.

Cherim, S. 1981. A philosophy for teaching preparatory chemistry. Paper presented at the Annual Two-Year College Conference (Atlanta, GA, March 27-28, 1981).

Defore, J. 1971. TECHNICIAN MONOGRAPHS: A COLLECTION OF PAPERS AND RESEARCH STUDIES RELATED TO ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAMS IN ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY. Washington, D.C.: American Society for Engineering Education.

Edwards, S. 1980. SCIENCE EDUCATION IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES: BIOLOGY. Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Community Colleges.

Friedlander, J. and S. Edwards. 1980. SCIENCE EDUCATION IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES: ENGINEERING. Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Community Colleges.

Hoff, B. 1979. Classroom-generated barriers to learning: International students in American higher education. Doctoral dissertation. United States International University.

Last, A. et al. 1984. An innovative freshman chemistry program in a small two-year college. JOURNAL OF COLLEGE SCIENCE TEACHING 14: 53-57.

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[1]See Mary Anne Wieferich, "The Teaching of Physics at the University Level" in this volume.

ERIC

Merlino, A. 1976. A comparison of the effectiveness of three levels of teacher questioning on the outcome of instruction in a college biology course. Doctoral dissertation. New York University.

Mooney, W. 1980. SCIENCE EDUCATION IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES: CHEMISTRY. Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Community Colleges.

Rand, A. 1984. College biology teaching, 1918-1982: Objectives as stated in periodical literature. Doctoral dissertation. East Texas State University.

Scharmann, L., and H. Harty. 1985. Role expectations of the two-year college biology instructor. COMMUNITY/JUNIOR COLLEGE QUARTERLY OF RESEARCH AND PRACTICE 9: 111-118.

Shaw, P. 1983. The language of engineering professors: A discourse and registral analysis of a speech event. Doctoral dissertation. University of Southern California.

Sillman, D. 1980. Sources and information: Teaching the sciences. NEW DIRECTIONS FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES 8: 91-97.

WYOMING/NAFSA INSTITUTE ON FOREIGN TA TRAINING
Advanced Session - July, 1988

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