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ABSTRACT

Papers from a seminar on instructional materials for second language teaching include the following: "Co-Operative Language Learning: What's News?" (Ted Rodgers); "Principles of Communicative Task Design" (David Nunan); "Teaching Spoken English in the Non-Native Context: Considerations for the Materials Writer" (Mary W. J. Tay); "The Texts for Teaching Writing" (Ann Raimes); "Designing Instructional Materials for Teaching Listening Comprehension" (Jack C. Richards); "Power to the Pupils: Computer Software in Language Teaching" (John Higgins); "Self-Directed Learning and New Technologies: Computers as Language Learning Tools" (Bernd Ruschoff); "Tapping a Vital Resource: Student-Generated Materials" (Heidi Riggenbach); "The Roles of L2 Teachers, Learners, and Materials Developers in the Context of New Technologies" (Fraida Dubin); "Materials for Language Learning and Teaching: New Trends and Developments--The Malaysian Scene" (Asiah Abu Samah). Authors' names and addresses are appended. (MSE)

MATERIALS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

Edited by
BIKRAM K DAS

REGIONAL LANGUAGE CENTRE

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PREFACE

The 1988 RELC Seminar on "Materials for Language Learning and Teaching" attracted, as had been anticipated, a record number of more than 600 participants, most of whom were practising language teachers. Clearly, teachers are keenly aware of the crucial importance of teaching materials for their trade. One can only wonder whether a seminar on "Methods" (the theme of the 1989 RELC Seminar) would arouse as much interest. The feeling probably exists among many teachers that when the proper tools are made available, they will know how to use them. Confidence in one's own teaching is understandably greater than confidence in materials produced by somebody else. Within reason, this is to be welcomed: a bad workman quarrels with his tools -- but the workman who takes his tools for granted is worse.

As the editor explains in the introduction to this volume, the new generation of teaching materials will probably make greater demands on the inventiveness and creativity of teachers; in fact, it is being suggested that teachers and learners will increasingly become partners in forging teaching materials in the furnace of the classroom. It may no longer be possible for teachers to say: "Give us the tools and we will finish the job". At any rate, teachers will have to be much more aware of what teaching materials can and cannot do. This, in fact, was the main purpose of the RELC Seminar.

Earnest Lau
Director
SEAMEO Regional Language Centre

INTRODUCTION

This volume of papers from the 1988 RELC Seminar, selected because they represent some of the major issues that emerged, indicates the extent of current re-thinking about the nature of instructional materials and the role that they are expected to play in the teaching-learning process, vis-a-vis the roles of teachers and learners. Traditional beliefs about curriculum/syllabus design and the creation of teaching materials are being questioned. This may well be a minority view ; it may even be, as some critics imply, that what we are witnessing is only a temporary aberration -- a periodical change of fashion. Nevertheless, it is important to take note of the new thinking and to study its implications.

First, the more traditional view. Teaching materials are designed in accordance with the belief that in teaching we must begin with a clear definition of **goals** or learning outcomes (what we want the learner to learn) and then go on to specify the **content** (what we must teach the learner if the selected goals are to be achieved) as well as the **learning experiences** (what we want learners and teachers to do in order that the content will be learnt) -- finally, evaluating learning outcomes in order to validate the goals, content and learning experiences.

In all teaching, decisions have to be made about "what" should be taught and "how" it should be taught.Traditionally, syllabus design, of which the production of teaching materials is the logical extension, has been concerned primarily with the "what" of teaching (represented by the goals and the content) while the "how" of teaching (represented by the design of learning experiences) is assigned to "methodology". It is realised, however, that the "what" and "how" are closely interlinked and cannot be neatly separated. The choice of the "learning route" will, to a large extent, depend on the desired goals as well as the nature of the content.

Teachers need help then, in deciding both "what" to teach and "how". In many formalised systems of education, teachers have little choice in the matter of "what" to teach -- the goals are pre-selected and the content neatly laid out in the syllabus. The decisions have, for the most part, been made for the teachers; if they have any freedom to depart from the specification of "what", it is largely in terms of the sequencing of content (what is to follow what). The teaching materials make these decisions accessible to the teacher and help him to implement them.

Decisions about "how" to teach cannot be imposed on the teacher in quite the same way as decisons about "what", as such decisions are much more subject to teacher and learner variables (the individual differences among teachers and learners) as well as other situational variables. Nevertheless, major decisions about "how" to teach are, very often, imposed on the teacher, largely in the interests of uniformity.

Teachers differ in the attitudes they adopt to the fact that, in many cases, they are primarily implementers of decisions rather than decision makers. The fact is, however, that most teachers feel grateful for all the help they can get in taking as well as implementing decisions.

Good teaching materials are expected to provide this help. Not only do they take most decisions concerning "what" on behalf of the teacher, they make it easier for him to take decisions about "how" by offering clear suggestions. The teaching materials, therefore, tend to become more or less complete recipes for teaching.

Most producers of teaching materials do recognise, however, that materials, by themselves, can achieve little unless they are "activated" or translated into classroom procedures, and that it is the teacher who does most of the "activating". The guidance that materials can provide to the teacher cannot be a complete substitute for teacher-training; it cannot, for example, tell the teacher how to deal with live pupils in a real classroom.

There are, of course, materials that tend to by-pass the teacher and address themselves directly to the learner. Such "auto-instructional" materials assume even greater responsibility for decisions about the "what" and "how" of teaching than conventional materials: they are more or less complete recipes for learning.

While teachers deserve all the help they can get, there is always the danger that materials which take too many decisions on their behalf will reduce teacher initiative and inventiveness and generate "materials dependence" which, like any other form of addiction, is bound to be debilitating.

The desire to make decisions on behalf of teachers is not always prompted by consideration for the teacher; often, it reflects the feeling that teachers cannot be trusted to make the right decisions. "Teacher-proofing" of materials, to make them impervious to poor teaching techniques, has often been an unstated objective.

In recent years, protests have been voiced against the de-humanising effect of teaching strategies which tend to reduce the role of teachers. While the strongest of these have been directed against the attempt (real or imagined) to "replace" teachers through sophisticated technology, it would appear that even "low tech" teaching materials which, until recently, could have been seen as "helpful" may now appear to be "cramping".

The essence of the new thinking about teaching materials is, in fact, the different role that they entail for the teacher. The motivation for the changes that are proposed may partly be humanistic; but there is a more fundamental reason which is linked to new perceptions of the nature of human language and of the language learning process.

The alternative "approach" to the design of teaching materials which, loosely, represents the "Communicative Approach", questions whether it is possible or desirable to make specific decisions in advance about "what" should be taught. It suggests, instead, the adoption of a flexible agenda for learning. Priority is given to the design of learning experiences,rather than to content. In other words, the "how" of teaching takes precedence over and guides the "what", whereas earlier the "what" tended to control the "how".

Language teaching, it has been pointed out, tends to reflect the process of industrial manufacturing, where a "product" (say, a certain model of motor car) is first envisaged and designed, and then suitable manufacturing processes are set up to ensure that the desired product is "delivered". In language teaching, the "product" is represented by the learning outcomes or objectives, which we attempt to describe and specify in different ways.Outcomes may be specified, for example, in terms of the language skills or competencies that we want learners to acquire ; or, they may be specified in terms of the language items (e.g. words and grammatical patterns) that we expect the learner to "know". If learning outcomes are specified in terms of competencies, no clear specification of language content may be involved, although it would be difficult to avoid some specification of content. If, on the other hand, learning outcomes are specified in terms of knowledge of language items, this becomes almost synonymous with the specification of content. (In practice, most language syllabuses, and hence teaching materials, attempt to specify learning outcomes in terms both of competencies and knowledge of language items, thus requiring considerable specification of content.)

What is being suggested now is that such a "product-oriented" view of language teaching, analogous to industrial manufacturing, falsifies the nature of language as well as of the learning process. Process (to use a somewhat unpopular cliche) must have precedence over product.

To most linguists, language has been essentially an "object" -- something that can be analysed and described in terms of underlying "systems", "networks", "rules", "constraints", etc. This fundamentally static view of language gives rise to the conviction that in language teaching it is possible to specify, in advance, the product or learning outcomes.

New advances in the "ethnography of language" (essentially, the study of the use of language in real, everyday communication)suggest, however, that language should be viewed as a dynamic, evolving process rather than as a fixed object. The true nature of language is reflected not in the static descriptions of rules and systems but in the processes and strategies that human beings make use of (consciously or unconsciously) when they use language for communication.

The static view of language implies that when two (or more) human beings enter into linguistic communication, they merely adopt or "borrow" pre-existing and ready-made "systems", which are flexible enough to accommodate anything that they may wish to "say". Learning language, from this point of view, is learning to "conform" to conventional systems. If this vew is accepted, it is possible to argue that learning outcomes can and should be pre-specified.

The more dynamic view of language suggests (to use an exaggerated and somewhat dramatised metaphor, for the sake of clarity) that two human beings entering into linguistic communication do not so much borrow ready-made language systems as "create" fresh systems. Communication therefore becomes an act of invention rather than of mere "transmission".

The emphasis in linguistic studies has been, recently, on the processes through which "meanings" (i.e. messages) are negotiated, rather than on the ready-made forms which they use. Although any act of communication is partly predictable (in that the persons communicating will invariably make use of words and grammatical patterns or rules drawn from "lists" which already exist) and partly unpredictable (in that the turns and twists of conversation cannot be anticipated in advance), it is the unpredictable elements which are seen as providing a better clue to the nature of human language, which is essentially creative and open-ended.

Given such a view of language, it could be argued that it is misleading to suggest that learning outcomes can be predicted and therefore pre-specified. Syllabus design and materials production should focus, therefore, on the design of learning experiences, or tasks, and leave decisions about content "open".

Stronger arguments in favour of the ethnographic approach to the design of materials are drawn from recent advances in the theories of language learning (of second as well as first languages). Traditionally, the process of language learning has been viewed from an "intra-organism" perspective -- that is, as being located within the individual learner. Different descriptions of the process were provided by exponents of the Behaviouristic and Cognitivist approaches, who explained language learning in terms either of habit formation or rule-learning. After Chomsky's insistence on the Language Acquisition Device which every human being was supposed to possess, the "individual" approach to language learning was firmly entrenched. "Individualised learning" seemed to be the ideal; each learner had to be allowed to learn at his own pace, using individual learning styles,strategies and preferences. Teacher-controlled or teacher-dominated pedagogy was out: the teacher was a mere facilitator of learning, helping the learner to make the best use of the learning resources available -- chiefly, the instructional materials. It is small wonder that the teacher's role was sought to be progressively subordinated to that of the designer of materials: "teacher-proofing" was only a step further.

Current theories of language learning, however, adopt a primarily "inter-organism" perspective: in other words, language learning is explained mainly in terms of the interactions and transactions that take place between individuals. Studies of "Caretaker Speech", i.e., of the linguistic interaction between mothers and infants,or between native speakers and non-native speakers, reinforce the view that language learning is essentially dyadic. In real life, learners do not learn language through intensive pattern practice, with or without a teacher, or by having the rules of grammar explained to them: they learn when they are forced to communicate or exchange messages with others. The learning experiences designed for learners must take cognisance of this fact.

What is being argued, therefore, is briefly this: teaching materials should not be regarded as complete recipes for teacning and learning, providing substantial amounts of help and guidance both in the selection of content and in the design of learning experiences. They should be process and not product-oriented. The value of materials lies in the fact that they can be used to stimulate and trigger-off the processes of interaction through which language learning seems to take place in real life. Interaction in the classroom should be a process of "triangulation", with the teacher, the learners and the materials forming the three vertices of the "communication triangle". Materials should, therefore, not pre-specify learning outcomes or attempt to control or substantially guide learning: their function is primarily to provide opportunities for learning through interaction.

This view of teaching materials shifts the onus for learning squarely onto the teachers and learners, who become equal partners in exploiting the opportunities for learning that materials provide. While the learner has been, for some time, rather close to the centre of the learning process, the teacher has been progressively assigned an ancillary role. The ethnographic view of learning goes a long way, however, in restoring the teacher's importance in the learning process -- although in a very different role from being the "source" of learning.

What is being suggested is that teaching materials intended for classroom use should not be the "finished products" they have tended to be· they should, instead, be "raw materials" that learners and teachers can "act upon" in different ways to spark off interactive learning. The real "materials for learning" are created in the classroom by teachers and pupils acting together on the raw materials provided. The best materials then are not the ones which give the most help to the teacher in making decisions in advance of the lesson; they are the ones which create the best "openings" for spontaneous teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil interaction. From this point of view, the very "rawness" of materials could be an advantage.

A number of the speakers at the seminar highlighted the distinctions between "course materials" (the finished products, usually commercially produced) and "source materials" (the "raw materials" that can trigger off classroom inter action), between "primary materials" (pieces of language produced in the classroom by learners and teachers, during interaction) and "secondary materials" (textbooks), etc. Teacher-produced and student-generated texts were seen as valuable adjuncts to the learning process, and both were valued more highly, by some speakers, than conventional teaching materials. "Authentic materials", not specially designed for use in language teaching were preferred to the pedagogical materials created by specialists.

This is not to suggest, of course, that the "specialist" writer of teaching materials has been rendered obsolete: it was recognised that both "course materials" and "source materials" have a place in the classroom. But there is a clear admission of the fact that materials are less important than the activities which they help to generate, and that learners and pupils can contribute to such activities in equal measure. The materials writer has to pay much more attention to "tasks" than to language content.More importantly, "teacher training" becomes the crucial factor, rather than syllabus design, since it is the teacher who mainly stimulates and orchestrates classroom activity. What teachers in trainining need is not so much mastery of prescribed techniques as sensitivity to the interactive processes, which implies totally different attitudes to learners and learning.

The papers that follow do not necessarily conform to the view of materials design suggested above, but they do highlight the significance of either one or both of two elements which appear to be significant: firstly, the priority of process over any pre-specified product or content and secondly, the value of interactive learning.

Ted Rodgers, who has been a pioneer in the design of interactive materials, discusses the rationale behind interactive or co-operative learning. David Nunan provides a valuable framework for evaluating communicative tasks within a process-oriented curriculum. Mary Tay emphasises the role of authentic "communication practice" in the teaching of oral skills, with valuable evidence derived from linguistic analysis. Ann Raimes, whose name has become synonymous with the teaching of composition, illustrates how very artificial and constraining language textbooks can be as they cannot possibly reflect the spontaneous processes of learning. It is not just the writing process which is "messy and chaotic", as she puts it, but the whole process by which language is created in the classroom, and no textbook which is "cleanly linear" can do justice to this process.Jack Richards, a very successful writer of "course materials", reveals how awareness of processes can help the writer to design "authentic" materials for listeningf: once again, the emphasis is on "transaction", or the negotiation of meanings.

John Higgins and Bernd Ruschoff, who are leaders in the still somewhat esoteric field of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), are firm in their belief that the computer must be slave, not master. The value of computer technology, for them, lies in its power to unleash and enhance the dynamism of the interactive process. Ruschoff, in particular, demonstrates how an "intelligent" computer can simulate the functions of a live teacher in creating interaction in the classroom. Heidi Riggenbach examines the affective as well as communicative value of student-generated materials.

As has been stated earlier, the new trends in materials design restore the teacher to a very significant role, but they demand a far greater degree of awareness of the learning process. Teachers who wish to continue to use materials as a crutch will find this disturbing; on the other hand, there may be many more teachers who would prefer to have the last word.

(BKD)

CO-OPERATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING: WHAT'S NEWS?

Ted Rodgers

In 1969 I attended my first RELC Seminar. I think, in fact, it was the first RELC Seminar. At that time I talked a bit about co-operative learning in connection with a new language program we were designing in Hawaii called the Hawaii English Program. The idea of making co-operative learning a central part of a mainstream educational program was a very new one at that time and one that met with considerable comment, both positive and negative. Some of the co-operative learning elements in the Hawaii English Program proved too controversial with educators and sponsors, some proved to be not as effective as alternative approaches, some proved difficult to manage in day to day classroom situations, and some merely slipped silently into the silvery sands of Hawaii without apparent rhyme or rhythm. (I'm sure many of you are familiar with apparently successful materials and programs in your own situations that likewise die of unknown causes).

However, many of the co-operative elements of the Hawaii English Program were effective, were accepted and are still found in Hawaii's classrooms. I plan to show some slides containing some of these co-operative learning elements and which show examples of students using materials designed to support these elements. I also want to talk about some of the factors that intruded on the successful use of such elements and which might act as cautions as we enter upon another era of enthusiasm for co-operative learning.

This paper, then, will be somewhat of a primer in co-operative/collaborative learning with particular attention to materials used to support co-operative/ collaborative learning. The accompanying workshop will then provide an opportunity to examine, use, critique and construct some of the kinds of materials that have been proposed for and are currently being used in co-operative learning based classrooms.

I felt that a presentation on co-operative learning was timely in 1969. In some ways, such a presentation is even more timely in 1988. Co-operative or collaborative learning is receiving increasing attention from general educators and from language educators in particular. When I talked on co-operative language learning at the 1983 TESOL Convention in Toronto, there were no other presentations with a co-operative focus. At the 1988 TESOL Convention in Chicago, there were more than ten presentations specifically focused on co-operative learning and several more in which co-operative learning was a subsidiary theme. A TESOL keynote speaker was Spenser Kagan, a psychologist with particular interests in co-operative learning but with no particular background in language learning or teaching. This current interest among language educators signals a coming of age (or in view of the Hawaii English Program experience, a second coming of age) for co-operative language learning.

There has been a proliferation of papers on the topic of co-operative/collaborative learning in the last several years. It is difficult to summarize this outpouring of opinion, classroom activities, and proto-research reports. However, I will try to at least outline the territory.

As an organizational device I have used the not very original schema by which newspaper journalists are trained to write news leads. The news lead, like this paper, should answer the basic questions WHO, WHAT, WHY, WHERE, WHEN, AND HOW. These are usually known as the 5W's and an H. (AKA Huey Lewis and the News). There are a couple of sub-themes within each of the major themes. These are suggested by the sub-theme titles and the following text. Three of the themes - WHERE, WHEN, and HOW - lend themselves better to demonstration than description. These I hope to handle in the Workshop more or less accompanying this presentation. Responses to the questions WHO, WHAT, AND WHY, then, define the body of this presentation.

WHO : Major Directors and Actors
WHAT : Characteristics and Competitors
WHY : Ideology and Efficacy
WHERE: Community and Class Context (Workshop)
WHEN : Ages and Stages (Workshop)
HOW : Methods and Management (Workshop)

These issues, as in the case of the news lead, will not receive equal treatment but will be accorded space on the basis of available information and reporter bias.

I WHO: MAJOR DIRECTORS AND ACTORS

The notion of cooperative learning, especially peer tutoring, is not new. Mutual instruction has been found since ancient times in Hindu schools and was practised fairly widely in first-century Rome. In Spain in the sixteenth century, in France in the seventeenth century, in England in the eighteenth century and in New England in the nineteenth century we find records of peer tutoring or monitorial systems. The first educational figure to leave a personal endorsement of peer teaching was Comenius, circa 1630. Comenius observed that "The saying, 'He who teaches others, teaches himself,' is very true, not only because constant repetition impresses a fact indelibly on the mind, but because the process of teaching in itself gives deeper insight into the subject taught."

In the US, John Dewey is often credited with promoting the idea of building co-operation in learning into regular classrooms on some sort of regular and systematic basis. Having bestowed ritual credit on Dewey, most contemporary co-operative learning gurus then forward claims for the uniqueness of their own views of co-operation in learning. Shlomo Sharon, one of the more magnanimous of this guru group, gives the following somewhat exclusive acknowledgement to co-directors in the field of co-operative education.

> "The five methods (of co-operative education) are: Aronson's Jigsaw classroom, DeVries' Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT), Slavin's Student Teams and Academic Divisions (STAD), the Johnsons' co-operative learning approach, and the Sharan's Small Group Teaching method. The former three methods are categorized as Peer-tutoring methods, while the latter two are classified as examples of a Group-Investigation (G-I) approach."

Certainly other names could be added to these. Spencer Kagan, mentioned earlier as this year's TESOL keynote speaker, would be one, since Kagan has been doing cross-cultural research on co-operative vs competitive incentives in classrooms for the last twenty years. Kagan, like a number of other researchers, has borrowed most of his experimental activities from the designs of teachers, whom he credits in his work. Recently Donald Dansereau and his colleagues have introduced systematic manipulation of specific learning and interaction strategies within dyadic learning situations involving classroom instruction in the teaching of reading and writing. The Dansereau studies represent the most serious attempt to date to look at critical variables within co-operative learning tasks.

There are a number of lesser known lights, in which set of lower luminaries I might put Adrian Palmer, Judy Winn-Bell Olsen and myself, who have contributed a variety of co-operative learning materials to the common store of such activities. Jerry Dykstra, Paul Heinberg, Bert Byers and others in the Communication Department at the University of Hawaii, worked on a number of pair-learning designs which still form the basis for many of the peer-tutoring activities which others have borrowed and adapted. Research contributors from the second language community include Yael Bejarano, Steve Gaies, Mike Long, Pat Porter and a growing number of others several of whom are cited in the text and bibliography.

A lot of the "players", the students involved in reported co-operative learning classes or experimental laboratories, have come from special purpose learning situations, and often special learning situations in the US, UK, and Israel. This has sometimes caused educators outside these orbits (for example, most of you here) to question whether co-operative learning exercises can be adapted to educational situations which have large classes, limited resources and a minority of teachers trained in non-standard educational approaches. In this connection the "Each-one, Teach-one" cross-age tutoring experiments in Malaysia (Rodgers, 1985) and the experience with the JILAP/ILLP peer-tutoring materials in Thailand (Umrod, 1975) provide published commentary on both successes in and limitations to co-operative learning in the SEAMEO region.

II WHAT: CHARACTERISTICS AND COMPETITORS

Before beginning an analysis of the defining dimensions of cooperative learning, it may be useful to describe briefly some of the formats which have collectively become identified as cooperative learning paradigms. Sharon, cited earlier, identified cooperative learning types as five in number. As I indicated, also earlier, I think Sharon's perspective is too limited. However, describing the five activity types will give a sense of some cooperative learning styles for those otherwise unfamiliar with this genre.

Jigsaw. In Jigsaw, each member of a 5-6 member "home" group is fed a unique block of information relative to a topic the group is studying. This is the group member's piece of the "jigsaw puzzle". After group members read the information in their block, they split up and meet in "expert groups" with members of other groups who are responsible for mastering the same block of information. After "expert group" discussions, students return to their "home" groups to teach their fellow group members the content of their information block. Students are then tested individually or as a group on the total topic content.

Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT) and Student Teams and Achievement Divisions (STAD). TGT and STAD are peer-tutoring methods in which team members drill and assist each other in learning teacher-assigned content. Individual team members then take part in academic competition built around the content (TGT) or are tested by the teacher in a situation which does not involve face-to-face competition (STAD). Both of these methods rely on within-group co-operation and across-group competition as their motivating forces.

Group Investigation. (Including the Johnsons' cooperative learning approach and the Sharans' Small Group Teaching Method). In these approaches students work to produce a group project within a broader area of teacher-defined study. Differences between the two methods are essentially whether structuring is undefined (The Johnsons) or defined (The Sharans). In both cases students design their own study plan and determine individual tasks. Individual students gather information and bring it back to the group. The group analyzes and organizes the information collection and determines an interesting way to present their group findings to the other groups. The teacher and other groups make an evaluation of the group presentation which may include both individual and group evaluation.

There are other cooperative learning paradigms which we will look at in the Workshop, but these should give a sense of the whole.

At this point one might typically expect a definition of cooperative learning which embraces the examples. However, in the case of co-operative learning, it is the fashion to define the phenomenon by describing not what it is but rather what it is not. I will follow this tradition for reasons which may become clear.

Johnson (1979), Kagan (1987) and most significant others feel that co-operative learning is best understood in the context of differentiation from competitive learning and individualistic learning involving task structures and reward structures. Let us break these down. In brief, task structures deal with how students learn and reward/incentive structures with how students are evaluated. A task structure may require the student to compete against another student (eg in a spelling bee), to work alone (eg on a work sheet), or work co-operatively (eg in a small group). The reward/incentive structure defines how rewards (eg grades) are distributed. Grades can be given to individuals, teams, or to the class as a whole. If the highest grade in the class is given to the best student in the class and the worst grade is given to the bottom student (eg by curve or norm-referenced grading), the result is a competitive reward structure. If grades are based on, say, individual improvement, an individualistic reward structure is created, and students will not (necessarily) feel in competition, especially if all students can improve and receive equal rewards. If grades are averaged across team members or are based on whole class improvement than a co-operative reward structure has been created, and students (should) feel it is their best interest to see that other team or class members do well, in that every student's success will contribute to every other student's success.

Note that task structures and reward structures are, in principal, indedpendent. In a basketbnall game played in the normal manner both task structure and reward structure are, for <u>team</u> members, co-operative. That is, the task encourages team members to score to help their team win. A player on a losing team who scores fifty points loses just as badly as a player on the same team who scores 1 point. On the other hand if one designs a basketball game such that players play together on a team but are rewarded personally on the basis of points scored (ie there are winning players rather than winning teams) than the task structure is still co-operative (someone must put the ball in play so someone else can shoot) but the reward structure is competitive (players can succeed at the expense of their teammates who scored fewer points).

Individualistic structuring essentially assumes the independence of one student from another both in work style and in reward structuring. If a student works alone on a task and is rewarded for either how he compares with a pre-determined standard (criterion-referenced grading) or for how much he has progressed since previously assessed on a similar task, then the task and the reward are individualistically structured.

The most typical situation in co-operative learning is one that incorporates both co-operative task structure and co-operative reward structure. For example, a high ability student studies together with a low ability student for a test (co-operative task structure) and the grade for both students is determined by averaging the test grade of the high ability student with that of the low ability student (co-operative reward structure).

In non-school situations, people can often re-structure a task or a reward to their own choosing. For example, a marathon is typically thought of as a competitive event in which runners are publicly ranked in terms of their order of finish. However, the 10,000 people who run in the Honolulu Marathon do not all expect to win. For many, to finish is to win. For others, to better their previous best time is to win. They have "re-defined" a competitive reward structure as an individualistic one. For some runners, the comaradarie of other runners is their reason for running. They have "re-defined" a competitive task structure as a co-operative one.

Much of the research on co-operative learning reported to date, focuses on the relative efficacy of competitive, individualistic and co-operative task and reward/incentive structuring. In a summary of this research, Slavin notes, with some emphasis, that "The results of the field experimental research on co-operative learning methods indicate that the positive effects of these methods on student achievement result from the use of co-operative incentives, not co-operative tasks" (Slavin, 1984). Baldly stated, this means that co-operative learning is successful only when students are grade-tied, when each student's grade is determined by the success of his team. It should be cautioned that Slavin was talking to elementary school educators in the quoted piece and that, as well, Slavin has a particular committment to the design and manipulation of co-operative incentive structures. Nevertheless, in that most co-operative language learning materials focus only on co-operative task structuring and ignore co-operative incentive structuring, we need to examine carefully the applicability of Slavin's claim to our own language learning situations.

Having discussed competitive, individualistic and co-operative task and reward structures at some length, let me turn briefly to some characterizations of co-operative learning as they have appeared in recent discussion. It should be noted that while most commentators on co-operative learning accept the differentiation between competitive, individualistic, and co-operative learning outlined above, there is less agreement as to how co-operative learning should be def· ·d. As Slavin notes,

"The cooperative learning methods share the idea that students work in groups to accomplish a group goal. But in every other particular they are quite different from one another. STAD, TGT, and TAI are highly structured, with well-specified group tasks and group rewards (recognition in a newsletter, certificates), while Group-Investigation and Learning Together give more autonomy to students and usually have less well-specified group rewards. Jigsaw and Jigsaw II are used primarily in social studies, and TAI is designed only for mathematics, while STAD, TGT and Learning Together are used in all subjects. STAD, TGT, Jigsaw II use competition between teams to motivate students to cooperate within their teams, while Group-Investigation, Learning Together, TAI, and the original form of Jigsaw do not.
Finally, STAD, TGT and TAI are designed to help students learn a specific set of skills, such as adding fractions, putting commas in a series, reading, charts, and graphs, or understanding how chemical compounds are formed, while Group- Investigation in particular is designed primarily to get students to think creatively about concepts and learn group self-organizational skills".
(Slavin, 1983)

Despite the differences between cooperative learning methods just cited, there do appear to be some commonalities among such methods. One commentator on cooperative learning has summarized these commonalities as follows,

"Cooperative learning entails the creation of small heterogeneous student teams who work toward a common goal under these basic principles:

* Positive interdependence and distributed leadership - all team members are needed to accomplish the group task; no individual is allowed to dominate;
* Individual accountability for group work, so that no student can 'freeload' on the efforts of others;
* Face-to-Face interaction/discussion by group members to promote new ideas and closeness;
* Specific instruction in group process and interpersonal cooperation, so students can learn to become effective team members; and
* Group autonomy - students manage their own group processes and problems.

The teacher sets the stage for group work; instructs students in the skills required; serves as a resourse; monitors and evaluates academic learning and group process skills; but rarely intervenes to 'take over' if students run into difficulties."

(SMERC, 1986)

A definition for communicative language teaching games (CLTG's) shares some of the properties of the characterization given above and relates more specifically to the interests of language educators. CLTG's have been defined as "pair or small group co-operative activities with well-defined tasks but undefined language, in which there exists between players an information gap or built-in disagreement." (Palmer and Rodgers, 1983). Many of the packaged materials for language teaching which have been described as "cooperative" in orientation share most of the above features.

III WHY: IDEOLOGY AND EFFICACY

Educators who have proposed, done research on, or developed materials for cooperative learning all appear to share a strong ideological committment to cooperation in education. Cooperation was part of the Deweyian ethic. It formed an ideological cornerstone for many of "Alternative" schools of the 1960's and 1970's. Even those professional research specialists who one might expect would choose to keep some emotional distance between themselves and the object of their study seem to come with or come to a strong ideological commitment to cooperative learning. For example, Spencer Kagan, an experimental psychologist, speaks of cooperative learning in these terms.

"We need cooperative learning also if we are to preserve democracy. Exclusive use of autocratic, teacher dominated classroom structures leave students unprepared for participation in a democratic society...Cooperative, interdependent educational experiences in our classrooms are necessary if we hope to make possible the democratic ideal of informed and equal participation."

(Kagan, 1987)

There have been a variety of less consecrated claims put forward by those interested in co-operative learning, some of which have been supported by empirical research. Long and Porter (1985) offer five pedagogical arguments for the use of group work in second language teaching. "They concern group work's potential for increasing the quantity of language practice opportunities, for improving the quality of student talk, for individualizing instruction, for creating a positive affective climate in the classroom, and for raising student motivation."

Kagan (1986) holds that cooperative learning was created to respond to critical social issues in, especially, US education and that studies have shown that cooperative learning has, indeed, proven its effectiveness in improving ethnic relations, given minority students a stronger motivation to succeed in formal schooling and contributed substantially to the prosocial development of students.

For second language educators, the most relevant claims and the evidence for substantiation of these claims can be loosely categorized under four broad headings. I have labelled these headings so that they can be displayed graphically like a compass rose. Like a compass rose, these can be conceptualized as N.E.S.W. (North, East, South, West) or, in the case of claims put forward for co-operative learning, the claims for Negotiation, Efficiency, Sociability and Worldliness. I have taken a bit of liberty with my labels for the sake of the compass rose mnemonic (My rose by any other names would not sell as sweetly). Let me now describe the rose and defend my categories and their labels.

1. Negotiation. Many commentators have argued the important role that comprehensible input plays in second language acquisition (eg Krashen, 1982). To make his language comprehensible, a language sender can adjust speed, clarity, concreteness of reference, sentence length, vocabulary choice, use of extralinguistic context etc in accordance with the perceived need of the receiver. The receiver signals that message modification is necessary through feedback to the sender. Feedback may be verbal (question-asking, requests for repetition, etc) or non-verbal (perplexity of expression, in attention, etc). This interplay of sender and listener messages results in "Negotiation of Meaning" and "Negotiation of Interaction" (Long, 1983). While such negotiation is untypical of much of the language use in teacher-centered classrooms, it is endemic to most co-operative interchange activities. Thus, the argument runs, co-operative learning activities entail negotiation of meaning and interaction which results in comprehensible input which results in language acquisition.

2. Efficiency. Efficiency arguments typically turn on "Time on Task" and "Means Goals Match" reasoning. A number of studies in a number of areas have held that learning and retention are directly and positively correlated with time and intensity of study of the content whose mastery is being measured. The more you study something, the more likely you are to learn it. The more time on task, the greater the probability of task mastery. If the goal of learning is, say, conversational fluency, then the more time spent on learning relevant to conversation, the more likely one is to become conversationally fluent.

Means-Goals Match is the label for the hypothesis that learning activities should as much as possible resemble learning goals. If the goal of language learning is recall of grammar rules then memorizing grammar rules is the appropriate means. If the goal of language learning is conversational fluency then the appropriate instructional means is conversational practice with language matched partners.

Co-operative communication activities marry time on task to goal matching instructional means (ie Conversational Talk). Therefore such activities, it is argued, represent the most efficient means by which to achieve conversational fluency.

3. Sociability. Human beings, it is held, are endowed with a "Compulsion to Converse." (Weeks, 1979) The optimal, perhaps, only way to engender empathetic understanding between students of different social, ethnic, and economic backgrounds is through language-linked cooperatively undertaken activities (via team sport, for example). Kagan holds that co-operative learning methods were created principally to address major social problems of the United States educational system ie,

(a) the failure of the system to hold and educate minority students
(b) the failure of the system to create positive race relations
(c) the failure of the system to socialize students to pro social values and behaviours such as respect and care for others and knowledge of when and how to co-operate and help. (Kagan, 1986)

While some, myself included, would dispute the claim that socialization through schooling "demands" gave rise to co-operative learning as an educational enterprise, few would dispute the evidence that cooperative learning methods have shown themselves effective in improving classroom climate and have contributed significantly to the pro social development of students including their verbal skills.

4. Worldliness. I have adopted this term not only because it yields the necessary "W" to complete my compass rose, but because it suggests two other characteristics of (most) co-operative learning activities which appear to contribute to their effectiveness as language learning devices. "Authenticity" is one of these characteristics.

Many language learners, particularly those in regular school and university settings, see language learning as not only unrelated to the real world outside of school, but also as unrelated to the real world inside of school. One of the things I will try to demonstrate in the workshop rather loosely linked to this paper is the relative ease with which co-operative learning activities can be constructed from "realia" and from content materials in other areas of educational study. One of the benefits of such materials is that learners can undertake language practice using materials which are quite transparently authentic in origin.

Worldliness suggests another characteristic of co-operative learning activities which also appears central to the success of such activities. At the risk of a minor tautology, I call this characteristic worldly-wisdom. By this term, I mean to suggest those kinds of student skills which are rarely acknowledged or rewarded in formal educational settings. These are skills one sees drawn upon in parlour games such as "Charades". To such games, as to many co-operative learning tasks, learners bring a full range of personal knowledge, probabilities, hunches, intuitions, and paralinguistic skills. These are exercised in an attempt to convey or comprehend messages. In such tasks, learners are encouraged to employ the capabilities which allow them to function successfully in the myriad of partial information situations which are typical of daily, worldly life.

I have dealt at some length with the WHY's for cooperative learning. For many educators, and particularly for language educators, the more important concerns are the WHY NOT's. Often buried amongst the claims put forward favouring co-operative second language learning, have been a number of cautions and objections raised. These objections can also be loosely categorized under four broad headings. So as not to overwhelm the rose with both fair and foul petals, I will list four key areas of objection to co-operative second language learning, in twinned alliterations, and then comment on them. Let me note that these concerns are critical ones for second language teachers, and their relatively brief treatment here should not suggest that these concerns can be treated quickly or easily. There has been some research bearing on these issues. Considerably more research including the testing of teaching training procedures and practical classroom techniques is a critical next order or business for cooperatively inclined second language educators.

Objections to co-operative second language learning practices critically turn on concerns regarding

Muddled Modelling,
Faulty Feedback,
Chaotic Classes,
Native Noise.

Muddled Modelling is the concern that second language learners are by definition imperfect in the language of study. Second language communication between learners is likely to involve interlanguage or non-language forms rather than native language norms. Students may pick up bad language habits by modelling muddled forms used by their cooperating peers.

Faulty Feedback is the concern that peers may tolerate imperfect language on the part of their peers or, worse, provide correction where unwarrented. Only native speaking teachers can provide flawless feedback.

Chaotic Classes is the concern that pair or group work is going to result in classes out of teacher control with resulting noise, confusion, and disciplinary problems. The hubbub of many group communicating is likely to seem chaotic to administrators and other teachers even if a cooperative learning leader feels that groups are working productively.

Native Noise is the concern that students, particularly in monolingual class situations, are likely to revert to their first language or engage in code-switching in cooperative communication situations, particularly if there exists a team competitive incentive or build-up of frustration with a communicative task.

All of these are legitimate concerns and are frequently felt if infrequently expressed by teachers who are being urged to cooperativize their classes. These concerns need to be addressed directly and at length. In this presentation I can only briefly touch on some of the evidence bearing on these issues.

Muddled Modelling. First, it should be noted that those urging use of cooperative learning methods in second language classes have typically held different views of what facilitates language learning from those of their predecessors in language pedagogy. That is, they put emphasis on comprehensible input, negotiation of meaning, and comprehensible output rather than on native speaker modelling as essential to language learning. Thus, they are less concerned with muddled modelling than the previous generation of language teachers would be. They, in fact, might see the muddling as providing an authentic stimulus for learners to negotiate meaning. Along these lines, there is evidence that group work leads to more total student talk (Slavin, 1983) and to more comprehensible input (Porter, 1983) than does teacher-centered class work. Second, there is research evidence that shows that "the speech of learners in the small groups was significantly greater in both quantity and quality than that of learners in the teacher-led discussions" (Long et al, 1976). There are more recent reports that show that students do not produce more errors in unsupervised settings such as group work and do not learn erroneous language from one another (Porter, 1983).

Faulty Feedback. Similar comments can be made on this issue as were directed to the first point above. To cooperative learning advocates, negotiation opportunities are of more concern than miscorrections. Varonis and Gass (1983) report more negotiation of both meaning and interaction in non-native dyads than in dyads with native speakers. As regards Faulty Feedback itself, Bruton and Samuda (1980) report that in their study of group problem solving discussion, learners hardly ever miscorrected each other. In an unpublished study testing the efficacy of peer feedback in the teaching of composition to college age Thai students, Jacobs (undated) reported that there was "relatively little miscorrection, and even less often were miscorrections adopted in the rewritten drafts."

Chaotic Classes. Kohl speaks for many teachers who have difficulty when asked "to suspend one's fear of chaos... The spectre of chaos haunts many teachers, probably because they don't believe in their own strength or ability to handle the power they assume" (Kohl, 1969). There is considerable evidence from Hawaii, Malaysia, Thailand and elsewhere that teachers can acquire the classroom management skills that allow them to operate in animated but nonchaotic group instructional settings. Commentary here comes mostly from teachers who have taught classes in which pair and group work was featured (eg Umrod, 1975).

However, successful management of cooperative classrooms involves mastery of new kinds of instructional skills which are not part of most teachers' repertoires. Acquisition of these skills is not necessarily quick or easy. Hawaii English Program teachers received seventy hours of in-service training before moving into team-taught HEP classes, and, in preparation for her reasonably short comparative study of whole class vs cooperative learning, Bejarano provided teachers in her study with thirty hours of pre-training in cooperative learning methods and, as well, provided follow-up in-class coaching.

There is also considerable evidence that teachers often return to more teacher-centered classroom styles when group learning project pressure wanes (Huberman and Miles, 1984). Closer examination of teacher role preparation appear to be critical next steps in this regard.

Native Noise. Do students use their native language in group communication activities and what effect does this have on their learning of the target language? Deen (1987) looked at this question is some detail in her study of students learning Dutch in cooperative learning and teacher-centered settings. Deen noted that Dutch was used more consistently in teacher-centered settings than in cooperative learning settings but that both the quality and quantity of student produced Dutch was greater in cooperative settings in teacher-centered settings. When students lapsed into English in cooperative settings it was "out of frustration with the task". Deen considers inhibition of native language use to be, in part, a question of successful task design which minimizes such frustration. She notes that Jigsaw use "might therefore be extremely effective for language learning because it gives students a chance to acquire the forms first and then creates a necessary condition for practice." Other research has shown that the frequency of task related talk, whether in the first or second language, was positively correlated with student gains in the second language (Cohen, 1985). Along a somewhat different line, I raised the question in a previous RELC Seminar as to whether classroom interaction should be encouraged to resemble authentic interaction in the community in which students might use the target language. In much of Southeast Asia, code-switching among bilinguals appears to be the norm rather than the exception. Should code-switching then be tolerated or encouraged in language classes in the region?

The above discussion does not resolve the WHY-NOTS that second language educators have raised and should raise in regards to proposals built around cooperative learning in language classes. It may suggest the state of current knowledge in regards to these areas of teacher concern and suggest some next general lines of research and development in support of cooperative learning.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

My thoughts on materials for cooperative learning have been imbedded in the discussion. Some summary comments might be useful. Materials in cooperative learning can be said to be of four types - manufactured, modelled, modified and mined.

Manufactured materials are those available as commercial products. Kagan (1987) describes several commercial packages including language-focused sets such as Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition. Alemany Press has developed and markets a number of materials for group-based learning of English as a second language.

Modelled materials are those put together by teachers following the design of commercial or experimental materials. Several teachers have sent me copies of dyadic minimal pair exercises they have constructed following the model developed in the Back and Forth book Adrian Palmer and I wrote.

Modified materials are those taken from non-language learning sources and modified for language learning purposes. Most of the Jigsaw materials have been constructed by cutting up topical materials into sub-topical blocks. Thus, a piece on advertising might be cut up into individual content blocks dealing with newspaper, magazine, radio, television and billboard advertising. Individual group members would become experts on these sub-topics and report their information back to their group.

Mined materials are those from content areas which are used "as is" in a cooperative language study mode. Most of the Dansereau cooperative reading experiments, for example, use content materials mined from how-to manuals (eg "How to Fix a Lawn Mower").

Each of these have pros and cons associated with their use but all are worth consideration by language teachers interested in cooperative learning.

My own experience is that teachers feel most comfortable with cooperative learning materials which are familiar in content and purpose and which minimize classroom management problems. This view of educational innovation has been called "The Principle of Least Change". It was following this principle that Palmer and I decided to use dyadic minimal pair exercises and dialog puzzles in our cooperative learning materials. Minimal pair and dialog drills are familiar to language teachers in content and purpose and two person groups are the easiest groups to organize and oversee from a classroom management point of view. We feel these are good "least change" activities for teachers wishing to test the waters of cooperative learning.

Finally, we have been told that student achievement gains are contingent upon incentive structuring rather than upon task structuring (Slavin, 1984). This says that students work best with other students, cooperate best, communicate most effectively, persist most conscientiously when their grades depend in part on the learning success of their cooperating partners. This notion of cross-student grade averaging probably strikes closer to the bone of contemporary educational practice, especially in Southeast Asia, than does any other suggestion for educational change. I think it is this premise and its possible interpretations that needs to be most thoroughly explored by educators such as yourselves.

Well, I have brought my small part of the jigsaw to the group. I'll be interested to see yours.

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATIVE TASK DESIGN[1]

David Nunan

1 INTRODUCTION

Although the idea of using the learning 'task' as a basic planning tool is not a new one in the general educational field, it is a relatively recent arrival on the language teaching scene, and there remains some confusion about the place of tasks within the curriculum. In particular, there is debate as to whether 'task' is a concept which properly belongs to syllabus design or methodology. In this paper, I shall argue that the separation of syllabus design and methodology becomes increasingly problematical with the development of communicative language teaching.

Looked at in traditional terms, (ie seeing syllabus design as being primarily concerned with the specification of what learners will learn, and methodology as being mainly concerned with specifying how learners will learn) the design of learning tasks is part of methodology. However, if we see curriculum planning as an integrated set of processes involving, among other things, the specification of both what and how, then the argument over whether the design and development of tasks belongs to syllabus design or to methodology becomes unimportant.

For much of this century, language teaching has been preoccupied with methods. In some extreme cases this has led to a search for the 'right method'. Methods tend to exist as package deals, each with its own set of principles and operating procedures, each with its own set of preferred learning tasks. I do not accept that there is such a thing as the 'right method', and I do not intent to assign different tasks to different methodological pigeon-holes. Rather, I shall look at tasks in terms of their goals, the input data, linguistic or otherwise, on which they are based, the activities derived from the input, and the roles and settings implied by different tasks for teachers and learners.

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[1] This paper is based on material to be published in Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

2 'TASK' DEFINED

In turning to the concept of 'task', the first thing we need to do is decide just what we mean the by term itself. A review of the literature reveals a range of definitions. I shall look at three of these, the first of which is from Long.

> [A task is] a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward. Thus, examples of tasks include painting a fence, dressing a child, filling out a form, buying a pair of shoes, making an airline reservation, borrowing a library book, taking a driving test, typing a letter, weighing a patent, sorting letters, taking a hotel reservation, writing a cheque, finding a street destination and helping someone across a road. In other words, by "task" is meant the hundred and one things people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between.
>
> (Long, 1985: 89)

We can see that Long offers a non-linguistic definition. It is, in fact, the sort of characterisation which might be offered by a learner, if asked why he/she is learning the language.

Richards, Platt and Weber (1986) offer the following definition:

> an activity or action which is carried out as the result of processing or understanding language (ie as a response). For example, drawing a map while listening to a tape, listening to an instruction and performing a command, may be referred to as tasks. Tasks may or may not involve the production of language. A task usually requires the teacher to specify what will be regarded as successful completion of the task. The use of a variety of different kinds of tasks in language teaching is said to make language teaching more communicative ... since it provides a purpose for a classroom activity which goes beyond the practice of language for its own sake.
>
> (Richards; Platt and Weber, 1985: 289)

Here, in contrast with Long, the authors offer a pedagogical definition. In other words, tasks are defined in terms of classroom undertakings.

The final definition is from Breen:

> ... any structured language learning endeavour which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of out comes for those who undertake the task. 'Task' is therefore assumed to refer to a range of workplans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning - from the simple and brief exercise type, to more complex and

lengthy activities such as group problem-solving or simulations and decision making.

(Breen, 1987: 23)

All of these definitions have a common characteristic. They all suggest that tasks are concerned with communicative language use. In other words, they refer to undertakings in which the learners comprehend, produce and interact in the target language in contexts in which they are focussed on meaning rather than form.

In this paper, I shall define the communicative task as a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right.

As I have already suggested, minimally, a task will consist of some input and one or more related activities. Input refers to the data that learners are to work on. It may be linguistic or non-linguistic, while 'activity' refers to the work that the learner will do on the task. In addition, tasks will have, either explicitly or implicitly (and in most cases these are implicit) goals, roles of teachers and learners and a setting. These components are set out in Figure 1.

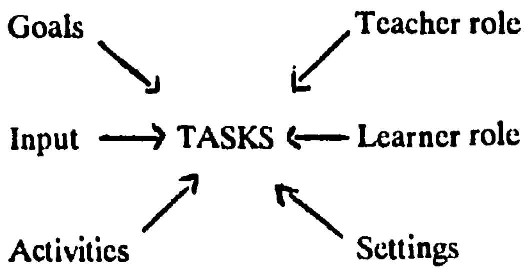

Figure 1: A framework for analysing communicative tasks

In order to exemplify these components in action, I should like to look at a communicative task from a commercially published coursebook. The example I have selected is taken from Maley and Moulding (1986).

Pre-listening

1 a) Look carefully at this questionnaire.

What are your sleeping habits?

A short questionnaire to discover your sleeping habits

1 How much time do you spend on bedmaking?
a) 5 mins a day
b) 5 mins every other day
c) 5 mins a week

2 Before you go to bed do you
a) pull open the downstairs curtains
b) read
c) eat

3 After a night's sleep do you find that the covers
a) are as tidy as when you went to bed
b) are all over the floor
c) are in a heap in the middle of the bed

4 If you have trouble getting to sleep do you
a) count sheep
b) toss and turn
c) lie still and concentrate

5 If you wake up in the middle of the night is it because
a) you remember something you ought to have done
b) you're cold
c) you're hungry

6 If you hear a bump in the night do you
a) get up cautiously and investigate quietly
b) charge around the house with a weapon
c) turn over and go back to sleep

7 Do other people complain about your sleeping habits?
a) never
b) frequently
c) sometimes

8 When you have dreams are they mostly
a) dreams about work
b) nightmares
c) sweet dreams

Make sure that you understand all the words in it and that you know how they are pronounced.

b) Now, working in pairs, one of you should interview the other using this questionnaire. If there is time, change roles (that is, the interviewer should now be interviewed).

(Maley and Moulding 1981 : 3)

The various components of the task are set out in Table 1.

Table 1

Examples of communicative task components

COMPONENT	EXAMPLE
GOAL	Exchanging personal information
INPUT	Questionnaire on sleeping habits
ACTIVITY	(i) Reading questionnaire (ii) Asking and answering questions about sleeping habits
TEACHER ROLE	Monitor and facilitator
LEARNER ROLE	Conversational partner
SETTING	Classroom/pair work

3 TASKS AND COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

The ascent of the 'task' as a basic planning tool in language curriculum design has come about as a result of changing attitudes towards language and language learning. These changes have manifested themselves in the cluster of approaches to language learning and teaching known as communicative language teaching or CLT. Central to CLT is the belief that learning a language involves more than simply learning grammatical patterns and rules. One also needs to be able to put one's knowledge to communicative effect.

With the development of CLT, the distinction between syllabus design and methodology (ie between specifying the 'what' and the 'how' of the curriculum) has become blurred. There is now a much closer relationship between the end of the curriculum (the capacity to communicate with others in the target language) and the means (classroom tasks, activities and exercises to develop this capacity). It is now beginning to be accepted that the syllabus designer needs to take both the ends and the means into consideration.

An influential figure in this move to give greater prominence to communicative means, rather than to linguistic ends is Breen. He has suggested that, rather than focusing on the end point in the learning process, there should be an attempt to:

> ... prioritize the route itself; a focusing upon the means towards the learning of a new language. Here the designer would give priority to the changing process of learning and the potential of the classroom - to the psychological and social resources applied to a new language by learners in the classroom context.
> ... a greater concern with capacity for communication rather than repertoire of communication, with the activity of learning a language viewed as important as the language itself, and with a focus upon means rather than predetermined objectives, all indicate priority of process over content.
>
> (Breen, 1984: 52-53)

4 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING TASKS

'Curriculum' is a large and complex concept which has been variously defined by different players in the educational drama. In some (principally American) contexts, it is used synonomously with 'syllabus', and is often intended to refer to a course of study. Thus, we have the 'physics curriculum' and the 'history curriculum'. In the present context, I shall use 'syllabus' to refer to the selecting and grading of content, and 'curriculum' more widely to refer to all aspects of planning, implementing, evaluating and managing an educational programme (Nunan, 1988b). Such a characterisation is in harmony with Richards, Platt and Weber, who define 'curriculum as an educational programme which sets out:

(a) the educational purpose of the programme (the ends)
(b) the content, teaching procedures and learning experiences which will be necessary to achieve this purpose (the means)
(c) some means for assessing whether or not the educational ends have been achieved.

(Richards; Platt and Weber, 1986: 70)

In general education, systematic curriculum development emerged in the forties. One of the most influential figures of the day was Tyler who set out a curriculum model orchestrated around four key elements as set out in Figure 2.

Goals ---> Content ---> Experiences (Tasks) ---> Evaluation

Figure 2: A linear model of curriculum development

This model was referred to as the linear or 'ballistic' model as it began with a specification of goals and objectives, moved on to specify content, thence to learning experiences and finally to evaluation. The outcomes of evaluation were then fed back into the goal specification phase.

In a communicative curriculum, in which means and ends are bound more tightly together, we might have a model such as the one set out in Figure 3, in which content and learning experiences (including communicative tasks) are developed in tandem, and in which tasks can suggest content and vice versa.

-----> Content

Goals $\uparrow\downarrow$ ----> Evaluation

-----> Tasks

Figure 3: An integrated approach to curriculum development

Such an approach might be operationalised as follows:

Table 2

Steps in an integrated approach to curriculum development

STEP	PROCEDURE	EXAMPLE
1	Identify target group	L2 learners who want to study at university
2	Establish goals	Read academic texts Take part in tutorial discussions Take lecture notes Write formal essay
3	Select input data	Academic texts
4	Consult syllabus checklist	Grammar Vocabulary
5	Select activity	Transform input data by completing a table
6	Assess leaners and evaluate programme	

Thus far, I have typified the curriuclum process from the perspective of the curriculum specialist. There is some evidence that those more closely connected to the day-to-day work of the classroom such as teachers and also possibly materials writers are more likely to focus more closely on tasks, and take these as their point of departure when planning their programmes and developing materials. This has been shown to be the case for language teachers (Nunan, 1987) as well as for content teachers (Shavelson and Stern, 1981).

This alternative approach is represented in Figure 4.

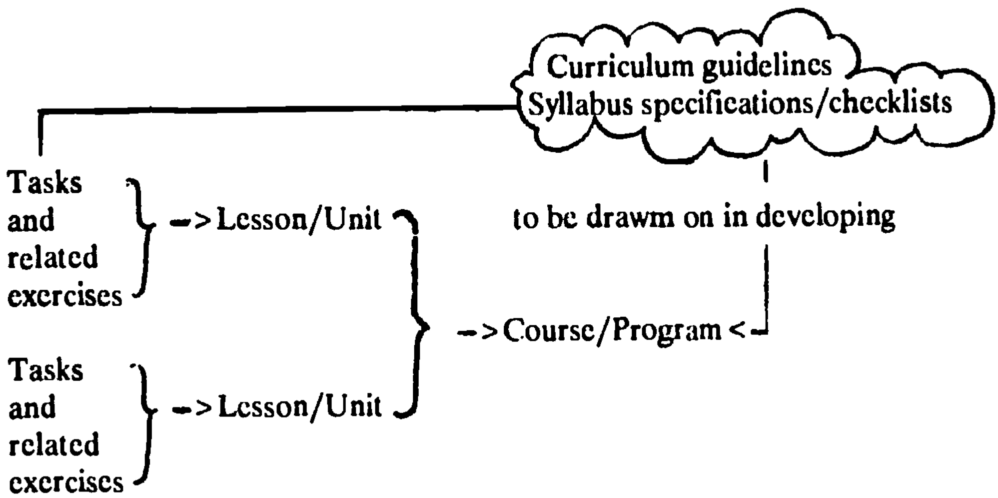

Figure 4: Curriculum planning for the classroom teacher

What I am suggesting here is that, from the perspective of the communicative classroom teacher, and also possibly for the materials developer, planning will proceed from a series of tasks along with attendant exercises such as grammar practice drills and so on. Curriculum documents and syllabus guidelines will act as a resource to be drawn on as necessary rather than a rigid set of specifications to be worked through in a linear fashion.

5 TASK RATIONALE

Classroom tasks are generally justified or rationalised in either 'real-world' or 'pedagogical' terms. Tasks with a real-world rationale require learners to approximate, in class, in the sorts of behaviours required of them in the real-world. Tasks with a pedagogic rationale, on the other hand, require learners to do things in class which they would never be called upon to perform in the world outside the classroom. As they cannot be justified on the grounds that they are enabling learners to rehearse real-world behaviours, they must have an alternative rationale. This usually takes a psycholinguistic form along the lines of: "well, although the learners are engaged in which they are unlikely to perform outside the classroom, the tasks are stimulating internal processes of acquisition.

Communicative classroom tasks

Rationale:	Real-world	versus	Pedagogic
	↓		↓
Focus :	Rehearsal		Psycholinguistic
	↓		↓
Reference	Needs analysis		SLA theory/research

Figure 5: The real-world/pedagogic distinction

An example of a communicative tasks with a real-world rationale might be:

The learner will listen to a weather forecast and decide whether or not to take an umbrella/sweater to work.

A task with a pedagogic rationale might be:

The learner will listen to an aural text describing a family and complete a family tree.

In actual fact, the real-world/pedagogic distinction represents a continuum rather than discrete categories. In other words, tasks will or will not be more or less likely to be occur in the real world.

Recently, a number of classroom researchers have conducted some interesting investigations into the effects of pedagogic tasks on language. In an early study, Long et al. (1976) found that small group work prompted students to use a greater range of language functions than whole-class activities. Doughty and Pica (1986) found that there was more negotiation of meaning in activities in which the exchange of information was essential (rather than optional) for the successful completion of the activity, Duff (1986) discovered that problem-solving tasks prompted more interactive language than debating tasks. Varonis and Gass (1983) found that there was more modified interaction in small groups in which the learners were from different language backgrounds and proficiency levels.

6 EVALUATING TASKS

In this section I set out a list of questions which can act as a guide in the evaluation of tasks.

The list of questions can be used in a variety of ways. You will not necessarily need or want to answer all questions in task evaluation. I would suggest that at particular times (when, for example, you are trying out a new task for the first time, or using a tasks which is familiar to you but not to your students) that you record the lesson in which the task is introduced on audio or videotape and use this to aid your reflection as you evaluate the task. An alternative would be to invite a colleague to observe your class and complete the evaluation for you.

Table 2

A checklist for evaluating communicative tasks

COMPONENT	QUESTIONS
Goals and rationale	- To what extent is the goal or goals of the task obvious (a) to you (b) your students? - Is the task appropriate to the learners' proficiency level? - To what extent does the task reflect a real-world or pedagogic rationale? Is this appropriate? - Does the task encourage learners to apply classroom learning to the real world? - What beliefs about the nature of language and learning are inherent in the task? - Is the task likely to be interesting and motivating to the students?
Input	- What form does the input take? - Is it authentic? - If not, are they appropriate to the goal of the task?
Activities	- Are the activities appropriate to the communicative goals of the task? - If not, can they be modified to make them more appropriate?

- Is the task designed to stimulate students to use bottom-up or top-down processing skills?
- Is there an information gap or problem which might prompt a negotiation of meaning?
- Are the activities appropriate to the input data?
- Are the activities designed in a way which will allow learners to communicate and cooperate in groups?

Roles and settings

- What learner and teacher roles are inherent in the task?
- Are they appropriate?
- What levels of complexity are there in the classroom organisation implicit in the task?
- Is the setting confined to the classroom?

Implementation

- Does the task actually engage the learners' interests?
- Do the activities prompt genuine communicate interaction among students?
- To what extent are learners encouraged to negotiate meaning?
- Does anything unexpected occur as the task is being carried out?
- What type of language is actually stimulated by the task?
- Is this different from what might have been predicted?

Grading and integration

- Is the task at the appropriate level of difficulty for the students?
- If not, is there any way in which the task might be modified in order to make it either easier or more challenging?
- Is the task so structured that it can be undertaken at different levels of difficulty?
- What are the principles upon which the tasks are sequenced?
- Do tasks exhibit the 'task continuity' principle?
- Are a range of macroskills integrated into the sequence of tasks?

	- If not, can you think of ways in which they might be integrated? - At the level of the unit or lesson, are communicative tasks integrated with other activities and exer cises designed to provide learners with mastery of the linguistic system? - If not, are there ways in which such activities might be introduced? - Do the tasks incorporate exercises in learning -how-to-learn? - If not, are there ways in which such exercises might be introduced?
Assessment and evaluation	- What means exist for the teacher to determine how successfully the learners have performed? - Does the task have built into some means whereby learners might judge how well they have performed? - Is the task realistic in terms of the resources and teacher- expertise it demands?

7 CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have considered principles of communicative task design. The 'task' has been defined as a piece of classroom work which has a sense of completeness in its own right and which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on meaning rather than form.

We have looked at the genesis of 'tasks' in communicative language teaching, and have looked at the relationship of the task to other elements in the language curriculum. We have also seen that tasks will be developed and rationalised, either in real-world or pedagogic terms. Finally, we have established a set of criteria for task evaluation.

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TEACHING SPOKEN ENGLISH IN THE NON-NATIVE CONTEXT: CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE MATERIALS WRITER

Mary W J Tay

1 INTRODUCTION

The starting point of this paper is the conviction that in the arduous task of producing suitable instructional materials for language learning, the materials developer, the syllabus designer, the teacher-trainer and the language specialist all have a role to play. Of course it is on the materials developer that the greatest responsibility falls but insights from others involved in the process of language teaching and learning should lead to an awareness of some of the broader issues to be kept in mind in the production of materials.

It is primarily from the viewpoint of the language specialist that this paper is written. There are three main sections in the paper. The first section attempts a quick review of the current situation in Singapore with regard to the teaching of Spoken English. The aims and rationale for teaching Spoken English will be examined with reference to (a) the English Syllabus (both Primary and Secondary levels) for the New Education System, (b) a selection of the main English language textbooks currently used in the secondary schools and (c) other English language-related publications such as TELL, published by the English Unit, Curriculum Branch, Schools Division of the Ministry of Education. While the review will highlight some of the strengths of the current syllabus and textbooks, it will also identify gaps in the teaching of Spoken English. The second section of the paper will go on to argue for the consideration of three broader issues in the production of materials for Spoken English, ie **intelligibility**, **interaction**, and **integration**. The third and final section will evolve a set of guidelines for instructional materials on spoken English.

2 REVIEW OF THE TEACHING OF SPOKEN ENGLISH IN SINGAPORE TODAY

Although Spoken English is not taught as such, the importance of Oral English is given due recognition in the English syllabus for the New Education System at both primary (henceforth PES) and secondary levels (henceforth

SES). In the statement of the general aims of teaching English Language in the primary school, the four basic skills are listed, with listening and speaking preceding reading and writing. The priority of the oral approach is also emphasized: 'Pupils must have a good oral mastery of the language items before they proceed to apply them in reading and writing' (PES:2) and the integration of reading and writing with oral English is advocated (PES:3).

In the syllabus published by the Ministry of Education, it is noteworthy that at the primary level, the objectives for listening are listed separately from speaking but at the secondary level the aural/oral skills are grouped together. Recently, the English Unit of the Ministry of Education has produced a separate forty-page document detailing listening comprehension guidelines for secondary school (normal, express and special courses). This is a vast improvement on the earlier secondary school English syllabus in that it incorporates the three I's that I shall be talking about in section two of my paper. There is provision for interaction-based activities, integration with the other major language skills, ie speaking, reading and writing, and concern for intelligibility as reflected in the recommended use of authentic materials. However, as these guidelines are still very new, mention must be made of the earlier syllabus which, presumably, helped to shape many of the current textbooks on English.

The listening skills to be taught at the primary level are mainly the ability to follow oral instructions and the ability to comprehend a short talk on subjects of general interest. At the lower primary levels, the first listening skill to be taught is the ability to recognise and discriminate the letter names and sounds of English. The speaking skills to be taught at the primary level, quite understandably, appear to be influenced by the requirements of the Oral English component of the English paper in the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE). The ability to read aloud passages of about one hundred words with correct pronunciation, proper phrasing, stress and intonation, is listed first, followed by the ability to respond to questions in correct English, and the ability to state facts, give simple explanations and express opinions on common everyday matters as well as things of special interest to pupils

At the secondary level, the aural/oral skills are stated as follows: the ability to understand English spoken in class and in everyday situations the pupil is likely to experience, the ability to speak so that he is easily understood by people he is likely to encounter, the ability to understand and use orally the more common speech conventions of social English, the ability to carry out a conversation on a topic appropriate to his maturity and interests, and the ability to read aloud with an acceptable degree of fluency and accuracy.

The main weaknesses in the primary syllabus may be said to be: the lack of integration between the four skills, the treatment of listening as something purely passive rather than interactional, and the preoccupation with correctness in speaking. If listening and speaking skills are to be of any use for the learner of

English, there must be greater emphasis on fluency and intelligibility. After all, is it not the case that only examiners and teachers of English listen to speech in order to judge 'correctness of language'? The vast majority of users of English listen and speak in order to communicate ideas, attitudes and feelings and not to speak correct English. Of course correctness is important firstly because below a certain 'threshold' level, speech which is marred by too many incorrect forms, becomes quite unintelligible, and secondly, because of the premium put on correctness by our society in terms of prestige and social acceptability.

The aural/oral skills listed in the secondary school syllabus reflect a greater awareness of considerations beyond correctness. The merging of aural with oral skills is itself an improvement in the sense that except in monologues, nobody can communicate effectively without being a good listener. On the other hand, nobody listens without interacting verbally or non-verbally in some way. Another strength of the secondary school syllabus is the pragmatism reflected in such expressions as 'situations the pupil is likely to encounter', 'easily understood by people he is likely to encounter', 'a topic appropriate to his maturity and interests'.

Any review of the teaching of Spoken English in Singapore schools today cannot stop at a critique of the syllabus but must also survey the main English language textbooks currently used in the schools. Constraints of space and time will allow only a cursory review of one set of materials - CLUE, the acronym for COURSE IN LEARNING AND USING ENGLISH, a series of Secondary English Course teaching materials produced by the Curriculum Development Institute of Singapore (CDIS). However, it is hoped that by highlighting the present strengths and weaknesses in the materials used for the teaching of Oral English in the secondary schools, the relevance of the issues discussed in the next section of my paper will become clearer.

The main strengths of the CLUE materials may be said to be:

1. It is a multi-media course which makes good use of cassette tapes and video cassette tapes, picture cue cards and letter cards.

2. It aims to integrate the four skills of listening speaking, reading and writing in language learning (although the integration of listening and speaking with the other skills is not too successful).

3. Language is taught as a means of communication in meaningful contexts and pupils are given training and practice in a wide range of communicative language skills.

4. It attempts to use authentic materials.

5. It attempts to teach English as language across the curriculum, thereby recognising the need to develop in the pupils the ability to use English in the other subjects in the school curriculum.

In spite of these considerable strengths, however, a number of noticeable weaknesses in the materials used for the teaching of spoken English must be mentioned:

1. Pronunciation is taught separately from everything else in each unit. (This is true of the Secondary 1 and 2 materials only: in Secondary 3 and 4, there is no separate section on pronunciation). It appears first in each unit but there is very little integration with the other skills of reading and writing.

2. There is too much concern with correctness in pronunciation compared to the equally important (if not more important) considerations of intelligibility and overall fluency.

3. The only visible gradation in the materials is the length of the words and sentences used. This could create the impression that there is little sense of progression. The same items are covered from Secondary 1 to Secondary 4: vowels, diphthongs, consonants and consonant clusters, stress and intonation.

4. The priority given to the items of pronunciation does not reflect their relative importance for considerations of intelligibility. It has been suggested (Nihalani, 1983, 1988; Tay, 1986) that suprasegmental features such as intonation, sentence stress and word stress play a far more important part than segmentals such as consonants, vowels and diphthongs. However, the suprasegmental features are covered only in sixteen out of forty units. There are only four units on the very important area of intonation, and the exercises on stress are not extensive enough to make an impact on the student.

5. The way that pronunciation is presented in the materials could do with considerable improvement. Most of the pronunciation drills take the form of isolated words and sentences taken out of context. Hardly anything is done to systemically teach discourse, or anything above the sentence level. It is true that there is much scope for oral production but everything seems to be left to the classroom teacher who, given the current emphasis on success in examinations, is likely to be listening to the student's oral production only for correctness.

Before moving on to consider broader issues in the production of materials for spoken English, brief mention must be made of English-language related publications such as TELL, an acronym for Teaching of English Language and Literature. In the January 1987 issue (vol 3 no. 1), there is an excellent section on developing oral competence by Andrew Watts, which I would highly recommend to the language teacher because of the many practical ideas contained in it. Two very important factors: integration with all EL instruction, and engaging the pupils actively in meaningful language interaction are mentioned in the editorial.

3 ISSUES IN THE PRODUCTION OF MATERIALS FOR SPOKEN ENGLISH

The gaps found in the teaching of Spoken English may be said to be the three I's: intelligibility, interaction, and integration.

One of the arguments often used to justify teaching RP to Singaporean speakers of English is that of INTELLIGIBILITY. It is often assumed that unless Singaporeans speak RP, they cannot be understood. This is an assumption which has never been backed up by empirical research. On the contrary, it has been established (Tay, 1986) that the assumption is invalid. One hundred British listeners living in the London area and who had never been to Singapore were asked to listen to a short stretch of spontaneous speech by ten Singaporean speakers and to rate their intelligibility. The speakers were all second year undergraduates reading English Language at the National University of Singapore. Of the ten speakers, the highest score was 89.1% and the lowest 56.4%. Five speakers scored more than 80% and two more than 70%. The speaker who scored highest certainly did not speak RP, but was educated in Singapore and had never been out of Singapore.

For our present purposes, perhaps the most important finding from the project is that contrary to popular belief, 'incorrect' pronunciation and grammar did not seriously impair intelligibility. Of course there were instances of when the listeners heard 'filial' as 'feel ill', 'pork ribs' as 'pot ribs', 'bangle' as 'banger' and 'accept' as 'a set' because that was what the speakers sounded like to the listeners. But there were not many instances of these. What is perhaps even more surprising is that the use of the 'wrong' tense did not bother the listeners at all. Thus, there were cases where the speaker said 'return', and 'retain' instead of 'returned' and 'retained' but all the listeners heard them as 'returned' and 'retained' anyway.

If 'incorrect' pronunciation and grammar do not seriously impair intelligibility, what does? The major obstacles identified in the project were: (1) discourse strategies, (2) vocabulary items, and (3) the mixing of styles and registers. As examples of (1), take the particles <u>ah</u> (used as a topic marker) and <u>know</u> and <u>see</u> (used as rapport markers). None of the British listeners ever heard these even after their presence was pointed out to them but all the Singaporean listeners did. As examples of (2), there were unfamiliar lexical items or collocations such as 'joss sticks', 'filial piety' and 'snap' photographs. As an example of (3) there was the use of a very colloquial word 'hubby' instead of 'husband' alongside a very formal one ('deceased' for 'dead') in an otherwise semi-formal context. These were what presented problems of intelligibility to the British but not the Singaporean listeners. If one of our aims in teaching spoken English to a certain group of students is to help them speak intelligibly on an international scale then these areas should be considered by materials developers of Spoken English.

The second major issue in the production of materials for Spoken English is INTERACTION. By interaction is meant the communication that takes place between the various participants in a discourse: how they express themselves, react (verbally and non-verbally) to what has been said, contradict or support the views of the other participants, express their feelings or attitudes to whatever is said and so on. This is a much neglected aspect of the teaching of Spoken English, perhaps because the oral English examination at the end of Secondary 4 stresses largely non-interactive activities such as reading aloud, answering questions on a passage using complete sentences, and taking part in an informal conversation in which the speaker controls most of the subject matter and the turn-taking procedures. These activities may well 'equip' a student to use English orally but they certainly do not 'enable' him to be an effective, interesting, dynamic speaker in most speaking situations which are unstructured and unpredictable.

In general, it may be said that the current syllabuses and textbooks do provide students with opportunity to practise what has been aptly described as 'interactional short turns'. (Brown and Yule, 1983: 28). However, students are taught to function only in situations with little 'communicative stress' (Brown and Yule, 1983: 28) where typically, they take part in conversation simply by responding to questions that somebody also asks them or reacting to somesone else's topic. Such aims are not broad enough to produce an effective speaker.

In addition to teaching 'interactional short turns', students should be taught how to handle 'longer transactional turns'. A good speaker is not just one who can respond to what was said in correct pronunciation and grammar and in complete sentences. He or.she must be able to interact with other speakers by either building upon what was said previously, demolishing it, or sidetracking it in order to introduce a new topic. Preparing short informal talks on certain topics and answering questions from the rest of the class (SES:44) does go some way towards helping students handle larger 'chunks' of speech above the level of the sentence. But unfortunately it provides no practice for unprepared, unstructured, unpredictable interactions. As most speech in the real world have these characteristics, the importance of preparing students to handle 'communicative stress' (no script, no prior preparation, no previous coaching in any form) cannot be over-emphasized. Role play, debates, or brainstorming sessions on a topic given on the spot should all help towards developing the type of oral fluency described above.

It is, of course, much easier for the teacher to stay within the safe confines of 'correct' pronunciation and grammar and merely correct mispronunciations and mistakes in grammar but if the task of the teacher of spoken English is to help the student communicate, then it can only be done by giving the students practice in communicating under 'communicative stress'. This is probably best done by taping (either on audio-tape or video-tape) peer-group interaction within the classroom, analysing them for problems in communication, and then discussing strategies with the students. This means moving away from the large-class, teacher-dominated method where the materials, or the teacher, constantly take the initiative and the student is simply required to respond. It also means that the teacher must refrain from interrupting the conversation to correct mistakes in pronunciation or grammar, or even to ask the student to clarify a point. After all, if the aim is to develop fluency in 'self expression' in the spoken language, there is nothing more disconcerting than being constantly corrected or to be told that what has been said is not clear when the real listeners, the peer group in this case, understand what was said perfectly well.

The third and last issue that I wish to discuss is that of INTEGRATION. It is now generally acknowledged that spoken language is different from written language (Halliday, 1985), that students should be taught to talk, not like books, in complete written-language sentences, but spontaneously in short, phrase-sized chunks (Brown and Yule, 1983). These new areas of awareness have tended to detract somewhat from the importance of integrating spoken English with the rest of the English curriculum and the rest of the school curriculum. It is this integration that I now wish to discuss.

The present syllabus and textbooks do recognise the importance of integrating speech with writing. Integration is thought of mainly in terms of sequential order-ing, such as discussing ideas for a composition orally before putting them down in writing. This is of course important. But equally important is integration in the sense that what is learnt in spoken English must affect written English. One of the current problems in the teaching of pronunciation is that most of the exercises are artificial, consisting of isolated words or sentences. If an integrated approach is kept in mind, the teaching of larger units of speech such as rhythm, sentence stress and intonation would be given top priority instead of individual consonants, vowels and diphthongs. Intonation can be related to grammar. For example, the contrast between restrictive and non-restrictive clauses can be taught not only in terms of the written language as indicated by commas, but also in terms of the spoken language as indicated by tone groups. Examples of such sentences are:

My brother, who is a doctor, has gone to Edinburgh.

Speech should also be integrated with writing because it is well established that 'errors' in speech can be related to 'errors' in writing. Thus, the omission of 's' at the end of an English word is much more serious than, for example, the confusion between 'tanks' and 'thanks' in pronunciation. While the latter is made clear from the context and does not lead to misspellings, the former, because of its high functional load, often leads to serious errors in writing as well. For example, when attached to a noun, it could make the noun plural (task vs tasks) and plurality in turn determines the choice of the verb in a sentence (make vs makes). It could also make a noun a possessive (John vs John's). Attached to a noun or pronoun, it could indicate that it is short for is as in 'He's coming' or has as in 'He's gone home. Attached to a verb, it indicates that the doer of the action is the third person singular. If correctness is important in speech, it is this type of correctness, the type which affects the written form, that should be given priority in teaching.

Translating these broader issues of intelligibility, interaction and integration into guidelines for the materials developer is not an easy task, but in the last section of my paper I shall try to do this.

4 GUIDELINES FOR THE WRITING OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ON SPOKEN ENGLISH

One way of helping the materials developer to focus on communication rather than correctness is to try and answer the well-known sociolinguistic question: WHO speaks WHAT to WHOM, WHERE and WHY? Under each question, a number of points are discussed. These are not meant to be exhaustive but are intended merely as ideas to stimulate further thought and discussion about instructional materials for spoken English.

(a) Who is the Speaker?

(i) Type of accent: the model of pronunciation for the speaker should be one that is intelligible to the people he will be interacting with; at the same time, it should enable him to identify himself with them culturally. Both these considerations would argue for a model based on educated Singaporean English rather than RP, for example.

(ii) Age: a very young child needs only to be intelligible to his parents and teachers but older people need to be intelligible to a much wider range of listeners. The content of what the speaker is saying as evident by the vocabulary and discourse patterns used should also reflect the degree and type of maturity suitable to his age.

(iii) Level of education: in both the substance and expression of his speech, a speaker should reflect the level of education he is at. Thus, a secondary three student should not sound like a primary three student in the way he expresses himself, even if he is only what is known as an 'EL2 student'.

(b) What is the Subject Matter?

(i) Type of interaction: short conversations require only short interactive turns but longer stretches of discourse, eg telling ^ story or presenting an argument require longer transactional turns which the student should be adequately prepared for. The student cannot 'express himself' adequately if he is not given enough practice and if he is not given sufficient guidance from the teacher about what constitutes good interaction.

(ii) Genre: specialist lectures will be intelligible only to those with an adequate grasp of the subject matter. Hence, the importance of having specialists vet instructional materials in subject areas that the language teacher is not familiar with. Hence also the importance of familiarising students with the crucial terminology needed to follow the lectures.

(iii) Amount of background knowledge which is assumed to be shared or inferrable: this will determine whether what is said is intelligible. For example, conversations which require a background knowledge of specifically British characteristics such as trains with corridors are poor tests for Singaporean speakers of English unless these speakers intend to live in England for an extended period of time.

(c) To Whom is the Speaker Speaking?

(i) Type of accent: In general, if the speaker and listener have similar accents, intelligibility is increased. One of the aims of materials for spoken English should be to train students to vary their accent according to who the audience is. Good speakers invariably do it, perhaps subconsciously.

(ii) Peer group or superior: the problem with teacher-centred interaction is that it forms only part of the child's real-world experience. Another disadvantage is that when the teacher dominates or even merely guides the discussion, the student has little chance to take the initiative. This is true also of peer group interaction where one student is much better than the other. While a student should know how to interact with their elders and betters, they should also be taught the rules of peer group interaction such as rules of politeness, turn-taking and so on.

(iii) Level of proficiency: often speakers are taught to speak so slowly and clearly that naturalness is lost. There is a type of English, popular with teachers, especially those who teach beginners, that some people feel is suitable only for the foreigner, the stupid and the deaf. To treat all listeners as one of these is highly offensive and great pains need to be taken to develop in the students the type of speech which will be pleasant, easy to understand, but not condescending in attitude.

(d) Where is the Speaker?

(i) Place: a good speaker knows how to adapt his speech according to where he is speaking. One of the problems with all the subjects of my intelligibility project was that even though they were told that they were recording for British listeners, they made no attempt to gloss unfamiliar lexical items like 'filial piety', or acronyms like 'CHIJ' and 'NUS'. Students should be made aware of what aspects of their speech, especially vocabulary and discourse, present difficulties to non-Singaporeans and to gloss these in their interaction.

(ii) Acoustics of the place: the need to train students to be able to interact well under less-than-ideal acoustic conditions is very important. Being able to communicate on a very poor telephone line, knowing how to project one's voice when addressing a noisy crowd are all part of the necessary training which the teacher should provide the student with. Those who can understand English only when spoken very slowly, clearly, and in perfect acoustic conditions will be quite unable to cope with interaction in the real world.

(iii) Size of the room: voice training, an essential component of training in Spoken English, should also teach the students how to control their voice according to whether they are in a small or a large room. How often have we met people whose pronunciation cannot be faulted but who 'lose' their audience, for example, by talking to two people in a small room as if there were 500 people in a big room (and hence sound offensive because they seem to be shouting at them) and addressing a large crowd as if they were whispering the most closely guarded secrets.

(e) What is the Purpose of What the Speaker is Saying?

Constant practice and drilling with speech that serves no purpose except to pass examinations will ensure a good grade in the exams but will not prepare students to communicate in English in the real world. Some of the most common purposes of speech are listed below:

(i) To give instructions: these should be clear and are best supplemented by visual means, such as maps, charts and diagrams. Trying to give instructions only aurally is unrealistic, especially when they are complex, such as complex road directions. Even a shopping list is probably best used when written down.

(ii) To inform: this would vary, depending on whether the listener is expected to grasp just the main idea, or also to pay attention to specific details. Again, like in (a) above, a multi-media is best.

(iii) To convey a certain attitude or feeling: the purpose of quite a lot of oral communication is not so much to convey information, as in (a) and (b) above, but to convey a certain attitude or feeling about a topic. Students badly need training in expressing their opinions clearly without sounding opinionated, to disagree without sounding disagreeable, and to show disapproval with out being unpleasant. This much neglected area in oral communication is best taught when students are shown how differences in intonation can convey different attitudes. Non-linguistic features such as gestures and facial expressions also help in conveying attitudes.

5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I should just like to stress three points which I have touched on in this paper. First, materials designed for teaching Spoken English must be set within a much broader framework than that of pronunciation. This is because pronunciation hampers intelligibility far less than discourse strategies and registers. Second, there is the need to provide students with ample opportunities to interact freely and with initiative, instead of being asked only to respond to teachers' questions. Third, the materials used to teach Spoken English should be well integrated with other skills of listening, reading and writing.

I am aware that many of the issues I have discussed in this paper are concerns already shared by many of my colleagues working closely with the schools. For example, REAP and ACT show great promise in producing a new generation of students who will be able to 'communicate' in English meaningfully. If I have raised more questions than provided answers it is only because I feel it would be presumptuous of me, a language specialist, to tell teacher trainers, teachers, syllabus designers and materials developers exactly what to do. I hope, however, that I have provided a forum for fruitful discussion.

THE TEXTS FOR TEACHING WRITING

Ann Raimes

Choosing materials for a course is always worrying. As more and more new books appear on the market, as more and more methods are recommended, our choice grows. And so being eclectic becomes an overwhelming intellectual burden instead of the judicious enterprise we want it to be. Many teachers feel that their main problem is finding the right materials: if they only had a good book, how much better their teaching would be!

But what in reality is the role of instructional materials? Richards and Rodgers, in their categorization of method into the three parts of approach, design, and procedure (1986), include them under design. The function of materials, they say, derives from the teacher's overall approach to language and language learning, and then from the course objectives, syllabus, learning activities, and learner and teacher roles established by the approach. The materials in their turn "further specify subject matter content ... and define or suggest the intensity of coverage for syllabus items" (1986, p.25). So materials can only reflect the writer's (and presumably the teacher's) theoretical approach to language and to the nature of language learning. The books, tapes, films, whatever we use in the classroom, don't necessarily determine our approach. They implement it. They translate it into practice.

The materials produced in the greatest numbers and those most familiar to teachers are textbooks, so I will focus on them. As approaches change, as the pendulum swings or the paradigm shifts, we expect our books to reflect and incorporate current theories. And our writing textbooks used to do just that. The problem now, however, is that composition theory has moved away from the "subject matter content" that Richards and Rodgers specified. Now that writing is seen as a process and not just as a set of discrete, hierarchical skills that can be learned in a nice tidy order, the idea of "coverage" of a body of knowledge has become obsolete and irrelevant.

I am going to talk first about writing textbooks. A lot of what we know about writing now has come to us from the field of teaching writing to native speakers. The L1 work has led us to do research into process, ethnographic studies, and to examine how our students' texts come into being. So what do L1 researchers have to [illegible] about their writing textbooks? Precious little that is good. Textbooks for teaching writing to native speakers are seen as not reflecting current theories: Mike Rose comments that textbooks are "static and insular approaches to a dynamic and highly context-oriented process, and thus are doomed to the realm of the Moderately Useful"--his capitals (1981, p.65). Why is that? Because they necessarily have to present composing as a linear activity, because writing does not have algorithmic rules in the way that, say, calculus does, because textbooks present drafts without teaching "how to conceive of the need for change" (1983, p.209), and because "writing is simply too complex and too unwieldy an activity to be taught from a textbook" (1981, p.70). While textbooks in other fields can dominate a course because they are a "repository of knowledge" (1983, p.211), composition texts have to convey strategies for "solving complex open-ended problems" (1983, p.211). And Rose questions whether it is at all possible to learn complex processes from textbooks.

Kathleen Welch sees the situation as more dire than the opposition of static and dynamic approaches suggests. She goes so far as to say that "Of the hundreds of pounds of freshman writing books produced each year, few are constructed with any overt indication that composition theory has ever existed" (1987, p.269). This lack of fit between theory and materials is to her the result of a "shared system of belief" between publishers and teachers, a "tacit commitment" between the two that what is needed and what works is the classical canons, the Aristotelian modes, and the use of excerpts as models. This approach to writing instruction she sees as ideological, founded not on sound theory but on unsubstantiated beliefs, almost an act of faith. Process, rather than profoundly influencing classroom directions, has merely been added on as another chapter, another mode (p.272).

The field of L1 writing has not been alone in the amount of research and development of new theory in the last few years. Second language composition, too, has been subject to the same sense of shifting paradigms. Let's look now at how approaches to teaching writing in a second language classroom have changed, and then at how writing textbooks either do or do not reflect the changes.

L2 composition research used to be limited to textual analysis. Ever since Kaplan introduced the concept of contrastive rhetoric--the interference of L1 rhetorical principles for an L2 learner (1966)--studies have explored various aspects of rhetoric and culture. Hinds, for example, has examined the notion of reader responsibility in Japanese (1987); Fen-Fu Tsao has looked at cohesion, coherence, and style in Mandarin and English (1983); Connor has studied the argumentative patterns used in four languages (1987); and Scarcella has categorized the orienting skills used by native and non-native speakers of English (1984). However, some studies raise serious questions about the concept of contrastive rhetoric as something that leads to negative transfer in the classroom: Connor and McCagg, for instance, found that the culture-specific patterns did not emerge when L2 students paraphrased a text, since they remained faithful to the propositional order of the original English text (1983); and Mohan and Lo (1985) found that Chinese students' problems with organizing ideas came not from any apparent indirectness of the Chinese language and its rhetorical patterns, but from the emphasis on correctness in their Hong Kong instruction. They thus posited developmental factors as being more important than negative transfer.

Even though we lack clear confirming data of the negative transfer that different rhetorical styles may induce, the classroom applications derived from the contrastive rhetoric research have been many--and persistent. In 1967, Robert Kaplan recommended the copying or manipulating of "carefully controlled models" (p.15), progressing to "slot-substitution drills" before finally composing on an assigned topic. After pattern drill at the syntactic level, he recommended "more pattern drill at the rhetorical level" (p.15). His "sermon" as he called it then, tongue-in-cheek, was taken to heart by many teachers and textbook writers, not just in 1967 but for many years. Many of our L2 textbooks in use today include large numbers of exercises asking students to write a paragraph with a given topic sentence, to write a paragraph putting given information in the "correct" order, or to read an essay and write one on a parallel theme with parallel organizational principles. The influence of patterns spread: other influential practitioners recommended controlled composition, guided writing, the imitation of models--anything so that the students would produce only prescribed, safe and relatively error-free texts according to an established model. This emphasis on patterns derived from the urge to divide up writing into skills, to see it in sets of subject matter, to provide order for the teacher and a clear arrangement of material to be covered.

However, more recent research, since 1981, has examined not just writing on the page but the writers themselves: what they do as they write, what their attitudes are to their instruction and to their instructors' feedback. The picture shown by this new research, with its emphasis on processes, is <u>not</u> similar to the picture produced by text analysis research. It does not depict L2 writers fighting against the rhetorical and linguistic patterns of L1 and fighting against error. Rather, it shows L2 writers using strategies similar to the ones native speakers use (Zamel, 1983). It shows them exploring and discovering content-- their own ideas--through prewriting, writing and revising, in a recursive way, just as native speakers do. They think as they write and writing aids thinking. They interact with the emerging text, their own intentions, and their sense of the reader (Raimes, 1985, 1987). Their knowledge of L1 writing helps them form hypotheses in L2 writing (Edelsky, 1982), and students often use L1 to help when composing in L2 (Lay, 1982), particularly in transferring planning skills (Jones and Tetroe, 1987). In short, researchers have found that, in this complex cognitive task of writing, the difficulties of NUS writers do not stem soley from the linguistic features of the new language and the contrasts with L1 but largely from the constraints of the act of composing itself.

This new emphasis on what writers do as they compose has led to recommendations for the use of classroom materials that emphasize composing processes: the invention and revision of ideas, with feedback from readers. L2 literature thus is similar to the literature on L1 writing in that it now recommends journals, freewriting, brainstorming, students' choice of topics, teaching heuristics (devices for invention), multiple drafts, revisions, group work, peer conferencing, and supportive feedback (for a comprehensive description of L2 composition teaching, see Hughey et al. 1983 and Raimes, 1983).

What do we see, though, when we look at the actual books? How much is the new theoretical approach included? An examination of some L2 writing textbooks gives us a picture as depressing as that seen by Welch and Rose. The books fall into three types, and I will illustrate each in turn:

1. Some books stick relentlessly to the traditional approach, emphasizing grammar, form, and models. Part of the reason for this might be that grammar, form, and models are easier to teach, since they are neatly algorithmic. We can give prescriptions to follow--like the five-paragraph theme--and nice clear rules. Examples 1-4 in Appendix 1 show just how little language and meaningful communication the student is expected to generate in doing these traditional writing tasks. The content is given, supplied in the book. The student is given not only the content but the organization and most of the words. The student is doing an exercise, not "solving complex open-ended problems" (Rose, 1983, p.211), and certainly not generating or communicating meaningful ideas in L2.

The sample illustrative readings included in these types of books are often as wooden as those shown in Examples 1 and 4. They are for the most part written by the textbook authors in order to illustrate a point of form. So we often find specially written samples of a standard five-paragraph theme for the students to imitate. This is precisely what Ann Berthoff calls the "muffintin" approach to language (1981, p.28), in which ideas are seen as formed first and then poured into the form that language gives them.

2. Just as Welch saw new theories being recognized by having one process chapter added, so too in L2 composition, some books recognize the new theories, and try to tack them on to the traditional approach. We find, for example, "process" in the title of a book that is devoted mainly to paragraph patterns, though it pays lip-service to process activities with a brief appendix on "The Journal" (Reid and Lindstrom, 1985); another book has one chapter on "Process" (Kaplan and Shaw, 1983); yet another includes a "Revising" section in each chapter, but then belies a process approach by giving quite midguided and contradictory prescriptions for paragraphs (Appendix 1, #5: Blass and Pike Baky, 1985).

3. A few books attempt to transform the new theory into practice, though in so doing they may go to extremes. One book, for example, includes sections on

"Getting Feedback," "Revising," and "Editing" in each chapter. The problem is, though, that in each case, regardless of the subject matter, the wording of those sections is exactly the same in each chapter, over and over again for twenty chapters! (Appendix 1, #6: Cramer, 1985). Thus revising is presented as formulaic, divorced from content, algorithmic. Strategies have become prescriptions.

Why is it that our textbooks fail to reflect recent composition theory? The reason is, I suggest, the same as the one proposed by Welch and Rose for L1 composition: that textbooks are static while writing is dynamic. Textbooks are linear while writing is recursive. Once we recognize these principles of dynamism and recursiveness, once we acknowledge that composing is generating language and communicating meaning, then patterns and subskills won't work for us. Nevertheless, we have to recognize that in our field, too, publishers and teachers cling to a set of shared beliefs, an ideology, that is not supported by the recent theories. That ideology, shared by language teachers and publishers, is that teachers and students need and want the prescriptions, the clearly illustrative passages, the manipulative exercises. Even though the writing process itself has been shown to be messy and chaotic, not cleanly linear, the prevailing belief is still that we have to clean it up and teach the rules in order to teach it at all. The clinging to shared beliefs is well illustrated in even the third--1986--edition of an influential teacher-training book as the author comments on marking compositions: she tells us to deduct points for errors, conceding "you may prefer, if ideas are important, to give two points for ideas. If you think four ideas are necessary, give 1/2 point for each" (Finocchiaro, 1986, p.88). Accuracy comes first, ideas are tacked on as an afterthought. That's far from being in the forefront of current theory about language learning or about composing.

So if our L2 writing textbook follows this lead and reflects an ideology not consistent with current theory, not consistent with the approach that we as teachers have established, what are we to do as we design our syllabus and our learning activities? For many of us the answer is "Adapt." We assign a textbook, dip into it, change it, supplement it. For others the answer is "Xerox"; they copy sections from as many books as possible. As an author I'll treat that one with the proper contempt and will move on. Others resign themselves to the inevitable: their answer is "Live with it." They're the ones who yawn in class--and whose students yawn, too. The answer I'd like to recommend is this: "Set priorities." A textbook should only be expected to provide secondary material for us, perhaps some good advice on writing, some clear explanations of grammar, some editing principles, and/or a selection of good readings to analyze. What we really should focus on in a writing class are our primary texts. I'll turn to those now.

The primary texts in a writing class I see as these:

- the students texts: that is, the writing the students do;
- the teachers' texts: that is, the comments we write on their papers;
- other authentic texts: supplementary readings for writing stimulus and for close analysis.

Since a writing course has no fixed content to cover, but devotes itself more to solving problems of communication of ideas and problems of language, textbooks written for broad sales will inevitably be general (hence the search for patterns) and cannot be context-specific. A textbook can't predict what any one student will write, can't print and evaluate that draft, comment on revisions, or point out errors. The readings in textbooks are frequently written by the authors merely to illustrate points of form, and frequently lack interest and grace, as well as authenticity. When students are locked in to examining uninteresting readings, and then have to do exercises and write an essay on an assigned topic, trying to do exactly what the teacher wants, then it's no wonder that there is not much engagement with language or with the urge to use language to communicate. To be consistent with current theories of second language acquisition, a writing course needs to provide the comprehensible input of real readings, whether professional or student writing, needs to allow communication of ideas in speech and writing, and needs to focus on meaning before form--but not in place of form.

To show how a class can be built around these three types of primary texts, I will describe a teaching sequence in a course I taught recently at Hunter College, and I will hope to show, too, how the primary texts we used can address issues of purpose, audience, content, form, grammar, and all the things composition teachers worry about, including the demands made by a curriculum and by an institution such as our school or university.

The class was asked to freewrite for ten minutes in response to a quotation from an article by Sissela Bok (1978) about whether doctors should tell their patients the truth. The students formed groups of four, passed their freewrites around and read each other's, thus establishing readers other than the teacher, and readers not concentrating on accuracy but on meaning. Then each group reported back as to the variety of opinions expressed within the group. We held a whole class discussion of the issues involved, which I wrote up on the board as they emerged. From writing and talking we turned to reading. The students took the article home with them and were asked to read it and respond to its main ideas in their double-entry notebook, a notebook in which they wrote on the right hand side a summary of the reading and any favourite quotations, and responded on the left hand page with their own comments, questions, associations, and stories. They then wrote a first draft of an essay based on the question posed in the first sentence of Bok's article: "Should doctors ever lie to benefit their patients?" Since my university demands that students pass a fifty-minute essay proficiency test, I asked the students to time themselves and complete the draft within that time limit, thus adjusting my use of the primary texts to institutional demands.

This sequence of writing, discussion, reading, writing, and more writing was followed by even more reading, writing, and discussion. The next class session was devoted to peer response. In pairs, the students exchanged drafts, read each other's draft, responded to it in writing on a guided response sheet (see Appendix 2), and then discussed with each other their responses. The response guidelines concentrated on content, but also asked student readers to make a one-sentence summary of every paragraph, thus asking them to pay attention to paragraph main idea and support. Then the students changed partners and repeated the task. Each student thus talked to two other students about his or her draft and took home two written response sheets. That night I too read the drafts and responded to them. But I made no mark on the students' written pages. Instead, I wrote each one a response, anything from half to a full page, in which I tried to do four things:

1. find something to praise;
2. make comments about content and organization;
3. ask questions about content;
4. pick out two-three areas (verbs, agreement) that the student should proofread carefully for in the next draft. I also indicated three lines in which representative errors occurred, without identifying the error.

You might wonder why I abrogated my responsibility as a language teacher, put away the red pen, and made no correction of error. Could this feature of my teaching design have any roots at the theoretical level? To answer this, I've summarized for you the L2 research on feedback and response (see Appendix 3). Direct correction of error has been shown not only to not improve accuracy (Robb; Ross and Shortreed, 1986), but to be confusing and misleading to students (Zamel, 1985). Our research sees writing and rewriting, with substantive and constructively critical comments (Radecki and Swales, 1986; Cardelle and Corno, 1981) as more beneficial than direct error correction.

The students, armed with two other students' response sheets, and with my response, revised at home. They handed the revision in to me. When I had received their first draft, I had counted the number of T-units (O'Hare, 1973, pp.47-49) and the number of errors. (A T-unit is a "minimal terminable unit," not necessarily marked by punctuation but by one main clause and all or any attached subordinate clauses or nonclausal structures). I did the same with the second draft. Now, I hadn't corrected a thing, there had been no focus on accuracy, but what do you think happened to the number of errors? The number of errors per T-unit decreased by 21% from draft 1 to draft 2. In addition, of the errors I located for the students in draft 1, only 47% (less than half) reappeared in draft 2--either corrected or remaining as errors. The other 53% had occurred in passages that were either changed or deleted totally in the second draft.

So if I had spent my time carefully correcting every error, the students would probably have been much more faithful to their original text and would not have worked on clarifying their ideas, cutting, adding, and changing. Students, as Cohen found (1987), focus their attention according to the signals we send. Let me illustrate this: the sequence I've just described I followed with two classes. In one of those classes, I paid more attention to the students' first language background by teaching a unit on the sources of error; after I noted the location of three errors, I asked students to write down what they thought their error was and to speculate about its cause--L1 interference, generalization about L2 rules, careless mistake, and so on. That group ended up correcting 47.6% of the errors I located, while the other group corrected only 18.5%. That is, they paid attention to what the task told them to pay attention to.

We see, then, that analysis of students' texts and of authentic readings played a large part in our activities. In both classes, we discussed and analyzed the reading in detail, treating it in the same way that we treated the student texts: we summarized each paragraph, we found the author's main idea, we examined how the writer introduced that idea and supported it. In addition, we looked at the tenses the author had chosen and commented on the rhetorical use of questions. I engaged in close reading at the sentence level, too: I scrutinized their second drafts for errors in verb use and sentence structure, and built classroom activities and exercises around the students' sentences in their contexts. So with no grammar textbook in hand, the issue of accuracy was emphasized, but within the context of meaningful communication instead of prefabricated sentence or paragraph exercises.

When we look at this sequence in terms of the texts used, we see no drill, no manipulative exercises, no imposed artificial models. And no textbook. In many institutional settings, however, textbooks are assigned. But since most writing textbooks reward conformity, not risk, we should not build a whole course around them. We can still make student writing and our response the primary texts, and use the assigned book as backup. For instance, a textbook section on main idea and support could have been assigned after we had analyzed the reading by Bok or after the students had analyzed each other's draft. Or once grammar problems arising in the drafts had been noted, students could have been assigned a few textbook exercises before working on editing their own sentences. When the focus is on the students' texts, with authentic texts used and treated in exactly the same way as their texts, students see their own writing as authentic, written to be read. As they write, they need the chance to experiment, to take risks, for writing is, as Peter Elbow says, "The ideal medium for getting it wrong" (1985, p.286). It is also, I contend, the ideal medium for eventually getting it right. And thus it is a valuable medium for language learning.

Teaching writing is not covering subject matter. It's providing tasks for the generation and use of language in communicative situations. It's providing the opportunity to take risks and test out hypotheses. N S Prabhu has argued lucidly and forcibly that "any collection of tasks acting as materials for task-based teaching can only have the status of source books for teachers, not of course books" (1987, p.94). The publicist who wrote the brochure copy for my latest book, Exploring Through Writing, saw the third part of it, the pictures and readings, as "a rich sourcebook." New perceptions about teaching and texts are crossing continents, challenging the old system of shared beliefs. In our writing courses, we'll use sourcebooks to provide information about generating and organizing writing, instruction on grammar and editing, and authentic readings. Our course books we'll produce ourselves. Happy writing to you and your students.

Appendix 1

TEXTBOOK SAMPLES

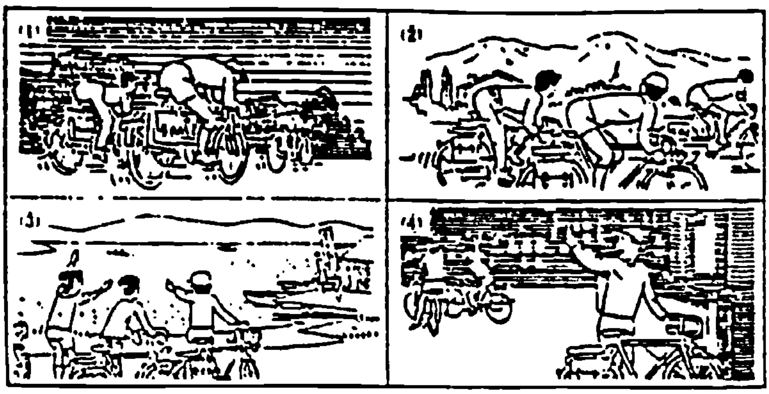
1. Attending a soccer match is never boring. On the contrary, seeing two teams compete is exciting. Following the action of the game is always fascinating. Also, witnessing the speed of the players is exhilarating. Observing the skill of both teams is satisfying. Yet, watching a favourite team lose is disappointing. At such times, being a spectator is frustrating. However, watching an important soccer game is always thrilling.

Tell a friend about soccer. Begin each sentence with **It is...to...**

Your first sentence: **It is never boring to attend a soccer match.**

2.

A. 絵を見て、( )内に適当な語句を入れたり、イタリック体の動詞を適当な形にかえたりして次の英文を完成しなさい。



Go on a cycling tour is a lot of fun. Last Sunday I went *cycle* with my friends. We started (①). We (②) while *ride* on our bicycles. Towards noon we (③). We spent about an hour *row* on the lake and *walk* along the shore. We left there at one and returned home (④). We covered nearly 150 kilometers in a day!

B. My Big Adventure という題で英文を書きなさい。

〈参考語句〉 野外スポーツ — driving, fishing, hiking, mountain climbing, rowing, skating, skiing, yachting, *etc.*
場所 — footpath, highway, ice rink, mountain, river, sea, skiing ground, *etc.*

Akira Ota et al. <u>A New Guide to English Composition</u>. 1. Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 1978.

3. TOPIC SENTENCE: Soccer is more fun to play than American football.

A. Less dangerous
   1. Doesn't permit excessive violence
   2. Players have no fear for their safety; quickness and agility are prized more than brute strength

B. Faster
   1. Play is very nearly continuous for each 45-minute time period
   2. Players are always moving, always playing

C. More integrated tactics
   1. Each player both attacks and defends
   2. Each team plays both offense and defense

CONCLUDING SENTENCE: Because soccer is a game of speed and total athletic ability, and because it is exciting to watch as well as play, it is rightly one of the most popular sports in the world.

Joy M Reid and Margaret Lindstrom. <u>The Process of Paragraph Writing</u>. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1985, p.110.

4. I go shopping every weekend. I usually buy many different things. I go to the supermarket and drugstore. I sometimes go to the department store and the hardware store.

At the supermarket, I buy many groceries. I usually buy rice, beans, meat, green vegetables, and fruit. There are usually many people in the supermarket. It is very crowded. I usually spend a lot of money because food is very expensive. At the drugstore, I buy toothpaste, aspirin, soap, and shampoo. At the department store, I look at shoes, hats, and coats. I go to the hardware store if I need nails or a new hammer. There are many interesting things in the hardware store.

I go home after I finish my shopping. I am usually tired after I finish my shopping.

Instructions for student's composition:

1. Write three paragraphs about your weekend shopping on 8 1/2 x 11 inch loose-leaf notebook paper. Remember to indent and leave margins.

2. Put the following information in your composition:

   Paragraph 1 - Tell where you go shopping.

Paragraph 2 - Tell what you usually buy or look at.
Paragraph 3 - Tell what you usually do after shopping. Tell how you feel after shopping.

3. Take as many structures, ideas, and words from the model as you can use in your composition.

Linda Lonon Blanton. Elementary Composition Practice, Book 1. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1979, pp.23-24.

5. P. 13...One characteristic of a topic sentence is that it contains only one idea. This is because the purpose of a paragraph is to discuss only one idea... Read the following pair of topic sentences and select the better one. Which one has only one idea?

(a) The French are famous for their love of liberty, equality, and brotherhood.
(b) The French are famous for their love of liberty.

****

P. 17-18. Read [the]...Then choose the best topic sentence from the three possibilities given.

In introductions as well as in general conversations, speakers maintain frequent eye contact. That is, they look directly at each other. Most people become nervous if there is too much eye contact: This is called staring. When shaking hands, people shake firmly and briefly. The expression "He shakes hands like a dead fish" refers to a limp or weak handshake, a sign in the American culture of a weak character. Prolonged handshaking is not unusual.

Topic Sentences:

1. Direct eye contact is important during introductions in the United States.
2. In America, limp handshakes are a sign of weak character.
3. Direct eye contact and firm handshakes during introductions are customary in the United States.

Laurie Blass and Meredith Pike-Baky. Mosaic 1: A Content-Based Writing Book. New York: Random House, 1985.

6. After the feedback session put your draft aside and let it have a chance to "incubate"-to let more ideas develop in your mind. Then look at it again. Think of the comments you got during feedback. Ask yourself the following questions as you plan a revision:

1. *What is the purpose of this piece?* What am I trying to get across here? Are there several points? What idea would unite all of them?
2. *Who is my audience?* What are these readers like? Are they a lot like me, or are they different? Will they understand my ideas without much explanation, or do I need to go into more detail on some points my readers may not understand? How can I convince my readers that the point I am making is valid?
3. *What is the best "voice" to use?* Knowing my purpose and my audience, should I sound formal, or is informality called for Should I be light- hearted and humorous, or do my purpose and audience need a serious approach?

Once you have a sense of your purpose, audience, and voice, revise your paper. You may want to outline it first, or jot down some notes.

Nancy Arapoff Cramer. The Writing Process: 20 Projects for Group Work. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1985.

Appendix 2

RESPONDING TO WRITING

Read another student's draft and write your responses to the following questions. Then return this sheet to the writer.

1. Who wrote the draft?

2. What main idea is the writer expressing about doctors and lying? If there is one sentence in the draft that contains that main idea clearly, copy it here. If there is not one sentence that expresses it, what do you gather the writer's main idea is?

3. What does the writer do to introduce you to the general topic of doctors and lying?

4. How has the writer supported the main idea? What reasons does the writer give you for holding his/her point of view?

5. Write a one-sentence summary of what each paragraph after the introduction is about. That is, how would you continue this sentence about each paragraph:
   The 2nd paragraph says that...
   The 3rd paragraph says that...
   etc.

6. On the back of this sheet, write any suggestions you have for the next draft. What do you think the writer could do to improve on this draft?

7. Your name:

Appendix 3

SURVEY OF L2 RESEARCH ON FEEDBACK AND RESPONSE TO COMPOSITION

STUDY	CONCLUSIONS
Cardelle and Corno 1981 Performance data collected on eighty students in five Spanish classes. Homework exercises were given praise of correct form, criticism of errors, criticism + praise, or no feedback on error.	Superior achievement when errors were addressed with constructively critical feedback.
Zamel, 1985 Analyzed 105 texts--fifteen teachers' responses on students' essays. Relates this to prior analysis of L1 essays.	Comments are often confusing and arbitrary; they focus on local concerns and errors. Teachers even misread texts and mislead students. They seem to expect no revision beyond surface level.
Radecki and Swales, 1986 59 ESL students at four different levels completed questionnaire on attitudes to comments and opinions on usefulness. Eight students were interviewed.	Responses led to classification of students into 3 categories: receptors (46%) resistors (13%), and semi-resistors (41%). Receptors preferred

substantive comments and marking of all errors.

Robb, Ross, and Shortreed 1986
134 Japanese freshmen in four sections wrote weekly essays and revised. Feedback varied in degree of salience provided. Essays were measured for accuracy.

Direct correction of error did not result in more accuracy. All groups improved with practice in writing over time.

Cohen, 1987
217 students (in ESL, freshman composition and foreign language courses) completed questionnaire on what they did with teacher feedback on their last corrected paper.

Students mostly made a mental note of comments and attended mostly to grammar. Teachers comment dealt primarily with grammar and mechanics.

Fathman and Whalley 1987
three studies of eighty ESL students and different teacher feedback on writing about a picture sequence with immediate or delayed rewriting.

Grammar feedback more strongly affects grammar than content feedback affects content. Holistic content evaluation scores not affected by focus on grammar. Rewriting tends to improve writing, regardless of type of feedback.

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DESIGNING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR TEACHING LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Jack C Richards

An approach to the design of listening comprehension materials and classroom activities reflects a view of the nature of listening and the processes it involves. An understanding of the role of bottom up and top down processes in listening is central to any theory of listening comprehension, as well as recognition of the differences between the interactional and transactional dimensions of language use and how these affect listening. In this paper, these views ot listening will first be elaborated and then applied to the design of instructional materials and activities for the teaching of listening comprehension.

1 LISTENING PROCESSES - BOTTOM UP AND TOP DOWN PROCESSING

Two distinct kinds of processes are involved in comprehension, sometimes referred to as "bottom up" and "top down" processing (Chaudron and Richards, 1986). Bottom up processing refers to the use of incoming data as a source of information about the meaning of a message. From this perspective, the process of comprehension begins with the message received, which is analyzed at successive levels of organization - sounds, words, clauses, and sentences - until the intended meaning is arrived at. Comprehension is thus viewed as a process of decoding.

Examples of bottom up processes in listening include the following:

. scanning the input to identify familiar lexical items
. segmenting the stream of speech into constituents, for example in order to recognize that "abookof mine" consists of four words
. using phonological cues to identify the information focus in an utterance
. using grammatical cues to organize the input into constituents, for example, in order to recognize that in "the book which I lent you" [the book] and [which I lent you] constitute major constituents rather than [the book which I] and [lent you].

The listener's lexical and grammatical competence in a language provides the basis for bottom up processing. Our lexical competence serves as a mental dictionary to which incoming words are referred for meaning assignment. Our grammatical competence serves as a set of strategies which are applied to the analysis of incoming data. Clark and Clark (1977: 49) summarize this view of listening comprehension in the following way:

1. They [Listeners] take in raw speech and retain a phonological representation of it in "working memory."
2. They immediately attempt to organize the phonological representation into constituents, identifying their content and function.
3. As they identify each constituent, they use it to construct underlying propositions, building continually onto a hierarchical representation of propositions.
4. Once they have identified the propositions for a constituent, they retain them in working memory and at some point purge memory of the phonological representation. In doing this, they forget the exact wording and retain the meaning.

Top down processing on the other hand refers to the use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of a message. This background knowledge may take several forms. It may be previous knowledge about the topic of discourse, it may be situational or contextual knowledge, or it may be knowledge stored in long term memory in the form of "schemata" and "scripts" -- plans about the overall structure of events and the relationships between them.

For example, if you see an adult seated on a park bench reading aloud from a book to a group of enthralled young children, you will probably assume that the adult is reading a story to the children - rather than, say, reading a recipe or a set of instructions on how to assemble a computer. This set of expectations for a particular kind of discourse is generated from the situation, that is, from our knowledge of a world populated by adults and children and typical interactions between them. On moving closer, you are able to confirm that the children are indeed listening to a story. Now you can activate your "schemata" for stories. We can think of this as a set of expectations as to how the content of the discourse will develop:

Where does the story take place?
Who are the characters?
Around what event or events does the story turn?
What will the outcome be?

Much of our knowledge of the world consists of knowledge about specific situations, the people we expect to encounter in such situations, what their goals and purposes are, and how they typically accomplish them. In applying this prior knowledge about people and events to a particular situation, we are able to proceed from the top down. We use the actual discourse we hear to confirm our expectations and to fill out the specific details.

Examples of top down processing in listening include:

- assigning an interaction to part of a particular event, such as story telling, joking, praying, complaining
- assigning places, persons or things to categories
- inferring cause and effect relationships
- anticipating outcomes
- inferring the topic of a discourse
- inferring the sequence between events
- inferring missing details

If we are unable to make use of top down processing, an utterance or discourse may be incomprehensible. Bottom up processing alone often provides an insufficient basis for comprehension. Consider the following narrative, for example. What is the topic?

> Sally first tried setting loose a team of gophers. The plan backfired when a dog chased them away. She then entertained a group of teenagers and was delighted when they brought their motorcycles. Unfortunately, she failed to find a Peeping Tom listed in the Yellow Pages. Furthermore, her stereo system was not loud enough. The crab grass might have worked but she didn't have a fan that was sufficiently powerful. The obscene phone calls gave her hope until the number was changed. She thought about calling a door-to-door salesman but decided to hang up a clothesline instead. It was the installation of blinking neon lights across the street that did the trick. She eventually framed the ad from the classifying section.
>
> (Stein and Albridge, 1978)

At first the narrative is virtually incomprehensible. However once we have a schema to apply to the narrative - "Getting rid of a troublesome neighbour" - we can make use of top down processing and the elements of the story begin to fit into place.

When we first encounter a foreign language, we are heavily dependent upon top down processing. For example, imagine a foreigner who has taken up residence in Japan. The first time she joins a group of Japanese friends for a meal, she hears them utter something which sounds like "Itadakemasu" before they begin eating. She has no idea if this is one word or three, or whether it refers to the food or the participants. After repeated experiences of this kind however and observation of the position and function the utterance occupies within the speech event of "meal talk", she infers that it is some kind of pre-eating ritual, probably the equivalent of "bon apetit". If she subsequently goes on to learn some Japanese, she will be able to apply her knowledge of Japanese words and grammar to the phrase to arrive at its literal meaning, which is "eat - going to". Initially then, she is entirely dependent upon top down processing - that is, the use of background knowledge - in working out the meaning of the utterance, and only later when her linguistic competence has developed, can she analyze it from the bottom up.

This is how listening comprehension appears to take place at the initial stages in second language learning. For example the Australian Adult Migrant Education Listening Proficiency Descriptions, which are derived from analysis of the listening difficulties of on arrival migrants to Australia and which characterize listening skills across seven levels of proficiency, include the following information concerning listeners at the lowest levels of proficiency:

LEVEL 0.5
No idea of syntactic relationships between words. Responds to isolated items and has to rely almost entirely on context to guess meaning.

Here, the listener is unable to make use of bottom up processing. Gradually, as language learning proceeds, the ability to make use of bottom up processing emerges, as we see in the following descriptions of levels 1, 2 and 3 in the Australian proficiency descriptions;

LEVEL 1
Little understanding of syntax. Meaning deduced from juxtaposition of words and context. Still responds to isolated words in connected speech... Speaker frequently forced to expand or paraphrase when listener's unfamiliarity with syntactic conventions causes misunderstanding.

LEVEL 2
Beginning awareness of grammar but still relies heavily on stressed words and context to deduce meaning... Can follow very simple, slowly-spoken verbal instructions only if supported by context. Certain areas of English grammar tend to cause severe comprehension problems (eg tense marking, pronoun reference, subordination).

LEVEL 3
Can understand some syntactic clues to meaning, but understanding of grammar very incomplete. In conversation, needs much more redundancy

than native speaker. Sometimes has to ask for clarification where syntax would make meaning clear to native speaker.

(Brindley, personal communication)

By the time the learner is at level four or five on the proficiency scale, there is less of a dependence on context. Context is now used in association with the ability to process the message itself to work our unfamiliar meanings.

Fluent listening thus depends on the use of both top down and bottom up processing. The extent to which one or the other dominates reflects the degree of familiarity the listener has with the topic of discourse, the kind of background knowledge he or she can apply to the task, and the purposes for which he or she is listening. An experienced cook, for example, might listen to a radio chef describing a recipe for coq au vin, merely to compare the chef's recipe with her own. She has a precise schema to apply to the task of listening and listens in order to register similarities or differences. She makes heavy use of top down processes in listening to the radio program. A novice cook however, with little previous cooking experience and unfamiliar with coq au vin, will be required to listen with much greater attention, perhaps in order to write the recipe down. Here, far more bottom up processing is required.

2 LISTENING PURPOSES - INTERPERSONAL AND TRANSACTIONAL FUNCTIONS OF LANGUAGE

As well as recognizing the fundamental difference between top down and bottom up processing in comprehending language, we also need to recognize the very different purposes which listeners may have in different situations, and how these differences in purpose affect the way they go about listening. While numerous classifications exist of the different functions and purposes for which people use language, we will use here a simple but useful distinction made by Brown and Yule (1983) between interactional and transactional functions of language.

I. INTERACTIONAL FUNCTIONS OF LANGUAGE

Interactional uses of language are those where the primary purposes for communication are social. The emphasis is on creating harmonious interactions between participants rather than on the communication of information. The goal for participants in such situations is to make social interaction comfortable and non-threatening and to communicate good will. In the process, information may be communicated but the accurate and orderly presentation of information is not the primary purpose. Examples of interactional uses of language are greetings, small talk, jokes, complements, casual "chat" of the kind which is used to pass time with friends or to make encounters with strangers comfortable. Brown and Yule suggest that language used in the interactional mode is listener-oriented. Questions of "face" are central, hence interactional conversation is a kind of "work" which we do in order for speaker and hearer to maintain face and to respect the face put forward by others. This is what the sociologist Goffman referred to as "face-work".

For example, a foreman sees a workman sweating profusely as he works on a difficult job and the foreman remarks sympathetically, "It's hard work"; Or a person waiting at a bus stop in a heavy downpour remarks to another person waiting, "Will it ever stop?" In both cases the speaker's primary purpose is not to inform the listener of the obvious but to be identified with the concerns of the other person (Wardhaugh, 1985).

One of the rules of "face work" is that it should elicit agreement. Agreement serves to create harmony and to diminish the threat to the participants' face, hence the importance of small talk on "safe" topics such as the weather, the beauty of gardens, the incompetence of politicians and so on (Brown and Levi:,on, 1978). Brown and Yule add that constant shifts of topic are also characteristic of this mode of talk, illustrating this with an extract from a conversation between some people who have been talking about a couple who visit the area in the summer.

A: you know but erm + they used to go out in erm August + they used to come + you know the lovely sunsets you get + at that time and
B: oh yes
C: there's a nice new postcard a nice - well I don't know how new it is + it's been a while since I've been here + of a sunset + a new one +
A: oh that's a lovely one isn't it
D: yes yes it was in one of the + calendars
A: yes that was last year's calendar it was on
B: was it last year's it was on + it was John Forgan who took that one
A: yes it's really lovely + this year's erm + the Anderson's house at Lenimore's in it + at em Thunderguy I should say +
D: they've sold their house
A: yes + the Andersons
B: oh have they
A: yes yes + erm + they weren't down last year at all

This extract also demonstrates another aspect of interactional discourse which Brown and Yule note - that since it exists largely to satisfy the social needs of the participants at that time, it is extremely boring for an outsider to listen to.

> Most conversations are appallingly boring. It is the participation in such conversations which makes us such avid talkers, the "need to know" or the "need to tell" or the "need to be friendly". You can listen to hours and hours of recorded conversation without finding anything that interests you from the point of view of what the speakers are talking about of what they are saying about it. After all, their conversation was not intended for the overhearer. It was intended for them as participants.
>
> (op cit: 82)

Likewise because such discourse is frequently between people who know each other, it assumes shared background knowledge about the topics introduced and hence leaves a great deal unsaid. It is embedded in context. Since the participants are able to fill out the details using top down comprehension it is not necessary to specify things very clearly. Interactional discourse is hence characterized by a high frequency of words whose precise reference is not specified.

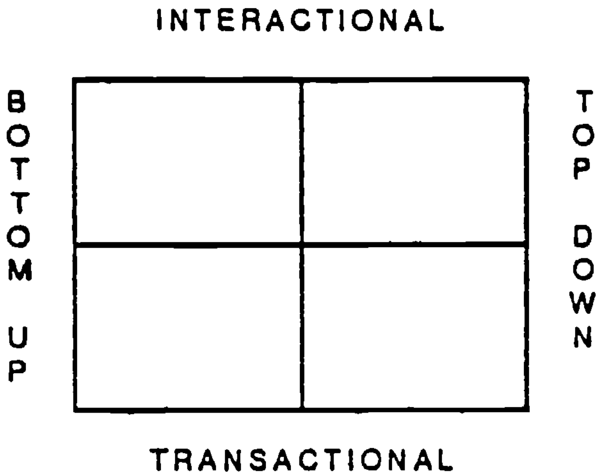
II. TRANSACTIONAL FUNCTIONS OF LANGUAGE

Transactional uses of language are those in which language is being used primarily for communicating information. They are "message" oriented rather than "listener" oriented uses of language. In such instances, accurate and coherent communication of the message is important, as well as confirmation that the message has been understood. Explicitness and directness of meaning is essential, in comparison with interactional language which is often vague and indirect by comparison. With transactional uses of language, coherence, content and clarity are crucial. Brown and Yule observe that completion of some kind of real world task often accompanies transactional uses of language, such as writing down a message or carrying out an instruction. Examples of languge being used primarily for a transactional purpose include news broadcasts, lectures, descriptions and instructions. Brown et al (1984) suggest that this is the kind of talk which dominates classroom life:

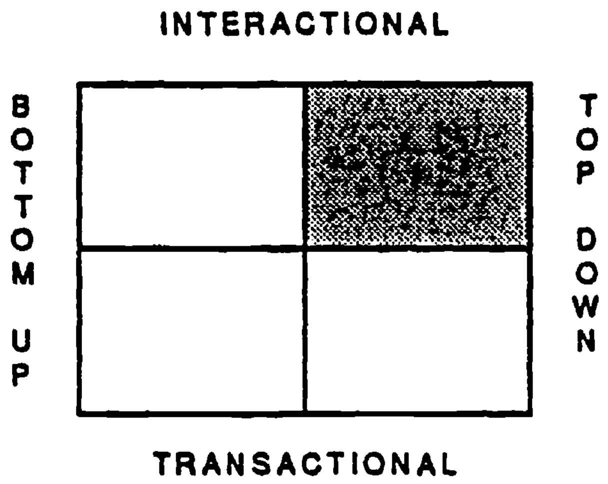
> Teacher: now + here we have a substance in which heat is moving along the rod from a hot end to a cold end + + can anybody tell me the name we give to such a substance - a substance in which heat can flow + + nobody can tell me that + well + it's called a conductor + + anybody ever heard of that word before? + good well + I'll put it on the blackboard for you + + it's called a conductor + what we are going to do today is have a look at some conductors.
>
> (Brown et al 1984: 9)

Tikunoff (1985) suggests that effective pupil classroom participation requires command of language in both its interactional and transactional functions. Language in its interactional funcations is needed in order to interact with the teacher and peers while accomplishing class tasks, while language in its transactional fuctions is needed in order to acquire new skills, assimilate new information, and construct new concepts. In many situations, both interactional and transactional functions are involved. At the doctor's, for example, the doctor may first use small talk to put the patient at ease, then switch to the transactional mode while asking for a description of the patient's medical problem.

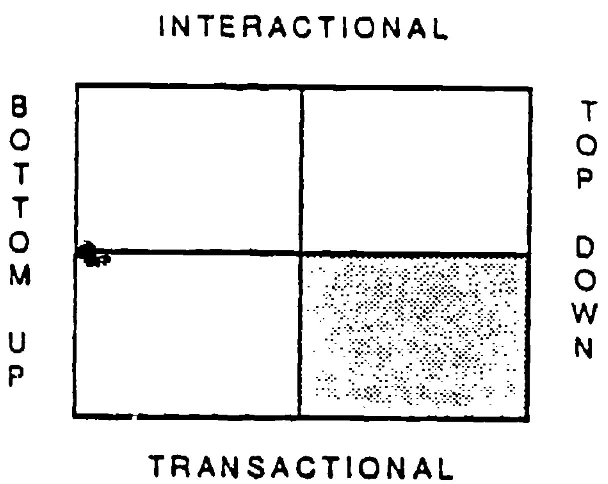
We can use this four-part classification of listening processes and listening purposes as a framework for comparing the different demands of different listening activites. Listening activities may be located at different positions within the following quadrant;



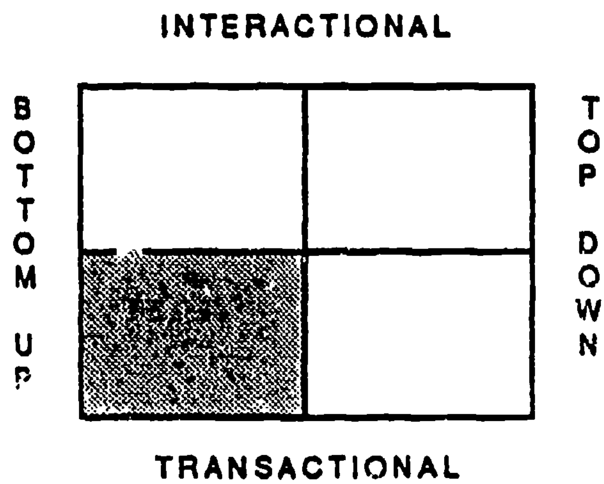
Consider a person listening to cocktail party banter for example, during which friends greet each other, exchange compliments and other customary rituals, and engage in small talk on fleeting topics of no import to anyone present. Such an activity I would locate in the following position on the quadrant;



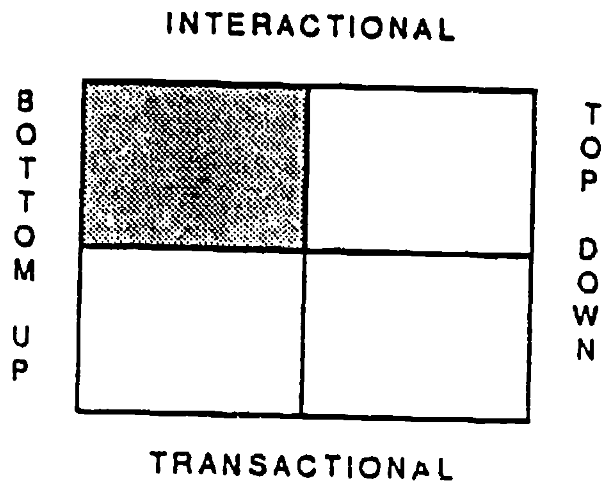
Now consider an experienced air traveller on an aircraft listening to a flight attendant reading the air safety instructions before the plane takes off. This can be located in the following position on the quadrant;



An activity which is transactional but which requires more use of bottom up processing, such as a student driver receiving his or her first driving lesson from a driving instructor would look like this on the quadrant;



An activity which would involve bottom up processing within an interactional situation would be that of a party goer listening intently to someone trying to tell a joke and trying to identify the appropriate place in the anecdote for him or her to laugh.



3 APPLICATIONS TO DESIGN OF CLASSROOM MATERIALS: METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Before we go on to consider how we can make use of the theoretical perspectives on listening discussed above in designing instructional materials, we need to identify a methodological position which is consistent with our understanding of the processes involved in listening. While there are plenty of available methodologies in language teaching, most attempt to account only for production rather than comrehension and hence will not serve our purposes here. The following are some tentative methodological principles which acknowledge the perspective on listening we have discussed.

I. MAKE MEANING THE GOAL

Both bottom up and top down processing serve as means to an end - the identification of the speaker's intended meaning. It follows that classroom activities should give priority to developing strategies for recognizing and using meaning, rather than serving as tests for information recall or excuses for manipulation of language.

II. CREATE VALID PURPOSES FOR LISTENING

We saw that the interactional and transactional functions of language involve very different purposes for listening. These distinct purposes should be kept in mind in developing listening exercises and materials, since responses appropriate for interactional listening will be very different from those required when listening for transactional purposes. Students should not listen to casual conversation with the same goals as they listen to a lecture. Similarly, in the real world, people do not listen to news reports in order to count the number of occurences of the past tense, nor should they be expected to do so in second language classrooms.

III. FOCUS ON PROFICIENCY

A proficient listener uses both top down and bottom up listening strategies, can handle a wide variety of types of listening, and can cope with listening circumstances, where distractions, interference, and incomplete transmission of meanings may occur. A listening programme should likewise allow the learner to develop strategies for listening in a wide variety of situations and for varying but relevant purposes. In this way the programme prepares the learner to make the transition from the classroom to the real world.

IV. TEACH, PRACTICE, AND THEN TEST

It is necessary to distinguish activities which have a teaching focus from activities which have a testing focus. An activity with a teaching focus assumes that the student does not yet possess a particular skill and provides the opportunity for the student to develop it through planned presentatior and practice. An activity which has a testing focus seeks to determine how much the student has learned as a result of previous teaching.

Dictation, for example, is a strategy for testing, not teaching.

4. APPLICATIONS TO DESIGN OF CLASSROOM MATERIALS: TYFES

The kinds of exercises and listening activities we use in teaching listening comprehension will reflect the different processes and purposes involved in listening - bottom up, top down, interactional and transactional.

I. EXERCISES WHICH DEAL WITH BOTTOM UP LISTENING

These seek to develop the learner's ability to do the following:

* retain input while it is being processed
* recognize word divisions
* recognize key words in utterances
* use knowledge of word order patterns to identify constituents in utterances
* recognize grammatical relations between key ele ments in sentences
* recognize the function of word stress in sentences
* recognize the fur-tion of intonation in sentences

Exercises which address these goals might require the learners to do tasks such as the following:

identify the referents of pronouns used in a conversation
recognize if a sentence is active or passive
distinguish between sentences containing causative and non-causative verbs

distinguish major consituents in a sentence, such as subject and object, verb and adverb
distinguish between sentences with and without auxiliary verb
recognize the different menaings implied by different patterns of word pitch
recognize the time reference of a sentence
distinguish netween positive and negative statements
identify prepositions in rapid speech
recognize sequence markers
distinguish between Yes-No and Wh questions

(Gore, 1978; McLean, 1981; Richards, et al 1987)

II. EXERCISES WHICH DEAL WITH THE TOP DOWN LISTENING

These seek to develop the learner's ability to do the following:

* use key words to construct the schema of a dis course
* construct plans and schema from elements of a discourse
* infer the role of the participants in a situation
* infer the topic of a discourse
* infer the outcome of an event
* infer the cause or effect of an event
* infer unstated details of a situation
* infer the sequence of a series of events
* infer comparisons
* distinguish between literal and figurative mean ings
* distinguish between facts and opinions

Exercises which address these goals might require the learner to do tasks such as the following:

listen to part of a conversation and infer the topic of the conversation
look at pictures and then listen to conversations about the pictures and match them with the pictures
listen to conversations and identify the setting for the conversation
read a list of key points to be covered in a talk and then number and check whether the information was mentioned or not
read one side of a telephone conversation and guess the other speaker's responses: then listen to the telephone conversation
look at pictures of people speaking and guess what they might be saying or doing: then listen to their actual conversations
complete a story, then listen to how the story really ended

guess what news headlines might refer to then listen to news broadcasts about the events referred to
(Fassman and Tavares, 1985; Rost, 1986; Richards, et al 1987; Bode and Lee, 1987)

III. EXERCISES WHICH DEAL WITH LISTENING FOR INTERACTIONAL PURPOSES

These seek to develop the learner's ability to do the following:

* recognize when language is being used for inter actional purposes
* recognize appropriate moments to make phatic res ponses in a conversation
* recognize such illocutionary intentions as jokes, complements, praise
* recognize differences between topics used in small talk and those used as real topics in conversa tions
* recognize markers of familiarity and social dis tance between speakers

Exercises which address these goals might require the learner to do tasks such as the following:

distinguish between conversations that have an interactional and a transactional intent
listen to conversations and select suitable polite comments and other phatic responses
listen to utterances containing complements or praise and choose suitable responses
listen to conversations containing small talk and recognize when the speaker is preparing to intro duce a real topic
identify the degree of familiarity between real invitations and invitations being used to close a conversation
(Lougheed, 1985; Richards, et al 1987)

IV. EXERCISES WHICH DEAL WITH LISTENING FOR TRANSACTIONAL PURPOSES

These seek to develop the learner's ability to do the following:

* extract key information from a discourse
* identify specific facts and details in a discourse

- recognize and act on the illocutionary intent of a discourse, such as requests, advice, commands, instructions
- identify the sequence in which a series of events occured
- carry out tasks as a response to listening

Exercises which address these goals might require the learner to do tasks such as the following:

label the parts of an object from a description of it
identify the key ideas in a discourse
follow instructions to assemble an item
complete a map or picture from an aural description
write a summary of a talk or conversation
write down a message delivered aurally
identify a picture from a description of it
listen to an advertisement for a job and note down the job requirements
(Blundell and Stokes, 1981; Rost, 1986; Richards, et al 1987)

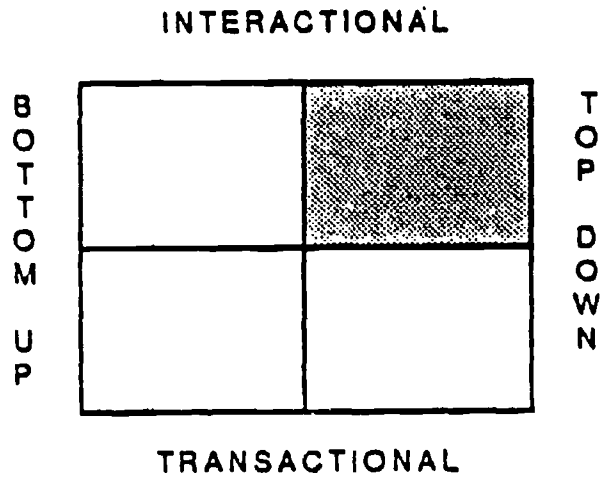
5 CRITIQUE OF LISTENING EXERCISES

We will now consider samples from current listening materials and examine them in terms of the criteria for materials design discussed above. A text which includes a great deal of authentic conversational discourse is Listening in and Speaking Out: Intermediate (James, Whitley and Bode, 1980). this text includes unscripted conversations and discussions in an attempt to prepare students for listenig to authentic native speaker discourse rather than the often artificial discourse provided when actors read from written scripts. Unit 1 deals with listening to conversations between friends talking about birthday parties and gifts. Part of the unit involves to the following conversation:

1. CHUCK: You know, I really don't like having to give gifts on like Christmases and birthdays and stuff, but I like giving gifts very much on times when I just feel like doing so.
2. SHARON: I do too. And I give gifts to a lot of people that way. I, uh, maybe like giving gifts at Christmas too, but not so much as an adult. When I was little, I did.
3. BETTE: Well, what kind of gifts do you like to give, Sharon?
4. SHARON: Almost anything. I mean, sometimes, uh, gum or cigarettes or ...(laughter)
5. GARY: You give gum?
6. BETTE: You really go all out, don't you? (laughter)

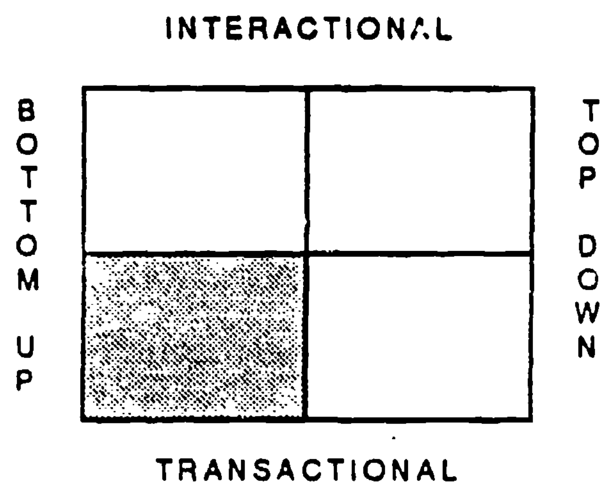
7. SHARON: Well, no, but what I mean is, you know, if I walk by a store and I see a kind of foreign cigarettes and I know somebody likes them and doesn't usually buy them for themselves, I , you know, I might pick up a pack and give them to somebody.
8. CHUCK: Yeah, that's nice.
9. GARY: When do you give...
10. BETTE: How about you, Gary?
11. GARY: When you...when do you...sorry...when do you give packages of gum? (laughter)
12. SHARON: Well, just recently, my mother's been here and she likes to chew gum and I don't usually buy it, but when I see it now, you know, I might stop and just give her a pack of gum.
13. GARY: Mmm
14. SHARON: Just for fun.
15. GARY: I like to give gifts.
16. SHARON: Yeah, I know you do.
17. BETTE: You want to give me one? (laughter)
18. GARY: Well, it's not your birthday, is it?
19. CHUCK: Do you...Gary, do you like to give, do you like giving gifts any time or just at certain times?
20. GARY: Yeah, I was going to say, uh, it's not Bette birthday and I like to give gifts at appropriate occasions. I differ with you on that. At Christmas and birthdays, anniversaties and things like that, I like to give gifts.
21. BETTE: You're rather formalistic, then?
22. GARY: Very so that way
23. SHARON: But I think you have...much better memory than the rest of us. I think one reason I like to give gifts all the time is 'cause re, never remember the appropriate times.
24. GARY: Well, you have to have a system of re-, recording.
25. CHUCK: Yeah, I have that problem also.
26. SHARON: Yeah. Yeah, I, 'cause I have so many brothers and sisters and other people, I don't remember birthdays and stuff.
27. CHUCK: You can write it down.

This conversation demonstrates language being used for primarily interactional purposes. The topics of birthdays and giving gifts are ones for which listeners have readily available schema, hence the situation can be represented as follows;



The conversation also illustrates several features of interactional discourse noted earlier. It is extremely boring, since as Brown and Yule observe, such conversations serve to satisfy the social needs of the participants and have little value or interest for an outsider. One's response on listening to such an extract is likely to be "So what?" or "Who cares?" Appropriate tasks to use in listening to this kind of discourse might include recognizing the number of speakers involved, what their relationships might be (eg friends or stangers), and what the purpose of the conversation might be (eg trying to choose a birthday gift or simply passing time).

Unfortunately the text does not lead in this direction. Instead, the conversation is treated as if it were an example of transactional discourse, one in which the comment of the conversation is crucial, and where evey item of the conversation must be identified through bottom up processing. Hence it is treated as an example of the following;



Thus students are asked to listen to the conversation as many times as possible and complete a comprehension task;

Read these statements about the discussion. Listen to the recording as amny times as you like. Then choose the best answer for each of the statements, and write the letter in the space.

1. Chuck and Sharon like to give gifts __________.
   a. at appropriate times
   b. at special times
   c. when they feel they should
   d. when they feel like it

2. Everyone except Sharon thought gum was _____ gift.
   a. an appropriate
   b. a memorble
   c. a required
   d. a funny

3. Sharon likes to buy small things that people _________.
   a. might usually buy for themselves
   b. might not buy for themselves
   c. might not have enough money to buy
   d. might not really want

4. Gary likes to give gifts ____________.
   a. at appropriate times
   b. at unexpected times
   c. that are expensive
   d. that are inexpensive

5. Gary believes ________ is important for remembering when to give gifts.
   a. a calendar
   b. a special form
   c. a system of recording
   d. a system of choosing

Later in the same unit, students are asked to listen to the conversation as many times as are needed in order to complete a partial transcript of the conversation;

FILLING IN

Listen to the recording, and fill in the blanks. You may listen to the discussion as many times as you need to.

CHUCK: You know, I really don't like having to give gifts on like Christmases and birthdays and stuff, but I like giving very much on times when I just feel like doing it.

SHARON: I do too. And ________ (1) give gifts to a ________ (2) of people that way. ________ (3), uh, maybe I like giving ________ (4) at Christmas too, but ________ (5) so much as an ________ (6). When I was little, ________ (7) did.

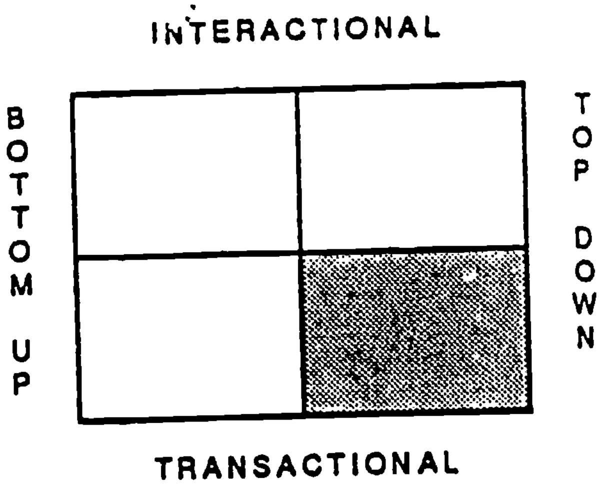
BETTE: Well, what kind ________ (8) gifts do you like ________ (9) give, Sharon?

SHARON: Almost anything. ________ (10) mean, sometimes, uh, gum or ________ (11) or ...(laughter)

A listening text with a different focus is News Tapes (White, 1977), which focuses on listening to news stories. Listening to news broadcasts is a good example of a transactional purpose for listening. Research on accounts of news events shows that readers and listeners apply specific schemata or scripts to the task The script "is the catalyst between reader and text that allows a top down approach" (Zuck and Zuck, 1984: 147). The script is "a predetermined, stereo-typed sequence of actions that defines a well-known situation" (Schank and Abelson, 1977: 41) or "a set of stereotypic expectations about listening to a news broadcast about a political event such as a change in power or political leadership, Zuck and Zuck report that some of the obligatory concepts anticipated are:

Who is the new leader?
How did the leader come to power?
Was the ascension to power anticipated?
What is the reaction of others to this change?
What do we know about the new leader?
What problems will the new leader be facing?

This kind of listening can hence be represented as:



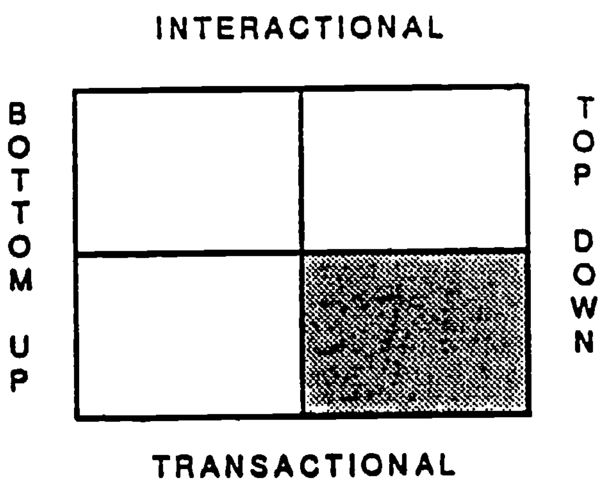
Now let us see how White's text approaches the problem of listening to a news broadcast. In unit one, the student listens to the following on tape.

An automobile accident in Chicago killed two young children yesterday. The accident happened at 4.40 in the afternoon on a Chicago freeway. The children, an eight-year-old girl and a seven-year-old boy, were riding in the back seat of their father's car. They were returning from school at the time. There was a lot of traffic on the road and it was raining very hard. When the father tried to slow down to leave the freeway, the car started to slide on the wet road. The father was unable to control the car, and it hit a lamp post and then crashed into another car. The policeman called an ambulance, and the ambulance took the father and the children to the hospital. The father was seriously hurt and will be in the hospital for a long time, but both the children died in the ambulance.

This is followed by a transcription task. The students listen to the "news broadcast" and complete a partial transcription of it. Subsequent exercises involve drills based on grammar points contained in the text, summarizing, and further transcription exercise.

Clearly these activities have nothing to do with how we listen to news broadcasts. The listening tasks set in the text involve exclusively bottom up rather than top down processing. No attempt is made to activate or make use of an appropriate script for traffic accident stories, nor are the tasks set appropriate for transactional listening.

In a unit on listening to news broadcasts in Listen for It (Richards, Gordon and Harper, 1987), news broadcasts are used as a basis for top down rather than exclusively bottom up processing, reflecting the following view of this kind of listening activity.



Before the students listen to a news broadcast, they read headlines and stories about news events. They are asked to guess what the headlines are about. Both tasks help develop a "script" which students can apply to the listening task.

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

Starting out Look at these newspaper headlines. What do you think each story is about?

Mail Carriers Won't Deliver Mail To Nudists

SMITH CITY, Ohio, May 16—Mothers at the Hot Springs Nudist Camp won't be getting their Mother's Day cards this year as the strike of mail carriers continues. Roy Hester, president of Local 212 of the Mail Carriers' Union, proclaims, "We will not be intimidated by a group of crazy people who refuse to put clothes on! Don't they know that we're decent folk who just want to bring mail to normal people?"

It's been seven weeks now since mail has been delivered to Hot Springs.

Teanagers Arrested For Computer Crimes

Value Of Dollar Falls, But Yen Rises

Fire Fighters Try To Save Homes In California Forest

FRESNO, Calif., April 17—Fires were still reported raging out of control today in six major areas of Kern County, situated in the magnificent Sierra Nevadas. Homeowners have evacuated San Coachella and portions of Salton City, but firefighters caution that today's prevailing westerly winds are putting their homes in severe jeopardy.

Damage to homes already lost has been estimated at $8.5 million, according to Helen E. Watson, a spokesperson for American Insurers, Inc., the major insurers of homes in the county.

Space Shuttle Delayed

Better Secarity On International Flights

They then listen to the following news stories, taken from actual news broadcasts.

DIANE MARTINET: Good afternoon. This is Diane Martinet with the midday on KALF. Fires in California continue to burn out of control, and several small towns in the forests near San Francisco are still in danger. One of the greatest dangers to the 500 fire fighters, however, comes not from the fires, but from plants in the forest - poison ivy plants. Many fire fighters have had skin problems after touching the plants, and at least three have had to go to the hospital for treatment for their skin problems.
Following recent airline hijackings, the International Airline Association, the IAA, has b. meeting in Washington this week. The IAA has been discussing ways to improve security and has introduced several new measures. Beginning in January, improved security measures will include more armed security guards on international flights and special training for pilots.
NASA, the National Aeronautics and Space Agency, today announced in Florida that the next Space Shuttle mission has been cancelled. The mission was scheduled for an 11.30 am takeoff on Tuesday. However, the flight has been cancelled because of problems with the shuttle's central computer system. NASA technicians noticed the computer problems during last minute checks.
Seven teenage computer specialists have been arrested by police in New Jersey. After taking an advanced computer course at school, the seven boys, all from Princeton, New Jersey, learned how to obtain top secret information from government computers in Washington. They also started to use their home computers to make free long-distance telephone calls.
In New York, the value of the dollar stayed the same today. But in Tokyo, the dollar fell dramatically. At the end of the day, it was worth 183 yen, compared to 195 yen yesterday.
And members of a Smith City, Ohio, nudist camp will start receiving their mail again soon. The Postal Service has received complaints from some of the mail delivery personnel who were embarrassed by the appearance of the nudists, and three weeks ago the Postal Service said they would no longer deliver mail to the camp. But - good news for the nudists - following an agreement made today, the Postal Service has said it will provide regular mail delivery on one condition: When the mail is delivered, residents MUST either remain indoors or wear clothes. Well!
And now here's Joe Santos with the sports news. Joe, isn't it a little cold this time of year in Ohio? Especially for nudists! Well, it's been a strange week for baseball! During the game between...

On first listening, students are given a simple task - identifying where each event took place:

1a. Listen to the news programme. Draw a line between a newspaper headline and the place where the story happened.

Place	Headline
NEW YORK	POSTAL SERVICE MAKES AGREEMENT WITH NUDISTS
WASHINGTON	FIRE FIGHTERS TRY TO SAVE HOMES IN CALIFORNIA FOREST
FLORIDA	VALUE OF DOLLAR FALLS BUT YEN RISES
CALIFORNIA	TEENAGERS ARRESTED FOR COMPUTER CRIMES
NEW JERSEY	SPACE SHUTTLE DELAYED
OHIO	BETTER SECURITY ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

Students then listen again and indicate whether statements which summarize the key information in the news stories are true or false:

1b. Read these statements. Listen to the news program again, and say if the statements are True(T) or False(F).

☐ 1. There was a small fire near San Fransisco.

☐ 2. Poisonous plants are a problem to the fire fighters

☐ 3. Better security is needed on airplanes.

☐ 4. There will not be armed security personnel on international airplanes.

☐ 5. The space shuttle will take off on Tuesday.

☐ 6. The boys used their computers to make telephone calls.

☐ 7. The boys were selling secrets to the Russians.

☐ 8. The dollar has risen in value.

☐ 9. The dollar is worth 183 yen today.

☐ 10. The nudists have not received mail fo over a year.

☐ 11. The nudists must stay inside when the mail comes.

The tasks set hence reflect valid purposes in listening to news broadcasts - identifying what happened and where it happened - and allow students to use a top down rather than bottom up approach to listening.

Another text which contains exercises designed to prepare students to use a top down approach to transactional listening is Now Hear This (Foley, 1984). In Unit Eleven, for example, students listen to a description of work in a toy manufacturing factory. Before they listen they discuss factory work and are prepared for some of the vocabulary they will hear in the passage. A picture is also provided which sets the scene and thus established a script for the description they will hear. Following these activities, which provide a basis for top down processing, the students hear the following description:

It's July. The temperature is 89 degrees. the workers at Toy World are busy getting ready for Christmas. Toy World manufactures children's toys. It operates many short assembly lines. This area assembles dolls. The doll parts arrive from Hong Kong. They come in large boxes, one for arms, another for legs, one for bodies, another for heads. Bill and James unpack the boxes and put the parts on the line. They put a head, a body, one left arm, one right arm, one left leg, and one right leg in each box. Olga installs a voice box in the back of each doll. The dolls can say "Mommy", "Daddy", and "night-night." Then, Tony and Marta assemble the dolls. Sometimes a part doesn't fit, so there are extra parts next to the line. Then Ana dresses the dolls. She put pink pajamas on some dolls, yellow pajamas on others. George packs the dolls in boxes. The front of each box is clear plastic so that children and their parents can see the doll in the box. He puts the smaller boxes into a larger one. Mark loads these boxes onto a truck.

Toy World is busy from May to November. During these months, it operates three shifts. But all the toys have to be on store shelves by November. From December to April, business is slow and many workers get laid off. Usually, only one shift operates.

Students complete the following exercises on listening to the description:

C. First listening. Look at the picture and listen to the story. After you listen, tell the class any information you remember about the story.

D. Second listening. Listen to the story again. Write the name of each worker on the picture. Then match the workers and their jobs.

1. Bill and James	a. installs a voice box
2. Olga	b. assemble the dolls
3. Tony and Marta	c. put the parts on the line
4. Ana	d loads the truck
5. George	e. dresses the dolls
6. Mark	f. packs the dolls in boxes

E. Third listening. Read these statements. Then listen to the tape a third time. After you listen write T if the statement is true, F if the statement is false.

___ 1. It's winter at Toy World.
___ 2. There are many assembly lines in this factory.
___ 3. The parts arrive in different boxes.
___ 4. Bill and James put all the heads in one box, and the bodies in another.
___ 5. The dolls can say "Bye-bye".
___ 6. If a part doesn't fit, there are extra parts next to the line.
___ 7. Ana puts pretty dresses on the dolls.
___ 8. Children can see into the box because the front is plastic.
___ 9. Toy World is very busy in December.
___10. The toys have to be on toy shelves by September.

These tasks seem appropriate since they focus on listening for meaning and direct attention to appropriate aspects of the story. Unfortunately, however, the unit does not stop here. The author gets trapped into using the description for "doing language work". Exercises follow which attempt to exploit some of the grammar of the description and which ultimately require the student to complete a partial transcription of the text. This latter exercise has now led the students away from using a top down approach in getting the essential meaning of the text and requires them to listen and remember specific words - an irrelevant task and one which requires exclusively bottom up processing.

An exercise which is more successful in requiring appropriate listening processes for different kinds of listening tasks is seen in Unit 4 of Fast Forward (Fassman and Tavares 1985). As a preparation for listening to the job announcements on a radio programme, students first predict what they expect the requirements for specific jobs might be.

Getting Ready

The State Employment Agency is an organization that helps people find jobs. You are going to listen to a radio program called Jobs Unlimited where you will hear about some employment opportunities that the State Employment Agency has to offer. But first, you'll read some newspaper ads for the same jobs.

1. Look at the ad for the Savey Hotel. What other requirements besides "do light bookkeeping" would you expect to hear in as advertisment for a secretary?

> The Savey Hotel has an immediate opening for a secretary. Light bookkeeping required. Contact Ms Johnson at (111) 838-1728

1 ______________________________

2 ______________________________

3 ______________________________

2. Look at the ad for WESL Radio. What qualities besides "a dynamic personality" might be required of a disc jockey?

> Great opportunity for DJ. If you're an experienced disc jockey with a dynamic personality, call (111) 432-6153 RIGHT NOW!!

1 ______________________________

2 ______________________________

3 ______________________________

3. Look at the ad from Mercy Hospital. One of the requirements is "A chauffeur's licence." What kind of job do you think they are advertising? What other requirements might there be?

Mercy Hospital has openings for people with chauffeur's licenses. Excellent benefits. Call Mr Jordan at (111) 979-6424

1 ______________________________

2 ______________________________

3 ______________________________

4. The Mundus Travel Agency requests someone who can "work with figures." For what kinds of jobs would this skill be needed? What other requirements would you expect?

Mundus Travel Agency is looking for an energetic person who is interested in the world. Must be able to work with figures. Contact Ms Cheng at (111) 919-5310.

1 ______________________________

2 ______________________________

3 ______________________________

Then the students listen to radio annou..ccments about each job and complete brief notes:

Listening

1. Listen to the ads and see if the predictions you made above are correct. Complete the notebook pages below. Then compare your notes with your classmates.

1 SAVOY HOTEL

Type of job: secretary

Requirements:

1 ______________________________
2 do light bookkeeping
3 ______________________________

Contact: ______________________________

Salary: ______________________________

2 WESL RADIO

Type of job: disc jockey

Requirements:

1 ______________________________
2 a dynamic personality
3 ______________________________
4 ______________________________

Contact: ______________________________

3 MERCY HOSPITAL

Type of job: ______________________________

Requirements:

1 a chauffeur's license
2 ______________________________
3 ______________________________

Contact: ______________________________

4 MUNDUS TRAVEL AGENCY

Type of job: ______________________________

Requirements:

1 ______________________________
2 able to work with figures

Work week: ______________________________

Salary: ______________________________

11

The task here does not require students to attempt to identify every word heard in the announcement. Rather, the students must attempt to identify key information, a task for which the pre-listening activity has given them a script.

CONCLUSIONS

In developing classroom activities and materials for teaching listening comprehension, a clear understanding is needed of the nature of top down and bottom up approaches to listening and how these processes relate to different kinds of listening purposes. Too often, listening texts require students to adopt a single approach in listening, one which demands a detailed understanding of the content of a discourse and the recognition of every word and structure that occures in a text. Students should not be required to respond to interactional discourse as if it were being used for a transactional purpose, nor should they be expected to use a bottom up approach to an aural text if a top down one is more appropriate. Ways of using listening passages should be explored which help students employ appropriate listening strategies for particular listening purposes.

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POWER TO THE PUPILS: COMPUTER SOFTWARE IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

John Higgins

I am going to talk about teachers and learners, about computers and programmes, hardware and software. I am going to demonstrate any machinery. For the next 45 minutes you will be looking not at hardware or software but at liveware.

My brief for this talk was to say a little about the methodological principles behind CALL, to describe available and recommended software for language learners and to talk about trends, in other words to indulge in prophecy. The central part of the assignment produces a list, and since a list makes a boring lecture I have put that into a handout which I shall talk about only briefly, leaving me more time to speculate and to talk about how learners use software rather than talking about the software. Machines themselves are of no importance, or should not be; they are the paper on which the software is written and, just as you only think about paper when it becomes so torn that you can't read it, so you only think about machines when they are so difficult to use and unreliable that you cannot use them. Unfortunately that happens all too often, but they are getting better all the time, better in the sense of being unobtrusive and unimportant.

I'll begin with an anecdote. Twelve years ago I was conducting an oral examination in Fnglish for a group of pupils in Bangkok. Most of them had reached the standard you would expect; they could use English, but their vocabulary was limited, they made a lot of grammar errors, and their pronunciation was heavily influenced by Thai. There was one student, however, who was different. He understood everything I said; his accent was almost perfect, and he hardly made any grammar errors. What made him different? I looked at his record form, but could find nothing to explain it. He had not lived overseas and did not seem to have attended any particularly well-known schools. "Who were your teachers?" I asked him, thinking he might have had a native speaker in his school class. "My teachers?" he said, "my teachers were Richard Burton, Laurence Olivier, Vivien Leigh and Gregory Peck." He was a cinema buff, and watched movies with the kind of empathy that led him to imitate the behaviour of the screen heroes and heroines, including their language behaviour.

Now a naive reaction to a success story like this might be to say: school language classes are useless; let us instead spend all the hours for English on the timetable at the cinema. We could run a controlled experiment, perhaps, with one group getting ordinary textbook work and the other group seeing classic films. Then we could publish learned articles showing that the boys in the cinema group performed 2.131% better than the control group and that this is significant at the $p = .99$ level, while the girls showed only 1.7% gains and this is significant at the $p = .9$ level. (I have something of a prejudice against people who fill their papers with obscure mathematics).

A more sensible reaction would be to notice that what distinguished this pupil was his enthusiasm, his love not so much of English as of some users of English. English for him had become a hobby rather than just a subject. Once you have harnessed that kind of enthusiasm and alertness to a subject, then there is no further problem in getting the subject learned. The quality of the teacher and the materials hardly matters; old-fashioned materials serve just as well as the most modern ones

There are, I think, many teachers who would be uncomfortable to have that student in their class. It is usually unpleasant to have learners who do not succeed in learning what you tech them, but it may be even more disturbing to have learners who learn what you do not teach them. Yet there is bound to be a mismatch between teaching and learning (using learning for the time being in a broad sense which includes acquisition). If there were not, then education would be a continuous process of attrition, since you cannot pass on the totality of your knowledge. What we know about language as competent (not necessarily native) speakers could not possibly be stated explicitly in a finite time.

Let me try a little experiment to illustrate this. I want you to imagine you are doing a grammar exercise, a straightforward sentence transformation task. If you have a pen and a piece of paper handy, try writing down your response. When I tell you what to do, try doing it without too much thought; just write down the first response that occurs to you without agonising over whether it is the one I want.

Here is the task: make this sentence singular

They write books.

Now what did you write? Some of you wrote

She is writing a book. (or He is writing a book.)

doing exactly what I asked you to. Some of you may have written

She writes a book.

but then worried about it, perhaps crossed it out. The point is that I did not tell you to change the verb aspect, and yet that is what you would automatically do if you were thinking about meaning rather than form.

If we consider the four sentences

She writes books.
She is writing a book.
She writes a book.
She is writing books.

all four of them are grammatical, but the first two are natural, while the third and fourth require rather elaborate contextual justification. I could dream up contexts for them, for instance for number three:

She keeps getting divorced, yet she still manages to look cheerful. How does she do it?

Oh, every time she ditches a husband, she writes a book.

For number four:

Sally used to go to the bridge club regularly, but she has given that up. She's writing books instead.

If you want a linguistic explanation, you could say that there is a semantic feature +/- specific which applies to both verb phrase and noun phrase. A noun phrase with "a" can be either, but it defaults to +specific, ie we expect the speaker to have a particular book in mind unless the context makes that unlikely. On the other hand the plural, "books", defaults to -specific. Similarly the continuous verb aspect, "is writing" defaults to writing in mind, whereas the simple present, "writes" defaults to + specific; we can expect the speaker to have a particular act of writing in mind, whereas the simple present, "writes" defaults to -specific. Now it doesn't really matter whether you made that analysis or even understood it. What matters is that you instinctively would have chosen the right form in any meaningful context. How did you do it? Nobody ever taught it to you; it is not in the textbooks as a grammar rule. If textbooks came down to this kind of detail, they would weigh tons and cost fortunes. And that brings us to a characteristic of textbooks that has not been stressed very much yet this week, the fact that they are necessarily meagre. The quantity of teaching they contain is insufficuent to do the job unaided. As managers of learning we have to make sure that we open windows on a wider world of language outside the textbook.

The outside world, and even some people within the language teaching profession, seem to have what I call the Barber's Shop image of education. You want your hair cut? OK, go and sit down on that chair, turn your head the way the barber tells you, and wait till he or she has finished cutting. You want to learn English? OK, sit on that bench. Open your mouth when the teacher tells you to, and wait until he or she has finished teaching.

I am exaggerating, of course. Nobody seriously imagines that learning is quite as passive a process as getting a haircut. However, this kind of thinking accounts for the spectacular failure of certain kinds of CALL. One claim that used to be made often was that computers would let students make up work that they had missed through illness. (The same claims had been made for programmed learning and language laboratories.) Another claim was that one could learn at home. The strongest claim was that made by Tom Stonier that in future home would be the place one went to learn, and school would be the place for socialising. Yet any child who has tried to make up more than a few hours of missed work, or any parent who has tried to buy their offspring a real headstart by getting a computer and some disks, will know that it doesn't work. It is easy to blame the machines and the software. But do you think that a compulsory (note the compulsory) series of visits to the cinema to see old Gregory Peck movies would work any better? One cannot simply give a child a disk and say: "Away you go and learn your irregular verbs." Learning involves involvement. Parents who succeed in improving their children's education are those who learn alongside them.

So the software we like is software which involves teachers, learners, and parents in the same enterprise. We distrust the kind of software that tries to do the whole job, that tries to foresee every possible student error and supply an appropriate feedback message for each. We believe that the software is only one element of a learning environment that includes many other components, such as the dormant knowledge of the individual, what you can work out or remember if you are not under threat of public humiliation, such as the pooled knowledge of a group who collaborate on a task, such as the use of a teacher as a consultant, "Come and tell us why this did not work", and plain old-fashioned reference books. Learners often succeed in making software change its nature by using it in new ways; drills become games, toys become tools, and tools become toys. Long may this continue. In particular drill activities which are timed are sometimes turned spontaneously into races, and anything which involves scoring becomes a competition, either a competition against others or one against oneself, a constant effort to improve on one's best scores. Classroom teachers can also harness the competitive instinct among learners, but the language laboratory, with its pre-recorded fixed response, could never do this.

So what kinds of software are there? I have put down a rough-and ready classification into four main types, though I doubt whether every programme could be made to fit the scheme comfortably. There is one major category missing, the artificial intelligence group in which the machine functions as expert system or as tutee, learning from inputs and showing, often in its failures, something about the complexity of natural language. The reason for omitting this was that I do not know of any significant published programs in this area which can be used as they stand by learners, apart from the ubiquitous ELIZA. Watch this space.

Category A is "DO WHAT I TELL YOU", the machine controlling to a great extent the nature and order of events. This includes drills, exercises, quizzes and tests, and at the most organised end of this spectrum programmed learning. The mechanics are familiar. The machine gives you a task, say a sentence to complete or a question to answer. You can answer by typing out a word or phrase, or by selecting an answer in a multiple choice format, say by pressing a number key. The machine tells you if you are right or wrong and then invites you to try again if you were wrong. There may be some feedback about why the answer was wrong as soon as you have found the right answer. These programmes, just like books, can be good or bad, error-free or errorful, relevant of irrelevant.

However, one very interesting point has emerged from recent experience, which is embodied into some of the best software, particularly Wida Software's TESTMASTER. The conventional assumption used to be that you commented on wrong answers but, as soon as a student had found a right answer you said "Well done" and moved on to the next item. What Chris Jones, the author of TESTMASTER, has pointed out is that students have not necessarily lost interest in an item just becuase they got it right. Perhaps they would like to know what is wrong with a different answer which they were thinking of giving. this is a point which class teachers should take note of, not just programmers.

My second category, GUESS WHAT WAS THERE, is perhaps the clearest innovation that CALL has supplied in its short life. Tim Johns invented the form with his TEXTBAG program, in which all the words of a text were masked out and you had to point to single words and buy them, buying the minimum number of words that you needed in order to answer a comprehension question displayed at the end of the text. I followed this up with STORYBOARD, in which the words of a masked out text had to be guessed, and each occurrence of a successfully guessed word was supplied wherever it occurred, in technical terms a type-replacement activity rather than a token replacement activity. STORYBOARD probably has the distinction of being the most widely imitated CALL programme ever; there must be more than a dozen versions current. I could talk for a couple of hours about the programme and about what is done with it, but - I shall not. I do, however, urge any one who has never seen a version running to try it out; you could find it changes your whole perception of teacher/learner roles. In fact all the programmes in this category and in the next one belong to

Dr Prabhu's description of "meta-materials", namely structured activities with no content of their own; the content can be supplied by teachers and, whisper it, learners.

My third category, "CAN I HELP YOU?", is purely the computer as tool. If we as writers or administrators find them useful, why should we cut our students off from the benefits? Let them explore the language with their aid. Let them have the satisfaction of producing attractively presented work that they can display with pride, edited and corrected (by the teacher and by each other) with none of the tedium of making a fair copy by hand. For all that we may value hard work, it is generally the case that when we make work easier, we get more of it done. Whatever the pocket calculator may have done to our mental arithmetic skills, it has certainly led to more calculations being performed. It has ceased to be tedious to compare the cost of fabrics sold by the metre for dollars with those sold by the yard for pounds.

The fourth category, which I called "HOW DO I GET OUT OF THIS?", consists of activities which Dr Prabhu might call semi-materials, ie materials which have content but impose no structured methodology. Many of them were not created for language learners at all. Even those that were, such as our own INVENTION program, often lead to the comment, "But that's a maths program, not an English program". The answer to that, of course, is that we live in a world full of mathematics, the shape of a building, the speed of a car, the cost of a glass of beer. But we talk about these concepts in language, and we are not obliged to limit such talk to the maths lesson. (At this conference Ballagh and Moore have already given us a wealth of ideas for getting language out of mathematics and vice versa). We should always be trying to open a window on a world in which language can be acquired, a world where language is used in a concentrated way to receive and transmit meanings.

So finally to predictions. Where are we going from here? Perhaps you are expecting me to talk about laser disks and interactive video, about CD-ROMs and a world where the whole of the Library of Congress can be consulted from one's bedroom by pushing a few keys, about tele-conferencing, the global village of instant communication. These things will come, will be exciting, will take a little time to absorb, and will eventually be taken for granted. Meanwhile what of the learner and the teacher? Learners can use these things just as easily as anybody else. Machines supply power. However, we will need to learn how to use it. Although we will be able to get answers to a infinity of questions, we need to train ourselves to ask more questions. When we have the training we will have power to learn from a much wider part of our environment than a single teacher can provide.

The learning instinct is strong in all normal circumstance; we are constantly engaged in an effort to make sense of our environment, and in making predictions. There are two cases in which this learning instinct will be suppressed.

One is when the environment is too complex to be explained; that is what happens to me when I hear conversation in Chinese. The other is where the environment is so impoverished and predictable that it contains nothing which requires explanation, no problems to be solved and no uncertainties to be predicted. This might occur if I had to carry out an automatic drill on sentences whose meaning doesn't matter. Both cases, too much challenge and too little, lead to the same outcome, boredom or the switching off of the learning instinct.

What computers are good at, because of the rapid and slavish way they respond, is supplying optimal challenge, something a teacher with forty students can hardly ever do. Optimal challege is individually determined and can vary from minute to minute; at times I will want to be stretched, at others to receive all the help that is available. With the computer as a slave, learners and small groups of learners can readily find optimal challenges. This, more than any other reason, accounts for the so-called addictiveness of computers, the fact that even children with short attention spans can spend long periods with them.

The outcome is not likely to be that everyone will uniformly learn more and improve their performance. Since computers supply opportunities, not fixed paths to follow, improvement will be sporadic and unpredictable; we are likely to encounter more individuals like my star pupil in Thailand without necessarily seeing an overall jump in standards. The pioneers of CALL saw themselves as handicappers in a horse race, bringing all the horses to the finishing line abreast. What we predict instead is that computers will act like adrenalin, sending some of the horses racing far ahead of the field. In the process teachers are going to find their authority, in particular their authority as 'knowers' of their subject, will be undermined, since some of the learners will seize opportunities to discover things the teacher does not know. Teachers will have to find new roles, as advisers, as managers, even as fellow learners discovering new insights into language by using the same facilities as their students. For some teachers it will be an uncomfortable experience. Good luck!

APPENDIX: TYPES OF SOFTWARE

A. "DO WHAT I TELL YOU"

Quizzes - These are useful reading practice even when they are not specifically about language. there are quiz programmes in the public domain, including many which allow you to enter your own questions. Often the best use of them is to ask learners to write new questions and use them to challenge other members of the class.

Tests - eg Longman's SCREENTEST. These are much more popular with learners than one expects them to be. One needs to be careful, since a great many programmes in circulation, especially those in the public domain, are badly written and contain blatant errors or are confusingly worded.

Exercises - one can find ready-made exercises, but there are many programmes which allow you to build your own, eg Wida Software's GAPMASTER, TESTMASTER, and MATCHMASTER, and RDA's MARK-UP (for punctuation). Building good exercises is hard work; at least these programmes allow teachers to learn from their own mistakes and improve the exercises gradually.

Programmed learning - very difficult to write, though programmes to help you write branching programmes, such as Strange Software's INFO, can be bought very cheaply. The main problem is that of supplying relevant feedback to learners who have made mistakes. Basically this is something machines are not very good at; neither, for that matter, are books.

B. "GUESS WHAT WAS THERE"

Text reconstruction exercises are superficially like other kinds of exercise, except that the nature of the challenge is different; you have to reconstruct by trial and error a particular piece of prose rather than find a correct form of sentence.

There are basically four ways of mutilating a text and challenging learners to reconstruct it: your can delete things from it; or your can re-order it. You can carry out these operations at the level of the letter, the word, or the sentence, and you can do it partially or totally.

STORYBOARD, RHUBARB, QUARTEXT and CLOZEMASTER are all deletion programs, the first three being total deletion, ie everything in the text has gone. DOUBLE-UP, GOON, SEQUITUR and TEXTPLAY are examples of re-ordering programs.

Almost all programs in this category allow you to enter your own pieces of text. This makes them what Dr Prabhu described as 'meta-materials'. Teachers can select and enter text which is relevant to course work, but do not forget that they also allow learners to enter their own texts to challenge each other; this can provide a strong motivation for composition.

A slightly different type of deletion exercise is PINPOINT, which shows a tiny fragment of text and invites you to guess the title; if you do not want to guess, you can ask to see more of the text, and so on until you can guess confidently. The object of this is to persuade readers that they can understand something even if they cant't understand everything, and to help them develop a better risk-taking strategy in their ordinary reading.

In general the computer is a poor medium for reading long texts or for developing any of the skills of extensive reading. Most of the so-called reading skills programs, in which you have to read a text on screen and then answer comprehension questions, would be better done on paper. However, there may be diagnostic applications, and my own HOPALONG program attempts to help learners discover something about their own reading style and about the kinds of text they can cope with.

C. "CAN I HELP YOU?"

The computer's natural role is that of a slave, obeying orders and carrying out jobs on demand. The obvious language job is word-processing or, in other words, displaying fair copy of the master's second thoughts.

Cheap public domain and shareware word-processors are easy to find. One of the most interesting is MINDREADER, which says it is designed for bad typists; it tries to guess the word you are typing and, as soon as you have typed two or three letters, displays a list of possible words so that you can finish the word by typing a number. If you carry on typing instead of choosing a word, it will remember the word, so that it learns your style and soon starts offering the words you yourself use frequently.

All word-processors have a "search-and-replace" function, which can be used to create practice material from any piece of text which has been typed in. You can replace all the articles with "____" and then print out the text so that the learners can write them back in. For a more difficult task, use a piece of first-person narrative and replace all the first- person pronouns with "____". Now ask learners to re- write the text as third-person narrative, putting appropriate pronouns or names into the spaces and making any other necessary changes.

More expensive word-processors include outliners, spelling-checkers, thesauruses, and grammar- or style- checkers. These are of very little use as writing aids, but they are fascinating as ways of exploring the language, as programmes to play with. Feed in a nonsense word and watch what alternatives the spelling-checker offers you. Look at the set of synonyms offered by the thesaurus and then look for synonyms of the synonyms. Discuss which words will fit the context, and what is wrong with the others. Type in some Shakespeare and watch the style-checker offer its naive comments.

The most powerful aid of all for letting learners play with language is a concordancer, ie a program which finds particular words in a text and prints out the line on which the owrd occurs. You can use the FIND command in MSDOS for this purpose. WORD COUNT EXTRA from Strange Software produces a list of all the words used in a text, sorted either alphabetically or by their frequency. True concordance programs produce key-Work-in-Context (KWIC) displays, where you see the key word in the centre of the screen with half a line of context before and after, making it much easier to notice the way words come together, eg which preposition occurs after "believe" or the fact that the word "same" is almost always preceded by "the".

D. "HOW DO WE GET OUT OF THIS?"

Simulations can take many forms, but can be classified as "real-time" and "move-based". In the former an event is in progress which you can control but which requires some action from you; you can fail by being too slow. Examples are flight simulators, all the arcade action games, and sports simulations. They do not usually generate much language while they are in progress, but they can be talked about or written about afterwards.

Move-based simulations present you with a situation and ask you to make a decision. The computer calculates the outcome of your decision and then asks for the next decision. The action freezes while you decide what to do. There are many business and trading simulations of this form, such as CUP's FAST FOOD. Experience of using these with classes shows that the spoken language of the discussion is rather impoverished; people do not say more than they need to, and at worst it comes down to barking numbers at each other. You can improve things greatly by having the discussion take place away from the computer screen, and appointing a "runner" who enters the group's decisions and reports back to them the computer's reponse.

Adventures are a special kind of simulation, often based on well-known stories, in which you take on the role of a character, are given an objective, and proceed by giving commands to the machine or by selecting choices. Most advantures are too difficult for most EFL learners (or teachers) to solve, but CUP's LONDON ADVENTURE is designed for EFL learners, and there may be others which can be adapted.

Logic problems can also generate spoken language, and can be directed at specific points of usage. RDA's INVENTION, for instance, provides unlimited meaningful examples of sentences using comparatives in a problem setting. We are currently engaged in writing more programmes of this type to activity in which "play" can be given a strongly grammatical focus is fortune- telling and horoscopes; fortune-telling programmes are easy to find, and they give plenty of opportunities for using future tenses and if-clauses.

Sources of software mentioned here (all for MSDOS machines):

Research Design Associates, P O Box 848, Stony Brook, New York, USA

Wida Software, 2 Nicholas Garden, London W5 UK

Cambridge University Press, The Pitt Building, Cambridge, UK

Strange Software Ltd, 40 Bowling Green Lane, London EC1R ONE

Public Domain and Shareware libraries: the addresses are given in computer magazines.

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES: COMPUTERS AS LANGUAGE LEARNING TOOLS

Bernd Ruschoff

I INTRODUCTION

When discussing the problem of computer assisted language learning (CALL) materials for individual study, scholars often look back at the first (mainframe-based) phase of using computers as learning and teaching aids. In view of some of the "newly" developed drill and practice software as well as the many problems language teachers have had with technical media, this is often enough a look back in anger. However, while the principles of behaviouristic programmed learning (PL) or instruction (PI) should not be revived when developing CALL programmes for microcomputers, some of the earlier ideas concerning branching techniques and adaptivity etc should at least be reexamined.

Most programmes available to date use branching mainly on a one-to-one basis, even though in the past it has often been pointed out that it is not sufficient to use branching purely on the basis of a student's performance when dealing with an isolated task, but that the complete history of the student-program dialogue would have to be taken into consideration. (cf Eyferth, 1974) Furthermore, self-determination and the need for learners to take charge of their learning in a responsible way have become important features of language learning in recent years. Therefore, I intend to address myself to two important aspects to be considered when devising computer assisted self-study packages for language learning.

First, I shall further elaborate on the concept of adaptivity in CALL materials, which I have discussed on previous occasions. (cf Ruschoff, 1986) sufficient flexibility and adaptivity can only be achieved if such programmes in addition to providing a meaningful input analysis are able to collect information about the learning history and performance of individual learners and to interpret it intelligently. Two possible applications of this idea will be presented: the possibility of a permanent needs/performance analysis while a learner is working with a given programme, and a pre-exercise needs analysis, possibly on the basis of a pre-test. The resulting changes and adaptations in either course or content of a programme could be initiated automatically, but the importance and possible advantages of letting each learner participate in such decisions and thus giving him/her a measure of control are to be considered as well.

Consequently, the second aspect I want to present here will be an initial analysis of the possibilities (and limitations) of computers enhancing autonomous (language) learning. With regard to this problem, I intend to argue that self-study packages have to be put together in such a way that they take into account the fact that different learners have different levels of learning experience resulting in a difference of learning styles and learning proficiency. After the early stages of an exercise package, where the programme on behalf of an inexperienced learner "decides" more or less exclusively on course and content, such packages could in my opinion allow for a growing degree of self-determination as a learner progresses. However, this has to be organized in a way which gradually enables a learner to take more and more responsibility for his/her learning. That is to say, in addition to a flexible exercise path, a meaningful input analysis and calculation of an individual learner's performance, a CALL programme should also incorporate various strategies for gradually individualizing the learner in order to make him/her autonomous in the sense of becoming capable of self-instruction and self-direction as defined by Little and Grant (1986).

However, when I talk of individualization I am not referring to the kind of complete individualization of learning as proposed and investigated throughout the seventies. The strategies I would like to see incorporated in CALL programmes for individual study are aimed at improving a learner's ability to make the best use of self-study phases within a curriculum. It is my opinion that because of the specific communicative nature of the subject language complete individualization is a concept not applicable to language learning. Nevertheless, the theories and findings of research dealing with so-called "intelligent" tutorial systems as well as self-directed learning in general definitely deserve a closer inspection by developers of CALL programmes as to their applicability for language learning software for self-study. (for further information on these areas see Unterrichtseissenschaft 4. 1986: special issue on "Lernen mit dem Computer" and Caffarella and O'Donnel, 1987).

The ideas I am going to present in this paper are admittedly somewhat theoretical, as most of the CALL software developed for individual study tends to be more of the "masterial" rather than the "pedagogical" type as defined by John Higgins (1983). What I am about to discuss is based on observing students and schoolchildren as well as adult learners working with various kinds of CALL materials as well as consulting the literature dealing with "intelligent" tutorials and self-directed learning. Though the observations where not conducted in any empirical way, it was interesting to see how learners reacted to various levels of flexibility.

The main conclusion was that, apart from getting frustrated with programmes that treat input in an insufficient and simplistic manner, learners seem to feel the need to be allowed to influence the way they have to work with a programme.

They want to be able to decide for themselves between varying degrees of help and feedback and to ask the programme for further information when they feel it is necessary. They want to be able to interrupt an exercise and return to it at a later stage as well as to be allowed to flip back and forth in an exercise and to check on their work on previous tasks in the programme. Many more observations could be listed here, but due to the limited scope of this paper I shall now concentrate on describing some of my deliberations concerning flexibility, adaptivity and self-directedness as well as a few examples of the software we have developed at the AVMZ.

II FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTIVITY

Since the earliest days of (language) learning teachers have been faced with the problem of differing levels of competence and different styles of learning within any one group of learners. Learners are individuals, and the past has shown that in order to really be able to cope with these differences between learners when working individually, a teacher would ideally have to provide each and every one of them with customized self-study materials. Consequently, if one browses through the shelves of an educational bookshop, one will find a vast variety of printed materials for individual learning, often with accompanying AV-tapes, addressing themselves in different ways to problems such as vocabulary building, general grammar, revision, sentence construction, reading and listening comprehension etc...

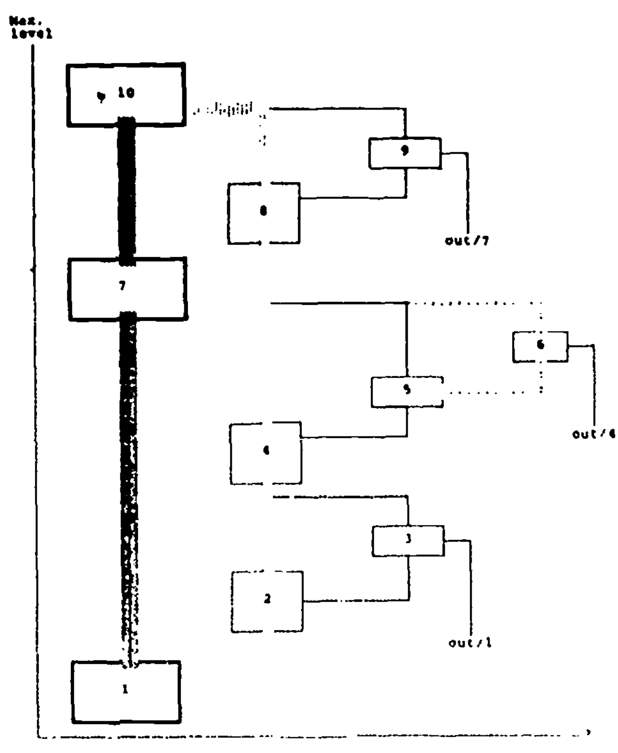
Traditionally, self-study CALL programmes were simply computer programmed versions of previously existing paper-based exercise materials, the only benefit being that a learner immediately discovered whether his/her response to a given task was corrent or not. As far as the input analysis of most of these types of "drill and practice" programmes is concerned, all too often the word analysis does not properly describe the simplicity and sometimes even stupidity of such materials. However, I shall not go into further details with regard to the need for intelligently programmed input analysis routines in CALL packages, as this problem has already been discussed by many of my CALLeages (sic) and myself in the past.

Furthermore, increasing amounts of the more recently developed materials seem to have been equipped with a higher degree of "intelligence" than their predecessors when it comes to their ability to treat students' input in a productive and constructive way. Returning, however, to the problem of individual learners' needs, it is in my opinion of equal importance to allow for a certain degree of flexibility in the structure and sequence of CALL programmes. To achieve a degree of adaptivity, I do not think that it is necessary to create an expert system or some other form of artificial intelligence. Such programmes would only need "to know" enough about the language problem in question to be able to perform a meaningful error-analysis. In addition to this they would have to have the capability of collecting relevant information on an individual learner's learning style and performance to be able to reprogram themselves in a way which ensures that they constantly suit his/her needs and further concentrate on areas of particular difficulty.

Ideally, and of course hypothetically, one could put all the different existing materials dealing with a particular set of language problems with all their different types of exercise forms and learning strategies and their varying degrees of help and feedback provided by the programme into one big package. Which of these exercises an individual learner will have to work with and which switches in course and/or content will take place while the programme runs would depend on a coefficient calculated by the programme and reflecting a particular learner's needs and/or performance. (cf Marty, 1982 and Ruschoff, 1986).

Realistically, one should start by creating self-study materials dealing with a given language problem in such a way that an exercise contains a set of different types of modules with various levels of difficulty and various kinds and levels of help provided by the exercise. Such materials would then run along the lines described above and exemplified bu the following figure

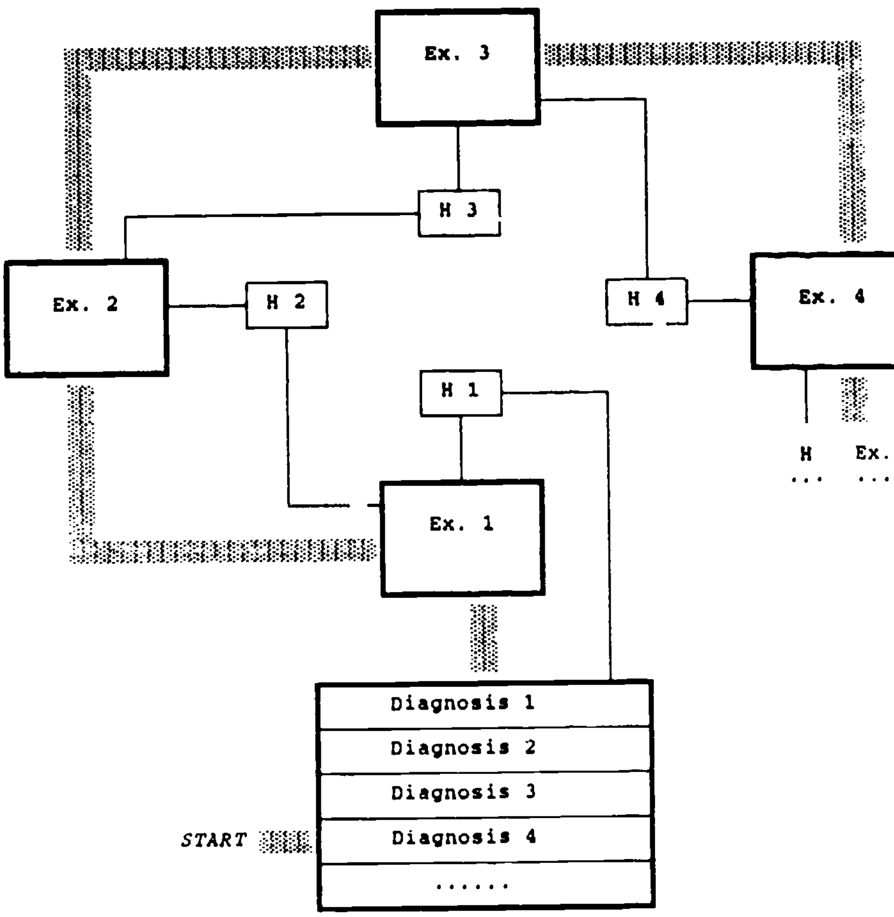
Flexible Exercise Path (example 1)



Easterbrook / Rüschoff 1987

We are currently working on a self-study package for business English, which is intended to function as a back-up to the rather limited number of course hours most business persons are able to attend. We are thinking of creating two types of flexible path within these packages.

Flexible Exercise Path (example 2)



Easterbrook / Rüschoff 1987

When working with programmes of this kind, the learner will go through a kind of placement test, examining all aspects of the language problem(s) to be exercised with the package. The result of this diagnosis is stored in the programme, and the route through the set of exercises and additional modules is planned accordingly.

If the pre-exercise needs analysis shows that a learner does not seem to have any significant problems with any of the language problems to be practised, the programme will simply follow the standard course through the exercise as indicated by the thick shaded path. If, however, the diagnosis shows that e.g. in a set of exercises dealing with the English tense system, a learner has no particular problems with the verb tenses and their grammatically correct forms as such, but his/ her knowledge of the use of the tenses in main clauses and related subordinate clauses focused on in ex. 3 appears to be rather shaky, the programme would automatically lead the learner directly through ex.1 and ex.2 as a sort of general revision, but then switch to H 3, representing a preparatory module with a revision exercise of the basic rules concerning this problem before letting him/her work on the actual exercise ex.3.

Of course, the main exercise should not neglect some of the basic criteria for CALL materials of this kind, i.e. learners have to be permitted to flip back and forth through the tasks and possibly allowed to stop working on the exercise in order to check through reference materials provided by the package etc, but in general the degree of help and feedback provided by the programme will be much less in comparison with the preparatory modules.

Another example would be that the main course through the programme consists of exercises in an exploratory mode, such as Wida Software's TESTMASTER, and that the preparatory modules would represent straightforward tutorials going through the items and language problems needed to make best use of the freedom and flexibility provided by the exploratory exercise. In this case the role of the diagnosis would be to determine whether the learner's command of certain aspects of the target language is sufficient to enable him/her to work on the more complex tasks of a flexible response exercise of the TESTMASTER type. In addition to the role mentioned here, in such cases the diagnosis would have to be geared towards an analysis of the student's learning styles, e.g. possible tendencies towards serialistic or holistic learning (cf. O'Shea & Self, 1983, p 56), in order to determine whether a more tutorial or a more exploratory path through a set of exercise modules appears to be more appropriate.

Both pre-exercise needs analysis and permanent needs/ performance analysis are going to be integral parts of the package we are working on at the moment. The main problem our work is now concentrating on is, of course, how to equip the package with the capability of interpreting in order to ensure a meaningful needs analysis. I have in the past already referred to the MINNESOTA ADAPTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEM, which includes some interesting aspects we are going to consider more intensively. (cf. Tennyson, Christensen and Park, 1984) The MAIS system is of particular interest to us, as it is one of the few practical demonstrations of some of the characteristics of intelligent tutorial systems we intend to incorporate in our software. (cf. Breuer, 1986, p 340)

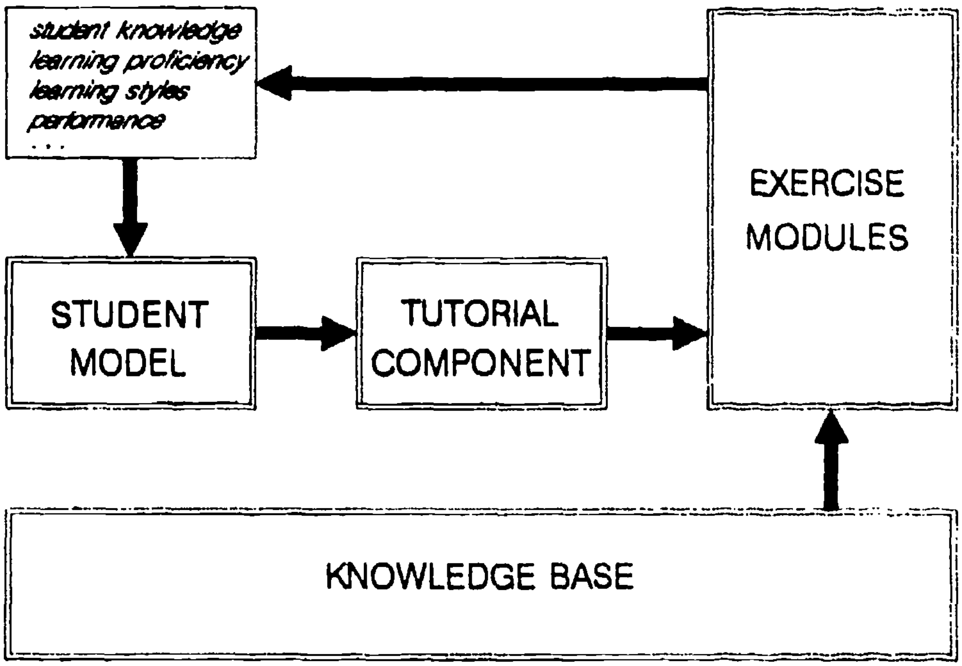
III SELF-DETERMINATION

Thus far I have talked about adaptive programmes with a flexible exercise path determined more or less exclusively by the programme itself. In the past, however, the problem of whether any changes in a programme's structure, sequence or content should be initiated automatically by the programme, or whether the learner should be allowed to decide on, or influence such changes has led to some controversy. It has often been said that the first option would seem to be the more appropriate choice from the point of view of learning psychology. In this way the learner would not notice how he/she is being helped, which may have a positive effect on his/her learning. (cf. Hope et al., 1985, p 47)

However, in 1983 O'Shea and Self reported on various researchers working on "intelligent" tutorial systems who support the argument "... that the learner himself is the best judge of appropriate instructional actions and that the extra responsibilty should help increase his motivation." (O'Shea and Self, 1983, p 159) Our observations mentioned above indicate that, while learners certainly have to learn how to become good judges of appropriate instructional actions, they certainly seem to work more productively when given at least a minimum level of flexibility.

Consequently, I tend to agree with Rex Last, who points out that a possible positive effect of automatic changes in a programme on someone's learning "... can be set against the motivational impact of putting a measure of control into the hands of the learner." (Last, 1984, p 47) It is also my feeling that this may well contribute to the effectiveness of CALL materials for self-study, because it ensures a certain amount of learner autonomy when working with such materials. This is of particular importance in adult education, because, as was stated by Knowles (1980), self-directedness is something towards which adults seem to constantly develop, as it seems to be part of their nature.

It might be interesting in this context ot look at Mandi and Hron's definition of an "intelligent" tutorial system, which has to be both adaptive and flexible. (cf. Mandi and Hron, 1986, p 360) According to them, the "... basic components of such systems must be considered the knowledge base, the student model and the tutorial component." (Mandi and Hron, 1986, p 358) I have tried to exemplify this concept by the following figure.


student knowledge
learning proficiency
learning styles
performance
...
EXERCISE MODULES
STUDENT MODEL
TUTORIAL COMPONENT
KNOWLEDGE BASE

The knowledge base refers to the actual content of a set of exercise modules, the student model can be seen as a dynamic representation of a learner's knowledge, performance, learning style and level of comprehension. Finally, the tutorial component guides the learner through the set of curricular modules on the basis of the student model.

In this concept, the term adaptive refers to the fact that course, content and exercise type are always matched with the actual knowledge, performance and learning proficiency of a student. Their understanding of the term flexible, however, includes the fact that a learner has the choice to change the form of presentation and exercise type as well as to make use of additional help options provided by a package on his/her own initiative. Furthermore, one of the main characteristics of computers as learning tools mentioned most often is the fact that computers supposedly "... facilitate autonomous learning: students can, ideally, learn whatever, whenever (soon wherever) they wish." (O'Shea and Self, 1983, p 58)

The main problem, however, "... is not learner control versus no learner control but how to help students optimize the use of learner control available to them." (Merril, 1980, p) Learner control, ie autonomy and self-directedness, is something that has to be developed in students. It seems to be particularly adults who have great difficulty when faced with the task of learning a new language from scratch or taking a refresher course after many years of absence from a (language) classroom. And, as we were able to observe when running a one year beginners English course at the Wuppertal local council adult education department, this applies just as much to the use of CALL programmes in such groups.

The proper use of a certain degree of freedom ideally provided by flexible and adaptive CALL programme is something that does not come naturally. Just as teachers have to learn how to make the best use of computers in language learning, learning with CALL software has to be learned. The fact that computer assisted language learning programmes provide the learner with some kind of feedback and a means of keeping track of his/her performance by some sort of evaluation routine does not mean that other problems of autonomous learning, such as setting up a proper course plan with appropriate stages and selecting the right kind of exercise or activity at the proper moment in the course etc, are no longer relevant.

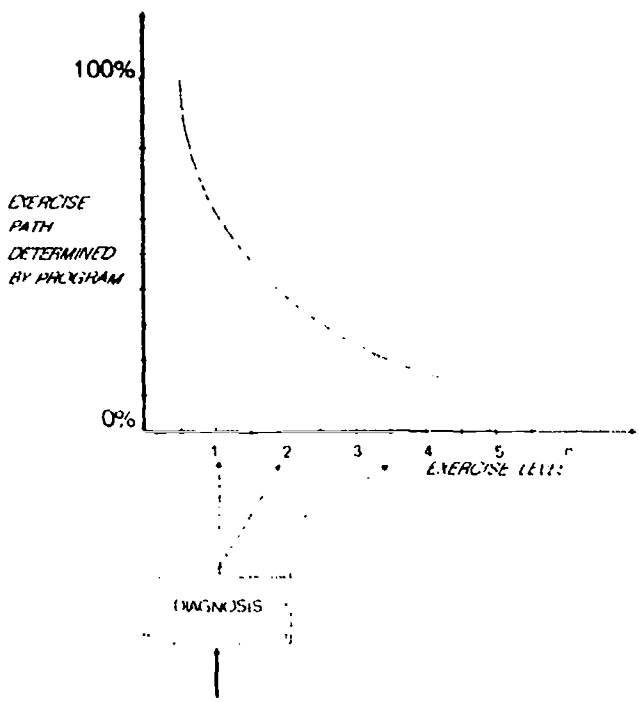
"The learner will begin to achieve autonomy only when he or she feels able to take the initiative in the pedagogical dialogue or interaction that underlies the learning process, whether that dialogue/interaction is conducted with a teacher ... or in a private set of learning materials." (Little, 1987, p 16) Consequently, CALL packages of the kind referred to in this paper should gradually increase the amount of learner control over what is going to be learned and how.

The ability to work in a self-directed manner will also have to be considered as part of the student model mentioned above.

Futhermore, working with a certain exercise module selected by the tutorial component will almost certainly have some effect on the student model, which is why I have attempted to point out a certain circular causality in fig 3. It is, in my opinion the task of a responsible software developer to ensure that this effect is a positive one and to avoid learning patterns of the past being reinforced by simple "drill & kill" programmes, as Chris Jones (1987) sometimes refers to the more traditional CALL programmes. In other words, such sets of exercise modules should incorporate a set of measures intended to further develop a learner's ability to make use of the computer in a responsible, self-directed and, thus, more creative way.

After an initial phase in the early stages of a learning package when less experienced learners need to be provided with exact instructions as to the course, content and learning strategy of a set of exercises, the way in which the learner is presented with more and more options and asked to take a growing number of decisions on his/her own, should be conceived in a way that ensures a gradual change of learning patterns and, as a result, an increased level of autonomy.

DEGREE OF SELF-DETERMINATION



In this kind of set-up, the entry diagnosis should also be directed towards determining the degree of learning proficiency in addition to the appropriate exercise level. With regard to this problem research conducted by Guglielmino (1977), who has developed a Selp-Directed-Learning-Readiness Scale (SDLRS), and by Long and Agyekum (1983), whose investigations according to Caffarella and D'Donnel (1987) support the validity of SDLRS, would have to be looked at more closely. The tutorial component will then also have to "decide" whether the programme should provide more of guided learning or rather allow for a more exploratory style of learning.

At the beginning, a less experienced learner will, of course, have to work with modules which, however adaptive, involve a tutorial component taking most decisions for him/her. Gradually the degree of self-determination increases and more and more modules which allow for more flexibility in the sense mentioned above are presented to the learner. In the same way, the decision taking role of the tutorial component will decrease.

As far as the actual types of module are concerned, which we intend to write for a package of the kind descibed in this paper, we are currently thinking of the following:

(a) straightforward tutorials with help and feedback provided by the exercise on the basis of student performance;

(b) tutorials which simply inform the student as to the correctness of his/her response, but leave it to the student whether or not he/she wishes for further information on mistakes, further help before a new attempt, further information on the subject of the module, or a revision module before returning to the actual exercise;

(c) tutorials with an exploratory component which encourage the learner to search for alternative correct solutions in addition to the flexibility as described in (b);

(d) exploratory modules designed along the lines of WIDA Software's TESTMASTER (cf Jones, 1986) which simply provide the learner with a certain frame within which he/she is free to experiment with alternative correct solutions as long and as often as he/she likes;

(e) reference materials and data files with background information which learners can consult at will when working on an exercise package or with other (non-computer based) materials of the curriculum;

(f) routines which present the learner with a video, audiotext or a text on the screen, but leave it to him/her how to approach the "text". The programme simply allows for access to a variety of help features, exercises and tests, which the learner may or may not make use of.

As to the final option listed above, we have developed a listenting comprehension exercise along the lines of an interactive videodisc developed by a team in France (cf Garrigues, 1986) We are using an audiocard, a device installed in the IBM-PC which allows natural sound to be recorded into the computer (either on floppydisk or on harddisk). Any spoken text recorded can be accessed freely at any time of an exercise without any significant delay. Once a learner has listened to a text or dialogue he/she may choose from the following options in order to prepare for the comprehension questions:

```
AUDIOTEST
________________________________________________________________

                        *** HELP MENU ***

  Your options ... :   ( 1 )  Listen again
                       ( 2 )  Listen again (sentence by sentence)
                       ( 3 )  Listen again (with subtitles)
                       ( 4 )  Listen again (different speaker)
                       ( 5 )  Access written help / read script
                       ( 6 )  Start questions on the text

  Your choice   ... :
________________________________________________________________

     Type in the number of your choice - then press ENTER ⏎
```

Furthermore, once a learner has started to work on the questions, the programme provides him/her with a set of help options listed at the bottom of the screen.

```
AUDIOTEST                                              question  2  of  4
__________________________________________________________________________

                            A)   He's flying to Paris

                            B)   He has another meeting

                            C)   He's arriving from Paris

                            D)   10 o'clock is too late for him

        Your choice ...: d
__________________________________________________________________________
     Please type in the letter/number of your choice - press ENTER ↵

1=repeat question    2=read/repeat question    3=help/hint    4=written help
```

As with the help menu above, some of the options are only available once a learner has used certain other options or tried to answer a question unsuccessfully. One may only listen to the initial text presented by a different voice or, in the case of the original text being a dialogue, to a narrated version after having used options 1 to 3 (see fig 5). The written help, which is either the script or a description of the content of the original audiotext, is available together with glossary only after a learner has at least attemped to work on the comprehension questions. As said before, we intend to develop similar types of modules using both interactive audio and interactive video materials in addition to text based modules.

Ultimately, the learner should be able to approach a set of exercise and task modules in much the same way as he/she would approach a textbook with lesson texts and tapes, back-up information, exercises for review, practice and self-control etc. All the components needed to achieve a certain goal are laid out before the learner, but how he/she makes use of the set and in which order he/she works his/her way through the materials depends entirely on the individual. It is hoped that at such a later stage the learner will be well prepared to make good use of a by now (hopefully) well developed internal advance organizer and monitor.

We are currently conducting a project in cooperation with IBM Germany using an IBM authoring language called SEF (Self Educational Facility). This authoring language allows us to develop our concept for packages in a way which represents at least one step in the direction described in this paper. While working on an exercise, a learner may constantly access various help options by pressing any of the function keys listed at the bottom of the screen.

```
urse : MOD          Chapter : N                       Question : 2
____________________________________________________________________

   Add  both  to the sentence below  - where does it fit?

   (move the cursor to the appropriate gap, type 'x' and  ↵)

 1. Karen and Peter both work in the new research lab.

 2.   At the moment   they   are   attending   an   international
    conference   in   Rome    .
____________________________________________________________________

F1=help   F2=answer   F3=next   F4=index   F5=joker   F6=info   F7=glossary
```

A glossary can be consulted, which allows for the learner to choose from either a paraphrase of the word in question or a different context as well as straight forward translation. Learners can access general information on how to use the flexibility provided by the package and how to handle various technical details. Using the FS-JOKER key, a learner may either consult further background materials and other help relating to the general subject of the exercises or access a notepad facility. In this notepad he/she can enter any comment on the exercise or questions to be discussed with the teacher. The notes are stored and can be printed at the end of the exercise. A third option available is the possibility to stop working with the exercise package with or without a "bookmark". If the learner decides to set exact part of the package the learner was working on before.

IV CONCLUSION

Despite the examples of first practical applications mentioned above and the description of what we intend to develop in the near future, the points I have argued in this paper admittedly remain somewhat theoretical. The main intention of this paper was to point out that apart from the behaviouristic drill and practice exercises of the past there are quite a few "good" traditions of the early days of using (mainframe) computers for learning, and to show how some of the ideas proposed in the past might be applied to computer assisted language learning.

However, much more research is needed into the concept of intelligent tutorial systems and self-directed (language) learning, and it has been stated more than once that the technology as such has developed considerably faster than the various theories of teaching and learning. (cf Breuer, 1986, p 340) O'Shea and Self draw an similar conculsion by saying that "we have seen that improvements in computer technology,..., have not led to significant changes in educational practice." (O'Shea and Self, 1983, p 268)

Furthermore, Caffarella and O'Donnell (1987) have indicated that amongst the many aspects of self-directed learning to be investigated in greater detail more basic research is needed in order to better understand how learners plan and organize their learning. As far as language learning is concerned, we still need to further develop a typology of suitable computer-based exercises and workforms. In addition to this it is necessary to direct more research attention towards the various strategies to be implemented in CALL materials to help learners to achieve a certain level of learning pro-ficiency and autonomy.

Our observations show that it does not suffice to provide learn..rs with a degree of freedom of choice and flexibility in CALL materials. When dealing with inexperienced language learners, the first step has to be to make learners aware of the fact that there are choices and alternative ways of learning. Appropriate strategies for individualization should be implemented in CALL software for individual study. Futhermore, learners should be "taught" not to expect the computer to automatically work wonders and that letting the computer take all the initiatives and control all learning might not always be the best way of making full use of the potential of computers as learning tools.

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TAPPING A VITAL RESOURCE: STUDENT-GENERATED MATERIALS

Heidi Riggenbach

INTRODUCTION

Reviews of the last two decades of language teaching have revealed that dramatic changes have taken place (Morley, 1987; Richards, 1987). Called "communicatively-oriented curriculums" by some, or the "proficiency movement" by others (Higgs, 1984; Mohan, 1985), there is little doubt now that these developments have radically changed the directions of both language research and language education programmes. Although there are many aspects to this new "paradigm" in the field of langauge teaching, few would argue that a main feature is the greater stress on learner interaction, and thus a focus on the learners as active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of a teacher's lessons.

In a study on interaction in the classroom, Pica, Young, and Doughty (1987) suggest that there are two different kinds of linguistic environment available to second language learners: one characterized by input that has been modified or simplified -- such as that found in the more traditional "teacher-fronted" classroom, and the other characterized by opportunities for interaction. Their study shows support for the assertion that the second linguistic environment is more beneficial for the learner, since, in this setting, both speakers focus on the immediate task of communication itself in "real time", and work together to achieve mutual understanding, modifying their language according to the demands of the situation. In addition, interactive-type activities seem to address to issue of student "comfort" as a factor in second langauge learning. Some research suggests that interactive group work lessens many students' anxiety about performing and lowers their "affactive filters", facilitating learning (Gaies, 1986; Long and Porter,1985; Pica and Doughty, 1985, Doughty and Pica, 1986).

Some language teaching programmes provide opportunities for students to interact -- through role plays, conversation games, group and peer work. To support this, a wealth of materials are now available which attempt to provide frameworks and suggestions for such activities -- such as texts of guided discussion topics, etc. Although these are a major improvement over the "teacher-centered" materials available in the past, it is sometimes tempting to overlook a rich and practical resource that is available for free: student-generated materials.

Student-generated materials are a means by which students may be brought into the role of active participant in their own language learning processes. Students create their own materials in a sense: they produce their own language "data" or they observe language in action; they collect these data by means of audiotape, videotape or detailed field notes; they analyze these materials and use them as a basis for discussion and other class activities; and, in the process, they develop a greater appreciation of the subtlety and nuance of linguistic interaction, and learn some of the skills necessary to shape and motivate their own langauge learning progress.

The arguments in favor of students designing materials and, as much as possible, carrying out their own language learning programme seem mostly self-evident. From a commonsense point of view, many people would agree that one's own experiences and tools are more interesting, memorable, and relevant than those which are second-hand or provided. Secondly, while some prepared materials which use interactive-type tasks promote a kind of "planned spontaneity", student-generated materials often necessitate real spontaneity and thus provide confidence in students that they can function in such spontaneous situations. Another advantage to student-generated materials is their practicality -- they are, like "real life", available for free; few resources outside the student's own are necessary, which may be especially suitable in areas such as Southeast Asia where current materials are expensive or not readily available. Lastly, involving the students in the process of language learning is a good way to motivate them to continue it on their own, after they leave the classroom environment.

Relevant to this is what Hatch, Flashner, and Hunt (1986) have called the "experience model" of second language acquisition. Briefly, it is their claim that "language clarifies and organizes experience, and conversely that language grows out of experience". Accordingly, activities which "activate the system for discovery of the new" should be implemented in the classroom. In other words, these authors suggest that language learners should be encouraged to become their own researchers in order to obtain first-hand experience with language. In a sense, these researchers and others (eg Heath, 1986) suggest that every student of a second language can become an applied linguist interested in the language acquisition process itself.

STUDENT-GENERATED MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

This paper, motivated in part by the "experience model" described above, will introduce and briefly describe some of the techniques whereby students may collect and use their own materials for use in (and out of) the classroom, thus bringing themselves into a more participatory role. Rather than assuming the more traditional role of passive recipient of their instructor's "teaching", these activities require students to generate their own materials -- particularly in the skill areas of speaking and listening.

Of course, the idea behind these types of activities is not necessarily new -- the teaching of writing, for instance, has always depended on activities where students draw from their own experiences and even, sometimes, use their own work to learn editing techniques. (Rarely, however, do such "follow-up" sessions require that the student take a critical and objective view of his or her own language learning processses.) But, with the advent of audio and video recorders, it is now possible to extend the type of self-monitoring that has always been available in writing to the skill areas of speaking and listening.

For the sake of simplicity, the activities described here will be organized into three distinct "types": performance activities, participation activities and observation activities. Each kind of activity will be described and then examples will be given of some of the more successful and interesting activities from each type.

1. PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

"Performance" activities, the type most familiar to the current generation of second language teachers in this region, are those in which the student prepares beforehand and delivers a message to a group. A good example of such an activity is the student speech. However, the typical speech activity used in an oral communication class cannot be considered "material". In the usual calssroom setting, students deliver a speech and the teacher gives feedback, often using an evaluation form. By the time the feedback reaches the student, usually the details about the performance have been forgotten. The activities suggested here can make the student speech useful as material for students to learn more about their language, but more is required than one-time student performance and teacher evaluation of errors and other features.

One first step is peer evaluation. Peer evaluation can be a useful component of oral performance activities since:

1. the "audience" becomes involved in such a way that students, as members of the audience, become more than simply passive listeners;
2. the evaluation process helps students to gain confidence in their own ability to evaluate language; and
3. the evaluation activity itself becomes an opportunity for real, spontaneous interaction since the "message" (the evaluation) is important to the student performer.

One technique in peer evaluation of oral materials is for the teacher to select beforehand two students to formally evaluate another student's performance; a special motivation for these evaluators is for the instructor to grade them on their evaluations. The evaluators begin by taking notes on the content of the student's speech, briefly outlining the main points and thereby demonstrating their ability (or lack of ability) to follow the student's speech.

Immediately following the speech, it can be constructive if the two evaluators orally sum up, before the rest of the class, their reactions to the performance. This can be done efficiently if their remarks are limited to two comments -- one on a positive and effective aspect of the speech, and one on an area that needs work. This helps the student who has performed to get some immediate, balanced feedback on the performance and also gives the rest of the audience some perspective concerning the important features of successful speech-giving.

Finally, the evaluators fill out the evaluation sheet in some detail for the presenter to read and consider. This evaluation sheet, drawn up by the teacher beforehand, can be the same as the teacher's. Its purpose is to structure the evaluation so that it meets the goals of the activity, with categories for such criteria as CONTENT (Is it focused? clear? original?), ORGANIZATION (Is it logical? Are there appropriate transitions?), and DELIVERY (Is eye contact maintained? Are notes relied on too much? Is the volume adequate, etc.) Other comments would relate to the focus of the particular assignment, and could include spefific grammar or vocabulary points.

Another way to use the student speech as "material" is to audio- or videotape the students during their intial performances and allow them to evaluate themselves. With self-evaluation, students listen to or watch their recorded speeches and evaluate themselves according to the same criteria as the teacher and peer evaluators use. This can be especially illuminating for the students, who are usually unused to hearing themselves (or seeing themselves on videotape). Next, the student performers select a portion of their talk and transcribe it in detail (complete with hesitations, filled pauses -- "uh"s -- and grammatical errors). Where in their initial performance they focused on communication, in the follow-up they focus on their problems and nonnative-like features, considering ways to restructure the piece so that it would be more effective.

Although not discussed in detail here, student-designed role-plays and student-written dramas, if publicly performed, can also function as "Performance Activities" (see Peck, 1987 for a good discussion of how role-plays were successfully implemented in a course for social workers). All such structured performance activities can use "new" techniques such as peer evaluation, audiotaping, transcription and self-evaluation, and thus can serve as an introduction to the less traditional participation activities discussed below.

2. PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES

"Participation" activities can be some of the most diverse and interesting of student-generated materials, and can serve as the basis for a whole course by themselves. These are activities where the student participates in some communicative activity in a "natural setting". For example, in an oral communication course, students are required to audiotape a spontaneous conversation with a native speaker of their choice. (If access to a native speaker is difficult, the alternative is to find a partner who is considered "fluent" -- someone who has studied or spent time abroad, for example. If even this is difficult, students can converse with the most advanced language students.) The goal of these conversations is for the student to obtain "data" that is as natural and spontaneous as possible given the constraints of the recording procedure.

Once the conversation is recorded the students transcribe, on their own, an excerpt of the conversation that they find interesting. Transcription, an important element of many student-generated materials and activities, allows the transcriber to focus on details -- a valuable exercise in listening comprehension, as well as an opportunity to heighten awareness of the students' own difficulties of expression. In the process of transcribing, students discover much about natural language that is difficult to teach -- that native speakers also make "mistakes": they hesitate, rephrase, pause, mispronounce words, etc. Finally, the transcription process makes materials available in a written form for the class to use as a basis for many further activities.

Once the initial conversation data is audiotaped and transcribed, there are many options for activities based on it. One use of the material is for vocabulary-building. The student notes down unfamiliar words or idioms in the native or fluent speaker's language, and also targets areas in his or her own speech where there was some difficulty in achieving clear communication. With the leisure of hindsight, the student can set about discovering how the message could have been presented in a clearer or more accurate manner. (See Sample A, below, for an example of this activity.)

Another possibility is for the student to concentrate on the native speaker's speech and to note effective or interesting usage. With the aid of a transcript and the heightened awareness of detail brought about by the transcription process, students can focus on details which are difficult or impossible to catch during the actual conversation itself.

Finally, this procedure can be used as an exercise in discovering regularities of conversation strategies, such as topic control, "attendance" markers, or specific "gambits" (such as how to appropriately disagree, register surprise or sympathy, etc). In a US context, for example, one conversation strategy that commonly needs to be addressed is how to "interrupt" appropriately.

All of these topics can be independently pursued by the students in the form of a language learning journal (eg Bailey 1986), small-group discussions, or student-created role plays. Or, alternatively, the teacher may listen to the tapes or read the transcripts, select a particularly successful example of the feature under study, and, with the student's approval, use the sample as a focus for discussion.

SAMPLE A

Conversation Excerpt
(Student Transcript)

Speaker	Conversation Excerpt	Student Comments (Activity: Focus on Accuracy of Expression)
NNS:	And, and how about, do you have any brother or sister?	(should be plural)
NS :	Yes, I have four brothers in Chicago. I'm from Chicago.	
NNS:	Uh-hn, four brothers all older than you?	
NS :	One older and three younger.	
NNS:	Uh-mm..do you, do you think it's interesting to live in a family.. umm just have brothers and no sisters?	(should be "that no just has"?)
NS :	Oh. I never lived in a family with sisters (laugh) so I don't know how to compair it. (laugh) Ya. I think I was wanna to have a sister, but I didn't have one, so, I don't know, but I would like to know.	(my mistake? = "I was wanting" or "always wanted"?)
NNS:	Do your brother..um all take care of you?	(should be + s)
NS :	(laugh) No, this is not in America.	
NNS:	Oh, but..(wait) Sometimes in Taiwan if you have many many, so so many brothers in a family, then you might be more...dependent, because your brother, your brothers (laugh) always will take care of you, and you don't have to worry about many things, so...	(sound funny! repeated too much) (should say "because they can help you in many ways" I did not finish!)
NS :	Do you like that way?	

Another participation activity that elicits enthusiastic student response is the interview. This activity, if properly prepared, is ideal for "activating the discovery of the new" so essential to learning. In it, the students become their own historians, interviewing their acquaintances or relatives about some meaningful or memorable aspect of their lives (see Spradley 1979, Terkel 1974). the most successful of these projects seems to inlvolve subjects whose experiences are different in some important way from the student (eg, interview the oldest person you know, interview someone you know who doesn't "fit in". In Malaysia, for example, highly successful student interviews have centered around experiences of the Japanese occupation of Malaysia during World War II, descriptions of village life in East Malaysia, etc.

In the interview exercise, follow-up activities can be similar to those used for the student-gathered conversations, but here other alternatives are available: students can be asked to retell or report the story in their own words, or use the activity as a basis to begin thinking about the difference between spoken and written discourse. In the Malaysian project, for example, students collected English-language narratives by speakers who were not necessarily fluent, transcribed them, noted the typicalities of spoken speech (the repetitions, the Straits-English use of "lah", the hesitations, restarts, etc). They then rewrote the spoken narrative into a written one, changing the vocabulary and sentence structure where appropriate, eliminating most of the features typical of "spoken" language, etc. The best of these written versions were then "performed" by being read aloud alongside the spoken one to note the differences. (See Sample B next page).

SAMPLE B

Interview - Spoken Version (Student transcript)

Abah's Story

Ooo... That time life very hard. Abah was still very young... Abah had to work. That time Abah became a coolie. Abah only thirteen years old. Abah start work at eight o'clock. Abah finish five o'clock. Stop for lunch at twelve. That time Abah eat boiled sweet potato with coffee-o [local expression for plain coffee without milk]. (Gives a little laugh.) That time Abah made sweet-potato buns for Chinese towkay.

That time Abah was paid Japanese money. When the Japanese surrendered, the money not acceptable anymore...when the whites come back. That time (...with regrets in his expressive voice) clever folks, they buy white-man money. Paid thousand thousand. Stupid folks sold all their white man morny. That time Abah also stupid. Abah sold also...(another little laugh)...not all. But when white man..when white man come back all the money no use. No money, very hard to eat.

Interview - Witten Version (Student edited)

Abah's Story

During the Japanese Occupation in Malaya from 1941-45, life was very difficult for me. Even though I was only thirteen years old, I had to work at a coolie job. This job was far from my home, and every day I had to walk a long distance. I started at 8.00 am and finished at 5.00 with a short lunch break always the same thing -- boiled sweet potato and coffee without milk.

I was paid in Japanese money, and when the Japanese surrendered, the whites returned. Before the surrender, many of the clever people paid great prices for the we called "white-man money", money that could be used in Europe and abroad. The simple Malay people sold all of their white man money, and when the whites came back, they had no money to use. I too was stupid and sold most, but not all, of my money. It was difficult since if you had no money you could not buy food for eating.

Two other participation activities deserve to be mentioned. One is the discussion-leading activity, where students: 1) select a topic, 2) find a short background article or write a summary of the topic, 3) draw up a list of questions for consideration by the rest of the class, and finally, 4) lead a semi-formal class discussion on the topic, with a prepared introduction and a spontaneous summing-up conclusion. Some of the same evaluation techniques discussed above can be used for this activity (peer evaluation, audio- or video-taping, and detailed self evaluation with the aid of the student transcription). Certainly too, this activity provides an excellent opportunity to look at the dynamics of turn-taking and topic control.

A final participation activity that has been used successfully is the "oral dialogue journal", where students speak spontaneously on an audiotape on a given topic, such as a response to an assigned article or essay, or on anything of interest (much like a written journal). With this activity it is the teacher who is the other "participant", and who responds to the student orally, via audiotape. This teacher response would primarily focus on content, thus creating a real dialogue, but could also touch on linguistic factors of the student's speech, such as fluency, pronunciation and grammar. When there is limited access to native speakers, this activity can be particularly effective as an opportunity for students to interact with and obtain exposure to native or fluent speakers.

3. OBSERVATION ACTIVITIES

These are activities in which a student observes and/or records linguistic interactions between two or more native or fluent speakers of the target language. This technique is useful for building student appreciation and awareness of language as it is actually used in the real world, and since the student is taking the role of non-participant observer, he or she is free to concentrate on the subject at hand without fear of performance errors.

A typical observation assignment, in an area where native speakers are plentiful, might be to assign two students, as a team, the responsibility for exploring how native speakers negotiate a certain social situation. For example, in a course dealing with conversation strategies, the focus of an assignment might be on greeting behavior. There are many such possibilities which can also serve as the focus for this assignment; almost any communicative task that is addressed in a language classroom can be observed in its "native habitat" -- whether it be how or when people greet each other, make requests, interrupt each other, thank each other, compliment one another, disagree, or receive compliments.

After a brief in-class discussion on field observation techniques (Spradley 1980), the students select a site, carry out their observations, and take detailed field notes in the manner of an ethnographic researcher or anthropologist. After observing a certain number of cases, the students write a brief summary and present these findings to the class. Alternatively, a follow-up activity could be a performance, in which the students create a role play which demonstrates the nonverbal and verbal behavior appropriate to the particular conversational strategy under analysis.

As in the conversation task described above, observation activities have the drawback of assuming access to a pool of native speakers. For purposes of observation, this problem may be partially alleviated by making use of native English speakers on radio and television, especially in "natural" settings, such as unrehearsed interviews.

Also, if native speakers are not available in large numbers, some of the same results may be achieved through the use of elicitation techniques, in which students ask native or fluent speakers to draw upon their intuitions about acceptable native-like behaviour in a given circumstance (eg Hawkins, 1985). In this case, the students and/or teacher would propose a hypothetical situation. For example, in the study of "complaints", a basis for elicitation might be the following:

> "Let's say you just bought a train ticket but found out that the date on the ticket is not the date you had requested. Even though you know you're not allowed to exchange tickets once they are purchased, you feel that, in this case, it is the ticket- seller's mistake, not yours. What would you say?"

The students would "collect the data" -- the native or fluent speakers' responses -- either by recording them on a tape recorder or by taking detailed notes.

The same type of follow-up activity could be assigned here as well: students could simply list the conversation strategies (or "gambits") most often used (eg, "I'm sorry but...", "I'm afraid you made a mistake.", "Excuse me, but it's important that you know that...", etc). As with the first observation activity, students often become interested in the sociolinguistic variance they observe in the different reponses. For example, if they present their results in the form of role play before the rest of the class, discussions are likely to arise concerning which conversation strategies appear to be most "native-like", which ones might be effective with certain age groups, which ones would be used only in very formal or informal situations, etc.

CONCLUSION

Although the above list of activities is certainly not exhaustive, it should be clear that many opportunities exist for implementing student-generated materials in the classroom. Such activities should not, of course, be inserted at random into an existing curriculum -- a certain amount of "structuring" (Richards and Rodgers 1987:53) is necessary to ensure a careful match of student needs, programme goals, syllabus design, and course objectives.

Because of the wide range and flexible applicability of the activities described here, it should be possible to adapt them to fit the most diverse intermediate to higher level student populations. The "interview" task -- to take just one example -- could be modified to fit a writing course organized around rhetorical modes (where the transformation from an oral to a written version could be used to teach strategies of narration); the same task might be used in a listening comprehension course whose materials are the actual interviews gathered by the other students. In a speaking course, the interview task might be modified to concentrate on interviewing and conversational "feedback" techniques, to stress the difference between oral and written language, as well as to provide fruitful material for classroom discussions, based on the content of the interviews.

As language teaching proceeds to a more mature grounding in language theory, it is expected that an even greater emphasis will be placed on the value of interactive input, the necessity of real communicative tasks, and the role of students as their own "teachers". Student-generated materials can offer a rich and practical way to meet these goals.

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THE ROLES OF L2 TEACHERS, LEARNERS, AND MATERIALS DEVELOPERS IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Fraida Dubin

INTRODUCING ROLES

The term 'roles' is a familiar one to language teachers. It turns up in many textbooks as an activity which gives learners opportunities for practicing the new language within the contextual framework established in the lesson. Since learning a new language implies some kind of alternation in one's persona, role-playing, as the activity is generally called, appears to be well-suited for second and foreign language classrooms. Role-playing, as it is typically carried out in language classrooms, has roots in two separate areas, the theatre and therapy (Dubin and Olshtain, 1986). In the former, it is utilized as a warm-up activity for actors; in the latter, it becomes a tool for therapists in helping people with emotional and psychological problems.

Roles have other lives as well. They are theoretical constructs which sociologists and social psychologists employ to describe levels of social interaction that lie outside of one's individual personality. Societal organization entails roles for individuals which imply certain kinds of identities, or patterns of behavior expected in given social situations. Roles which people assume through their membership in a particular society are reflected in behavior, modes of conduct, dress, bearing... as well as choice of appropriate register for language use. All of us have multiple roles: as professionals, as family members, as sub-culture members, etc. The British writer H G Wells, in surveying others' expectations of him as a famous author, husband, father, son, etc said "I am not a person; I am a mob."

In language classes, the participants carry out roles which are part of the larger context, school. These roles of 'learner' and 'teacher' have somewhat different manifestations depending on the particular setting: campus, academy, institute, center, etc. But they share underlying similarities. Of course, in school settings there are other roles, as well: for example, administrators, supervisors, inspectors, etc. Their physical presence in classrooms may be infrequent or intermittant, yet the roles they fill have implications for others' behaviours.
Another absentee role, a vital one in language classrooms, is carried out by the materials preparers and the authors of the textbooks which learners and teachers

use. In fact, these three together, the learner, the teacher, and the materials writer constitute the crucial cast of characters in the area with which we are concerned.

In this paper, I explore the real-life roles of a trio not usually viewed together: learner, teacher, and writer. The background or contextualization for this view is now, our time and place on the earth with its burst of new technological developments, particularly those which affect the processing, spread, and delivery of language -- a phenomenon commonly called the "information explosion." In looking at some of the implications of this outburst, I suggest that the roles of learners, teachers, and writers are inevitably changing and shifting in some kind of symbiotic relationship with new technologies. In order to see change in perspective, it helps to contrast where we have been with where we might be heading. The where-we-have-been-view is discussed under the sub-heading, 'Conventional Roles.' A tempting, so-called solution, is discussed in the second section, 'Personifying Roles.' Finally, some of the consequences of the shifts and changes taking place in classroom roles are presented in the last section, 'Roles In Transition.'

CONVENTIONAL ROLES

In the language pedagogy literature, teachers and learners appear to have been, over periods of time, alternately in focus. So, for example, when a particular method held forth, teachers' concerns were foregrounded. The audio-lingual era, of course, is our classic example. Then, in the early 1970's, learners' concerns came into their own with much greater emphasis given to their needs, differences, varieties, etc. In the mid-seventies, the term 'teach/learn' became common usage as a way to characterize the shared responsibilities these roles entailed (Pitt-Corder). Most recently, revived emphasis has being placed on learners through approaches called 'cooperative' or 'collaborative' learning, at least in the United States. In this view, everything that happens in the classroom is not left to the teacher alone. Learners are not passive receivers, rather they involve themselves in the work of learning in quite dynamic ways.

The fact that our conception of the roles for teachers and learners have been shifting is quite consistent with what social scientists say about roles. Anthropologists call these changes "culture conflicts." No doubt, the way I have characterized traditional teacher/learner roles is still very firmly in place in many places in the world today. "Role conflicts," the sociologists' term (Wolff), is used to describe what seems to take place when roles are affected by the larger societal context and what is taking place when roles are affected by the larger societal context and what is taking place in that sphere. A frequently cited example in discussions of role conflicts by social scientists is the husband and wife relationship and how it is affected by the mores, values, and beliefs of the culture as a whole. There are striking differences, in my culture certainly, in the way husband and wife responsibilities are carried out by people in their twenties and thirties as contrasted with my own age contemporaries. Sociologists call studies which contrast generations in this way "age-grading."

So far, I believe the ground I've been covering is well-developed, familiar territory. But what about the roles of materials preparers? Those phantom people who never appear in classrooms at all except through what anthropologists call 'artifacts,' or textbooks, along with all the other educational materials which they produce. I suggest that their role, at best, wobbles badly both as it is viewed by writers themselves as well as by their audience -- teachers and learners. The fact that it is rarely delineated is a telling indication of its vagueness. Writers' products, those artifacts, receive a minimum amount of attention in treatments of methodology and then it is apt to be in the form of a warning about their use. Writers themselves, of course, are often teachers, but carrying out a different role. Indeed, many of the pitfalls in educational writing come about by the author's unclear view of the writer's role.

This artifact of the language classroom, the textbook, has been undergoing significant changes during the recent period. In fact, unless one has kept up with developments in English language teaching, it is apt not to be recognized in its 1980's style. As manifested in its traditional or "classic" format, it figured prominently in a recent Broadway musical, an acclaimed work for the theater which many of us who live in the United States and elsewhere have viewed on television. In Stephen Sondheim's "Sunday in the Park With George," an English language textbook, used by a young French woman before she embarks with her new husband and infant daughter for America, is a pivotal element in the plot. Almost one hundred years later, the then-infant, now aged-daaughter still clings to her mother's English textbook as a tangible linking force between her mother's generation, her own, and her grandson's. The English sentences in the curious book were composed by an author who worked with the tacit understanding that the writer's role was to provide examples of so-called rules of grammar.

The book is Marie's.
The book is hers.
The tail is the dog's.
The tail is its.

Contemporary language textbooks are written from a quite different point of view, at least those that are produced by writers who are in touch with developments in the various fields of scholarship which contribute to language pedagogy. They strive to present language within a context that provides continuity, meaningfulness and a sense of reality. Moreover, the tasks which are laid out for the learners, the activities, endeavor to engage the users of the book in ways that stimulate the process of learning.

But the writer's role in relationship to learners and teacher is quite murky in the materials in the market today. This ambivilence is particularly apparent in the way in which writers choose to address their audience, teachers and learners. At times, there is a covert attitude of circumventing the teacher. Thus, when the writer addresses the learner the voice typically used is the command mode expressed by verbs such as: "listen to," "compare your answers with," "choose a partner," "study the list," "select the appropriate answer," etc. In other words, the writer speaks directly to the learner and leaves the teacher out of the picture. However, an alternate analysis of this kind of writing might say that by using this voice the writer is actually supplying a script with the expectation that the teacher, in fact, will read the textbook to the learners. There is the assumption that the teacher is a mediator between writers and learners.

Another example of the uncertainty about the writers' role turns up in those books that use the teacher as a messenger or errand-person. For example: "Have your teacher help you find a catalog or mail-order booklet;" or, "Ask your teacher to give you a map of your city, country or state." There are, as well, the books that indicate unsureness about what is the writer's and what is the teacher's actual areas of responsibility: "Discuss the following ideas with your teacher before you write these letters," or "Have your Teacher explain the issues in the article before your group prepares a panel." I suggest that most textbook writers tend to overlook the question of their role relationship to their audience -- learners and teachers -- in fact, they use the "command" mode because it is the accepted usage in this genre, not because they have thought through the consequences of its use.

These anomalies occur, too, because the craft aspect of textbook writing has largely been ignored. The large literature on second language pedagogy contains few entries devoted to the writing of language textbooks, or a view from the writer's rather than the teacher's perspective. While recently the writers' view has come to the foreground, principally at professional meetings, the focus has tended to be on issues of writer/publisher relations, how to get manuscripts published, and similar topics.

A few notable exceptions exist, of course: Beile and Rutherford (1975) were concerned with the ways that writing teams link their work to the needs of teachers. A brief section in Wilkins' influential work (1976) described the potential of the narrative format for developing materials within the notional-functional curriculum he was proposing. Breen and Candlin (1980) advocated that in the framework of a communicative curriculum authentic text-types be utilized and that the text, to provide "verisimilitude", should be used by learners in the way in which it was originally intended. Dubin and Olshtain (1986) contrasted the differences between materials which are produced within and outside of an institutional framework along with giving general guidelines for writing projects.

When textbooks have been discussed in language pedagogy sources, the focus more often than not, has been on adaptation of existing works or on criteria for evaluating and selecting books. For example, on adaptation the work of Madsen and Bowen (1978) and Stevick (1971); on overall evaluation criteria Robinett (1978), Dubin and Olshtain (1977), and Celce-Murcia and MacIntosh (1979). More specialized criteria for evaluation have also been suggested, for example: culture content (Joiner), sociolinguistic elements (Judd), and foreign language classrooms (Davison).

This emphasis on adaptation and evaluation, or an outsider's view, underscores the point that the role of the writer from a writer's perspective has been generally overlooked. In fact, the conventional point-of-view assumes that most materials are inadequate for the task, even flawed, and that the teacher needs to be warned about using them. For example:

> "The higher the general standard of the teachers, the less important are the course-books and other teaching materials. But when the standard of teachers is low, as it inevitably is for a time in conditions of rapid expansion of education, then the standard of teaching materials assumes great importance...insufficiently trained teachers working with poor materials face a considerable handicap."
>
> (Stevens)

> "The teacher/educator should not depend on materials alone to create a learning atmosphere in the classroom...materials should act only as a supplement to what the teacher provides."
>
> (Allwright)

Thus, we find that the "experts" or "specialists," for the most part, promote the value of, the concerns of, the needs of teachers, or learners, in some cases both. Few, if any of the experts in the fields are advocates of materials writers' concerns by offering professional help, guidelines for improving the craft through workshops, let alone university courses in the components of educational writing. While the roles of learners and teachers are relatively well-defined, and as suggested above, changing in quite dynamic ways, the role of the writer is, at best, left to the individual author to create for him/herself with each new project that is undertaken.

PERSONIFYING THE ROLES OF LEARNERS, TEACHER, WRITER

At this point, there is a temptation to personify these roles by viewing the situation as one which qualifies for intervention by a behavioral specialist, or a professional who brings the parties in for a group therapy session. The protagonists seem to be ready-made: learners, a bit unsure of themselves, but manifesting embarrassment, boredom and irritation for ever having been dragged into the therapist's office in the first place; teachers, secretly knowing that their new friend, the textbook author, is providing more fulfillment than the specialist in the field ever did, but too unsure to speak up about their own feelings; writers, hesitant and shy in the presence of their audience about whom, up to now, they have only been able to phantasize.

I will indulge in the possibilities inherent in this script for a paragraph or so, then cut it off because I find that it diminishes significant elements which are affecting the roles of teachers, learners and all others who work in school settings, namely cognizance of what is happening in the larger world, the technological one. First, and quickly, back to the therapist's office:

One approach the concerned, objective (paid) listener might take is to counsel the teacher about not feeling obliged to heed the well-intentioned advise of experts. "Instead, listen to your own inner-voice. Do what you consider best for your students. If you're getting something of value from the published course materials, keep on using them. Don't worry about creating a good classroom atmosphere. It will come about naturally. You must believe more in yourself."

It is intriguing to continue to spin out other possible so-called solutions in an effort to help bring about more cooperation, harmony, and understanding among the principle players in this drama of the classroom. To do so, however, would overlook the fact that while all of those concerned with despensing instruction -- teachers, writers, and experts -- have been busy talking to each other, in the meantime, the learners have been busy attending to other things, often outside of school.

They have been watching a great deal of TV, from infancy. They are caught up with the world of popular culture, cassette tapes, movies, video cassettes; they're comfortable with every kind of computer game; they find perfectly normal all of the varied manifestations which combinations of video, computers, the entire microchip technology can provide: automated money tellers at banks, computer scanners in super markets. Even of they cannot afford to buy them, they know a great deal about high-priced products such as compact discs.

The language teacher is caught between the experts who disparage materials and the learners' media-focused world. How can the teacher compete with videogames, VHS cassettes, and all the other products of growing technology? Technology, in fact, is a potent change-agent which provides the background for important realignments in the roles people assume in their school-related lives. Learners are learning more from each other, a pattern interestingly enough tied to the ways in which they are socialized into the culture of technological toys. Parents usually do not instruct their children in these devices, peers do. Look closely; you'll see that the materials writer has become a computer programmer.

ROLES IN TRANSITION

The observations in this section are not those of a professional futurist, although it is enticing to pause for a moment and consider how technology has brought about a revolution in human perception through a vast new apparatus for disseminating meaning, or language (Smith). But what of our principle players, learners, teachers, and materials writers? All three are living in the same technologically changing environment, although each group is affected in somewhat different ways in terms of their role designations.

Materials writers are challenged most directly. For them it is a matter of change, join up, or drop out. The necessity is already here in word processing as well as in the production of books through computerized typesetting. Writers today must know their way around these developments or risk not being taken seriously by their colleagues. At the same time, the possibility for the writers' role to become more prominent in language pedagogy is motivated by video and computer assisted instruction. Writers, however, must be aware of pitfalls: for example, writing computer programs which reproduce the teacher-as-authority role in the guise of the program. If you have followed the reviews of many CALL programs on the market, you will recognize this tendency in critical comments such as "too mechanical," or "there is not enough opportunity for the learners' creativity to be activated."

The teachers' role, already undergoing major shifts as instruction has come to be viewed as directing others' learning, will continue to change as a result of new teachers manifesting the ways in which they themselves were socialized into prevailing classroom roles. Along the way, there are apt to be any number of skirmishers, upheavels, minor tragedies, and inevitable backlashes. But overall, the teacher as an authority figure is fading fast. At the same time, in order for teachers to appear creditable in the eyes of learners, they too will need to be conversant with all the channels, worldwide, through which language flows.

The learners' role is becoming infused with a greater sense of activism, an inevitable outcome when people assume more responsibility for their own learning. Successful language learning, possibly more than other subject areas, involves knowing how to learn in ways that suit one's own particular needs. Young learners will increasingly realize that their technological toys, walkman recorders to lap computers, afford access to learning new languages in ways that are more dynamic and in tune with their personal styles than what is offered in traditional classroom settings.

I have found it useful to draw on the concept of roles as a mechanism for characterizing the field of language pedagogy the in light of today's and tomorrow's technological explosion, or revolution in the dissemination of meaning. I offer a final remark as a comment of the last item on Professor Candlin's list of "research findings" (1988), namely that "context improves learning." I would extend the definition of context in that item by making the following prediction: Second language is likely to grow and thrive in the coming period because of the context of an expanding global technology; moreover, this occurrence will take place despite what either teachers or materials writers do in classrooms, or what the experts advise them to do. Rather, language learning will flourish because of the wider context of technology in the lives of young learners.

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MATERIALS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING: NEW TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS - THE MALAYSIAN SCENE

Asiah Abu Samah

FOCUS ON INTEGRATION

The central concern of education in Malaysia, like in most other countries of the Region, is the total development of the individual. To this end the national philosophy of education lays special emphasis on the harmonious and integrated development of intellectual, spiritual, moral, social, emotional and physical attributes of the individual in the context of a united, balanced and progressive Malaysian Society. Our curriculum renewal efforts in the last five to ten years have been committed towards realising these noble objectives. In fact, so concerned were we with the goal of "harmonious integration" that we decided to focus our recent review of the primary and secondary school curricula on this theme.

The review of our primary and secondary curricula offered wonderful opportunities for innovation in the realm of teaching-learning strategies and materials development. The New Primary School Curriculum (KBSR), which was implemented in stages from 1983, placed special emphasis on development in the basic literacy and numeracy skills as well as overall development of the child. With the child-centred approach in mind, various pedagogical techniques such as group work, peer coaching, remedial instruction, and integration of various kinds of skills with knowledge content and value orientations, were tried out and implemented. These new emphases gave rise to all kinds of new developments and directions in the area of materials development. For example the new subject area popularly known as Man and the Environment saw not only attempts at interdisciplinary integration of content between the natural and social sciences but also the employment of a repertoire and pedagogical devices and materials production strategies that were derived from isolated experiments that had been hitherto undertaken.

It is not the objective of this paper to deal in detail with the innovative attempts of KBSR in the area of pedagogy and materials development. Nevertheless a reference to these attempts is necessary at this stage in order to set the scene for certain developments that are taking place in terms of materials production and materials utilisation strategies that shall be dealt with later in the paper.

The primary concern of this paper is to examine the main focus of the new integrated secondary curriculum (KBSM) which is more singularly devoted to the expansion of the integration concept and strategy. The KBSM, coming after the KBSR, benefitted a great deal from the KBSR experience - both in terms of strengths and weaknesses. If in KBSR we saw the beginnings of an attempt at integration in certain areas of learning and pedagogical techniques, in KBSM we are making a bolder attempt at intergration by making it the central concern.

CURRICULUM DESIGN ISSUES

The integration strategy has had far reaching implications in the design and organisation of the language programmes. Various questions with regard to design principles were addressed to, such as:

(i) In what way is the language programme contributing to the overall development of the student so that he can take his place as a knowledgeable and responsible member of Malaysian society, capable of contributing to his own well-being as well as that of the community around him?

(ii) What kinds of language skills and experiences are needed in order to achieve this overall integrated development goal?

(iii) What assumptions about language and language learning would best influence and chart classroom strategies and materials production that are in line with national goals as well contribute towards effective mastery of the target language?

In applying ourselves to the above questions, we realised that the mechanistic behaviourist theory treats language learning as mastery of a string of rules through, for example, sentence based drills, has only limited application in terms of overall individual development, or for that matter, in terms of effective mastery of the language. It was increasingly realised that, while appreciating the partial usefulness of the behaviourist approach, we need a more satisfactory theory of language and language learning that would more comprehensively take into account national goals as well as effectiveness in learning. The behaviourist theory seems to place too much emphasis on the learner as a mere passive receiver of information. On the other hand, the cognitive view, with its assumption that language learning is a rule-discovery activity, emphasizes the role of the learner as a more active processor of information, and as such it seems to be a more favourable strategy.

We also took into consideration the view that language is best learnt when it is used for purposes of communication. There needs to be a balance between "accuracy" and "fluency". This view of language learning brings with it a social and emotional dimension that seems very appropriate for the purpose of dynamic communication in the language.

Also, in the interest of integrated overall devlopment, we feel our language syllabuses should not be value-free. We would like to see our language programmes inculcate in the student a sense of pride and worth in being Malaysian. We want to reinforce in him the awareness that a balanced individual is guided by certain universal values as well as by specific cultural and social norms.

The burning question is, HOW CAN OUR MATERIALS REFLECT THESE CONCERNS?

MATERIALS DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

It is a universally accepted fact that a language programme is as good as the teaching-learning strategy adopted to convey this programme. Central to this teaching-learning strategy are the pedagogical techniques and the materials designed to affect the strategy.

The aims, objectives and content of the langauge programmes are laid out in the teaching syllabuses which outline the basic items to be taught in terms of skills, values, vocabulary, grammar and other relevant items. The task of the materials designer is to translate these syllabus objectives and content into operational, performance terms, i.e. into practical instructional plans. Integral to this exercise is the production of curriculum guidelines which involves elaboration and sequencing of the given syllabus items. Based on these curriculum guidelines, very detailed materials development guides were drawn up to assist textbook and other kinds of materials production. It is believed that since the majority of teachers and students are going to depend on textbooks as their main resource for teaching and learning, efforts should not be spared towards ensuring the quality of their production (Hutchinson and Waters rightly refer to the textbbok and such materials as "The Materials Syllabus").

The guidelines for textbook writing covered a wide range of issues. The attention of textbook writers was not only drawn to the aims, objectives and basic content of the language curriculum as presented in the syllabus, but also to pedagogical principles like the integration of skills, content and values; level of proficiency of the students; control in the use of language; balance of treatment of the different skills; the relevancy and suitability of situations and activities; and the presentation and organisation of the texts, activities and illustrations in terms of skills to taught and exercises for practice, consolidation, reinforcement and revision.

Bearing in mind the individual differences in the learning ability of the learners, the attention of textbook writers was consistently drawn to the need to produce multi-graded and multi-media materials to cater to these differing needs. With this in view, two new features were introduced as accompaniment to the student's text, viz. the teacher's handbook and, in the case of English, an audio-tape containing various kinds of exercises pertaining to English sounds that pose difficulty to Malaysian children.

The resultant textbook manuscripts, produced on a competitive basis, were stringently scrutinised by evaluation panels set up by the Ministry of Education's Textbook Bureau. These evaluation panels made detailed analyses of each book and subsequently submitted their reports to a high-level final selection committee chaired by no less than the Director-General of Education himself. The textbook titles finally approved by this committee were transmitted, together with sample copies from the publishers, to selection panels at the state or school level. These local-level panels made the ultimate decision as to which book or books is/are most suitable for use in their schools.

While it is accepted that the textbook is the main resource for teaching-learning, the need for multi-media support materials is also recognised. This need had been felt during the implementation of KBSR: The Educational Technology Division working closely with the Curriculum Development Centre, had produced multi-media support materials for the different subject areas. The visual materials were telecast through the Educational Television (ETV) service; the audio materials through the Schools Radio broadcasts; and the printed materials that were done for Mathematics and the Language were disseminated to schools through the State Education Departments. Besides the direct telecast/broadcast of the visual/audio materials, these materials were also canned on video and audio tapes and despatched to local resource centres and schools for use as supplementary materials.

The main thrust of suppport materials development however should be at the local and school levels. Efforts towards this have been emphasised and developed with the implementation of KBSR where, through the network of state, district and school resource centres, teachers have been encouraged to come together to pool their expertise and resources to produce much-needed support materials required to supplement the centrally produced materials required to supplement the centrally produced materials like curriculum specifications and textbooks. To augment these efforts the Schools Division of the Ministry had since 1981 embarked on a pilot project in 25 primary schools with the aim of encouraging wider use of school libraries and resource centres. In fact it was this project that saw the widening concept of school lioraries, particularly the conversion of school libraries into resource centres. The canned video and audio programmes, and printed materials that had been undertaken by the Educational Technology Service became the ready inputs to these resource centres. As most Malaysian primary schools had been provided with television sets and video and audio programmes became very convenient ind~ed.

With the early success of these 25 pilot schools, other school libraries began to follow suit in converting to resource centres. To supplement the collection of máterials at the resource centres. To supplement the collection of materials at the resource centres, as well as to ensure the relevancy of materials, teachers were encouraged and assisted to develop support materials they require for their daily teaching and to store these at the resource centres for future retrieval. Based on these efforts we hope to encourage the setting up of materials banks at these centres, as well as at the district level where teachers could be further encouraged to contribute to and benefit from these banks.

As a necessary supportive infrastructure for such laudable efforts at school and district level, the Ministry of Education has embarked on a nationwide strategy towards setting up resource centres at state, district and school levels. To date four model state resource centres have been established in the states of Kelantan, Trengganu, Pahang and Kedah. The current district and school resource centres are being upgraded with more up-to-date mateials and equipment. Under the current Eighth World Bank Loan Scheme, 360 new district resource centres are being built and equipped.

These state and district resource centres will operate in the context of the following functions:

(i) to act as a catalyst towards overall professional development of teachers, particularly professionalism in pedagogy.

(ii) to provide in-service training and guidance to teachers in materials production techniques.

(iii) to act as a materials bank to which teachers can contribute what they have developed either at the school level or at the resource centre itself, and from where they can obtain model materials for reproduction and production equipment like cameras, video or audio recording facilities, etc. for self-production of materials for use at the school level.

(iv) to assist teachers, through in-service courses and informal meetings, in acquiring skills of organising and managing their book and non-book materials more systematically at the school level, for easy retrieval.

(v) to help heighten current awareness of teachers through newsletters and other extension services by keeping them up-to-date on the state of the art in materials production, organisation and use.

(vi) to offer on the spot professional advice to teachers in the course of visits to school resource centres.

With these developments, the Ministry hopes the process of decentralization in materials development that had been started with the KBSR will continue to grow and prosper under the KBSM. The idea of school resource centres had already caught on in secondary schools and we are confident KBSM materials production needs will provide the impetus for further efforts in multi-media resource materials development in secondary schools.

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

All these noble attempts at systemizing production and improving the quality and utilization of textbooks and support materials are not without attendant issues and problems of course. Ever conscious of these issues, the Ministry's research and evaluation arms at the various divisions like the Curriculum Development Centre, the Inspectorate of Schools and the Educational Technology Division working cooperatively with the State Education Departments have been doing continuous monitoring and evaluation of the effects of such efforts. From the feedback obtained it is obvious that there is still ample room for improvement.

The first batch of language textbooks produced for the KBSM that are already in use in Form I (Grade 7) in the schools this year, while showing a marked improvement compared to pre-KBSM books, still manifest several forms of shortcomings. Textbook writers still have a tendency to pitch their materials at the average student, with the result that the high flyers and the low achievers are not adequately catered for. Our hopes was to see books catering to various levels of ability, so that schools could select the level or levels relevant to the needs of their students. There were courageous attempts in some books to introduce the multi-level concept in the earlier chapters but these were not sufficiently built up in the ensuring chapters. This has been a consistent problem with our language textbooks, and there is need for further in-depth research into the cause of such problems. Also we feel ther needs to be more open dialogue between curriculum developers, textbook writers/publishers and textbook consumers. Perhaps future briefings for textbook writers/publishers could be conducted in the form of workshops where problems could be more openly discussed. There seems to be a persistent problem about open discussions between curriculum planners and textbook writers. Textbook writers are not too inclined to ask questions or offer comments or suggestions at such briefing sessions. They apparently feel that if they seek and obtain too much information, they are losing out to their other competitors at the briefing sessions - which is not a very healthy situation, no doubt; but then textbook production is such a competitive business these days.

Besides this difficulty in meeting the multi-level need, the issue of meaningful integration of linguistic items with knowledge content and values also presents a problem. In some of the books the infusion of values is done in such a direct and glaring manner that it produces a very unnatural effect. Some only pay lip service to integration. Many of the Bahasa Malaysia books are still to preoccupied with the different forms of grammar and grammatical analysis that the more functional, humanistic and aesthetic aspects of the language are lost.

There is no doubt that infusion of values in a natural and effective manner into language learning texts and exercises without jeopardising the functional and communicative aspects of the language is a monumental task to the textbook writer. In this area perhaps the curriculum developer together with the teacher trainer needs to do more actual experimentation in the laboratory situation in schools in order to produce more meaningful samples and guidelines for not just the textbook writers but more so for the teachers who ultimately have to effect the integration in their schools. Integration requires very careful and deliberate selection and synthesis of content and employment of suitable pedagogical techniques for it to achieve some measure of success.

Our colleagues at the Curriculum Development Centre are now busy applying themselves to this task. With the added experience and insight gained in this exercise, as well as hindsight and feedback from the implementation of the current set of textbooks in the schools, future efforts should prove more fruitful.

Another issue that is inherently related to the issue of integration is the question of the literary, humanistic and aesthetic worth of the texts and oher stimuli used in the textbooks; in short, the place of literature in this whole exercise. There has been some attempt at integrating literature in the Bahasa Malaysia programme, even though it is treated in very functional terms in the syllabus. This perhaps explains why it does not emerge as a significant component in the textbooks. As far as the English programme is concerned, this aspect has not been given too much prominence at the syllabus design or textbook guideline stage, partly perhaps due to the fact that we were too engrossed with the more functional aspects of language instruction and integration at the time. But this has now emerged as an issue. For, upon reflection on the history of our own education, was it not the study of literature and our other literary pursuits that helped shape our character and our attitudes and perceptions of life and living in general? How much of these elements are still preserved in our educational and, in particular, our language programmes? Is it not the study of the great literary works of the past and the present that help provide a focus as well as a humanistic "home" to our more mechanistic and functional study of language? The question in our minds now is: Was this omission a weakness in our curriculum design or in our materials design? Or is the element of literary study too early to be introduced at the lower secondary level? (At the upper secondary level it is being planned as a separate elective course). If it is desirable at the lower secondary level, is it to be introduced as a significant separate component or should it be integrated into areas like Reading and Writing? What pedagogical and materials development strategies could be considered to foster its effective teaching and learning? Perhaps this seminar could help give some answers to these questions.

Turning now to the area of support materials production, we find that this aspect too is riddled with issues. From our experience in the implementation of KBSR, some interesting lessons could be drawn. Firstly we found that, except for textbooks, support materials produced centrally (e.g. at the level of the Ministry of Education) were less favourable to teachers than those produced by teachers themselves at the local or school level. We are still in the process of ascertaining the reason for this, but it is our belief now that materials produced centrally tend to be too remote from their local and specific needs to be of much immediate use to practising teachers. The materials teachers produce themselves are the result of their own need analysis and are geared to their peculiar circumstances. Also there is that personal sense of ownership and pride with regard to materials that they have produced with their own efforts.

Secondly, there is the issue of teachers not being acquainted with the fact that there are materials that have been produced to deal with the kinds of pedagogical problems they are facing. Specific materials to deal with specific problems like these need to be brought to the attention of teachers and to be properly demonstrated to them through workshop sessions arrnaged by the Education Department or the schools, we meet teachers who are struggling to help their slower pupils in Mathematics or Reading or whatever the case may be, who obviously need help and yet do not seem to know where to obtain help from. Yet we do know there have been materials produced to deal with these problems that we witness and these materials are supposed to have reached all schools. A recent report by the Inspectorate of Schools touches on the very same issue: While we are informed that there are schools which are using such materials to help overcome some of their difficulties, we also hear of materials still bundled up in the headmaster's office or in the school store-room!

Thirdly, there is the vexing issue of the strategy of managing the entire exercise of materials production, dissemination, utilisation, storage and retrieval. Who is to inititate the materials development exercise, and how are prospective materials developers to be identified? When is the exercise to be undertaken: during school hours or outside formal school time. What resources like equipment, raw materials, funds are available to the teachers? What kind of guidance or training is required by teachers to produce the materials they need?

When the materials are ready, there is the question of what is the best way of duplicating them. Consequent to that there is the need to plan for their dissemination and demonstration in terms of utilisation to other teachers. Too often we tend to take effective utilisation of materials too much for granted; as though getting the materials safely to schools is fool-proof guarantee that they will be used effectively. Remember the case of the materials still bundled up in the headmaster's room? Even if the materials get to the teachers' hands, there is still no guarantee the teachers will be able to utilise them properly if there is no guidance as to their use.

These are some of the issues that the planners and managers in our education system have to handle and strategise for solutions in the coming years. A start has been made towards devolution of materials production to the local and school levels. We need to build on these efforts so that the seeds that have been sown shall bear fruit in producing more effective materials development and utilisation techniques in our schools.

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