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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the three issues of the journal "The Teacher Trainer" published in 1994. This journal is designed for those interested in modern language teacher training. It makes use of a variety of formats: article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, Haiku ideas. Typical article topics during 1994 included: language school management; psychological risks for teachers during a period of methodological change; the cultural context of and motivation for language learning; the nature of preservice teacher training; supervisor feedback and classroom practice; using portfolios for teacher assessment in methods courses; consumerism in language teacher training; individualized instruction in inservice training; peer mentoring; trainee feedback on supervision; relevance in English-as-a-Second-Language programs; training program length; neurolinguistics; use of computerized language corpora for teacher training; recording data during teacher training sessions; idea files for teacher training courses; school placement for student teaching; adult learning; professional hierarchies in teacher training; and humanistic classroom methods. (MSE)

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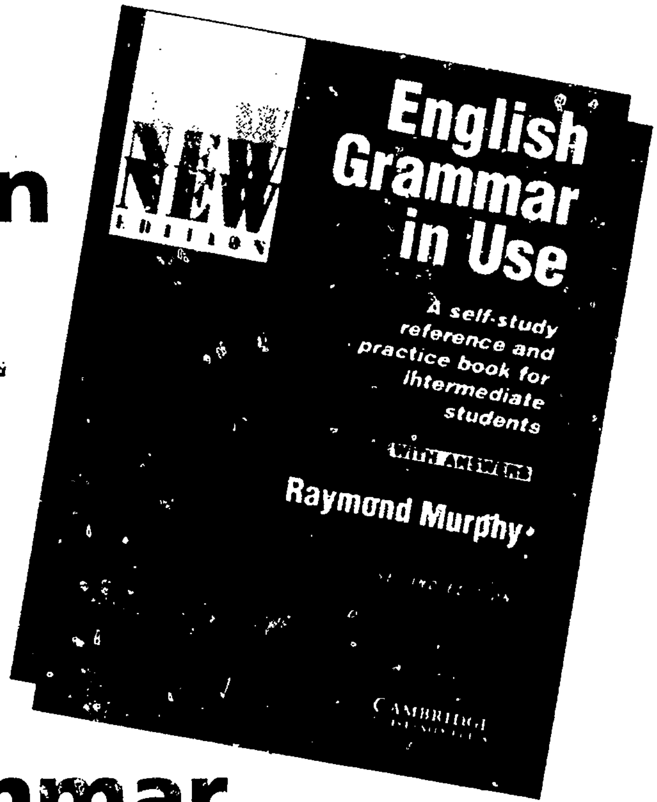

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The Teacher Trainer

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ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staffroom, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal comes out three times a year and makes use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

Editorial

Welcome to a new look Volume Eight! Thanks to a sophisticated new machine at the University Print Unit we should from now on look a little more up-to-date and have fewer typographical errors. Thanks to everyone who has written in over the years to suggest that we haul ourselves into the twentieth century,...here we are, just in time!

I am very, very happy to be back as editor. Mario Rinvolucri and Seth Lindstromberg did a wonderful job keeping the journal afloat while I was ill. They produced three extremely interesting issues in Volume Seven. I am very grateful to them for taking it on, and then for letting go again as I came back to health. Thanks guys!

Volume Eight, Issue One opens with a report from Mali on how management functions in a language centre can be shared amongst teaching staff. Teachers develop in new areas and responsibility is shared collectively. Simple, elegant, and radical.

In the second article Tony Luxon looks at the kind of psychological risk implied for teachers who are, in countries from China to Hungary to Nicaragua, being asked to change to a more communicative methodology. Changing roles, materials, areas of knowledge and relationships can cause anxiety in anyone let alone teachers in full public view.

Change is also the subject of Barbara Hyde's article on Albania. She looks at the basic assumptions of western trainers, the background to Albanian teaching and the gap between the two. How can "outside experts" work within this cultural gap when introducing change? Barbara offers some suggestions.

In the autumn of 1993 there was a conference to discuss the UCLES/RSA pre-service teacher training scheme. In this issue under the 'Conference Report' series there is a discussion of the present model of teaching underlying much pre-service teacher training. That is the "Presentation Practice, Production" model. The model is briefly explained and its advantages and disadvantages are outlined. There then follows an article by Jim Scrivener on a way of discussing teaching based along Skills, PPP and some other lines. Jane Willis follows this up with a plea for "Task based language learning" to be considered as the main teaching model for pre-service training courses.

Simon Borg comes next. He stresses the importance of planning training sessions systematically and advocates a three-step procedure of identifying principles, defining content and selecting processes. He gives examples of each of the three steps.

All our articles on observation and feedback have been grouped together this time. Teh Pick Ching leads the collection with an article on interactive supervision. This means that an observer offers suggestions, quietly and unobtrusively while a lesson is in progress. Examples from one lesson on rice-growing and another on chickens illustrate the type of intervention Teh Pick Ching has in mind.

Next in the set of articles on supervision comes Ruth Wajnryb's 5-step framework for running feedback sessions. A short, interesting bibliography is included at the end of the article.

The last article in the observation and feedback series comes from three teachers at the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong. Mark, Bartholomew and Selina all kept records, including journals, on their experiences of being observed by pre-service trainees. Although the presence of observers did lead to feelings of unease, especially initially, it also acted as a trigger to critical self-reflection by the experienced teachers. The article suggests some ways in which practising teachers can take full advantage of trainee observation.

This issue finishes with our Publications Received page. As usual this page offers thumbnail sketches of publications chosen from an enormous pool of educational resources. Those chosen are, or parts of them are, of special interest on relevance to teacher trainers.

Well, that is our usual mixture of the famous and the innocent, the practical and the thoughtful. I really hope you enjoy the new look and the contents of this issue. Keep the articles coming and don't forget to tell your friends about us!

All good wishes

Tessa Woodward, The Editor

Collective Management

How complex individual job descriptions can lead to staff development and the training of trainers

Henri Traoré & Donard Britten

In this article we describe the management structure of a small ELT institution - the Centre de Langues (CDL) in Bamako, Mali, in West Africa. We try to show how collective management, involving the delegation of many responsibilities to members of the teaching staff, can help teachers to develop in new areas and can prepare them for a teacher training role. The ideas presented here are partly home-grown, the result of a steady adaptation to changing circumstances. They also derive from the inputs of a British Council / ODA ELT Project which CDL has been associated with for some years, and notably from Carew Treffgarne, the ODA Educational Adviser covering that project.

Nature of the institution

CDL is a branch of the Malian Ministry of Education, to which it is responsible for EFL curriculum development, materials production and the in-service training of English teachers in government schools. Though a public body, CDL has free use of the revenue it derives from its direct teaching of English to government and international bodies, other development agencies, private companies and members of the public. The director (who also teaches), the 15 teachers, and the support staff of two secretaries and a sweeper, are all Malians.

External and internal management

As regards the Ministry (i.e. as seen from the outside), CDL is a normal government service for which its director is responsible in the usual way. Internally, however, the director has shared the management function with the teaching staff in a complex pattern of sub-division and delegation of responsibilities. This pattern of devolution is represented in an [illegible]ganigram (q.v.) and by detailed job descriptions for st[illegible] members, of which we give one example.

The organigram

A conventional organigram is straightforwardly hierarchical, with lines of management and answerability running from top to bottom, and each individual or group occurs in it only once. The CDL organigram, on the other hand, is only partly hierarchical, with four coordinators coming under the director, and everything else distributed under them; and the terms in it represent not posts or groups of posts, but individual areas of responsibility. (The co-ordinator jobs rotate every couple of years among the teachers). Each slot is assigned to a staff member, but as there are over 30 slots and only 15 teachers, and as some slots are shared by two or more teachers, each person is responsible or jointly responsible for several slots. As in a normal organigram, the person occupying a slot can change. But here, the combination of slots that the same person takes charge of can be varied too. In this way, it is possible to match jobs to interests and aptitudes.

Range of jobs in the organigram

The organigram shows all the main professional tasks (outside basic teaching and related duties) and all management tasks except for relations with other Ministry departments. There are slots for jobs in:

- marketing (advertising, publicity material, sales, handling enquiries)

- course organisation (planning course content, assigning teachers, timetabling, checking registers, testing)

- finance (accounting, budgeting)

- library, buildings, grounds

- equipment (computers, videos, cassette-players, language lab)

- general administration (secretarial, purchasing, stocktaking)

- staff development (in-house training)

- curriculum development and materials writing for the schools (responsibility for running each team).

Job descriptions

Each job description lists areas of responsibility other than the professional jobs that all do of direct teaching, teacher training (when the need arises) and translation. A typical teacher's job description lists between five and ten distinct areas of responsibility, plus participation in one of the CDL's five curriculum development and materials writing groups. The jobs a teacher does (slots in the organigram) are negotiated between the teacher concerned and the director before being finally agreed at a staff meeting. Generally speaking, people do the jobs they are interested in or good at. Every teacher's combination of jobs is different from every other one, i.e. job descriptions are tailor-made. Job descriptions are renegotiated from time to time because of staff changes, or to avoid "job fatigue", or to improve performance.

Coordinators

In each role or area of responsibility in a teacher's job description, he* is responsible to one of (at present) four coordinators, who check that jobs are being done. They

* To our regret, all 15 teachers are men.

continued

in turn are responsible to a "management committee" comprising the director, the cordinators and the accountant (also a teacher).

Full staff meetings

Quite a lot of matters are decided by majority vote in full staff meetings. These include:

- the annual budget

- major organisational decisions or other innovations

- reallocation of responsibilities, i.e. reassignment of slots in the organigram and consequent rewriting of job descriptions

- evaluation of CDL performance each term.

From peer training to teacher training

Responsibility for a given area doesn't necessarily mean doing it all yourself: very often it means helping/informing/training colleagues in that area. For instance in each technical area (language lab, library, computers), the person in charge ensures cleaning and maintenance, the availability of equipment or materials, etc but also trains colleagues in their use. Similarly for apparatus that may be new to some teachers - fast cassette copier, OHP, laminator, stencil cutter, duplicator, video camera, even photocopiers at first. In drawing up each year's budget, the marketing coordinator shows other teachers how to prepare budget estimates for their areas of responsibility. In the same way, the teacher in charge of staff development doesn't do it all himself, but gets other teachers to conduct training sessions, which he helps them plan and run. Curriculum development and materials writing groups are run by experienced staff who guide newer members in the work their group has to do, including preparing IST materials and conducting training sessions with teachers in government schools.

The training role therefore starts with peer training in one's own area of responsibility (even something as banal as showing all fellow staff members how to start the generator when they need it). From that sort of thing teachers progress to peer training in in-house staff development sessions. And as we have said, all staff members work in teams to produce materials for secondary school teachers, and finally take part in in-service training in the field.

Advantages of collective responsibility

This may sound like all chiefs and no Indians, a pretentious, bureaucratic and cumbersome system based on goody-goodyism. But it actually works very well. Jobs get done with less shirking or delay than is often noticeable in public institutions. Teachers show commitment to their roles and great willingness to do non-teaching jobs. There is a feeling, not of doing things for "management", but rather for the whole team, or for one another, which is often the reality.

Teachers develop a wide range of new skills in the very varied areas we have mentioned. They help each other to do new jobs and use new types of equipment not commonly found in government services in Mali, and in so doing, they acquire training skills appropriate for use with one's peers. As we ourselves see the system functioning, there is a natural link between the skills development of the teaching staff and their ability to impart skills to others.

Is the system applicable elsewhere?

We don't know how usual or unusual CDL's organisation is. We realise it depends partly on a number of unusual circumstances, notably a determination at the outset to adopt a non-directive style of management. It is obviously significant too that the teachers are virtual shareholders in a joint enterprise, earning fees for direct teaching and bonus payments when there is a financial surplus. But the shared sense of responsibility seems to us to have as much to do with job satisfaction as with the desire for gain, and we therefore hope that this brief account will not be without interest for others.

Biodata: Henri Traoré trained in Bamako and Leeds and has a Master's degree in EFL Management from Warwick. He has been the CDL director since 1982.

Donard Britten has worked since 1992 in the BC/ODA project operating out of CDL.

Sample Job Description

Mamadou Millogo

Coordinator for marketing
Responsible for sales, ESP course design and computers

1. Contribute to the secondary level ESP outreach team.
2. Draw up an annual marketing plan.
3. Hold quarterly marketing meetings.
4. Ensure the implementation of the marketing plan and report to the Director and committee.
5. Carry out market research.
6. Make sales visits to potential clients.
7. Negotiate for new courses.
8. Report to sponsors on progress of students.
9. Ensure that a needs analysis is carried out for every sponsor of an ESP course.
10. Ensure that an appropriate choice of teaching materials is made for each specialist learner group.
11. Train colleagues in computer use, as requested.
12. Ensure the care and maintenance of Centre computers.
13. Supervise the use of the OHPs, laminator and film projector.

Organigram

Centre de Langues

Director HT

Administration BK	**Marketing MM**	**Outreach SS**	**Teaching FK**
Equipment & maintenance AD, SH, BK, HK, MM, NO	Publicity SH	ESG syllabus & testing SS	Course design (GE) NO
Computers MM	Sales DB, LK, MM	ESG materials & methods MW	Course design (ESP) MM
EFL resources BK	Course enquiries & examinations HK	ESTP FK	Course administration HM
Environment DB, NO	Accounts & budgeting AB	EF syllabus & testing BK	Timetabling LK
Office supplies BT	Video library AD	EF materials & methods AB	Placement NO
Library MW	Reception & secretarial BK	Staff development SS	Course evaluation DB

Would you like to send something in to "The Teacher Trainer"?

"The Teacher Trainer" is designed to be a forum for trainers, teachers and trainees all over the world. If you'd like to send in a letter, a comment, a cartoon, a taped conversation or an article sharing information, ideas or opinions we'll be very happy to receive it. It's easier for us if the written pieces are typed up with double spacing. The style should be simple and readable and the normal length of articles is about 1000 to 2000 words. We can serialise if necessary but this will delay publication considerably!

Who reads "The Teacher Trainer"

Here is a sample list of subscribers:

ACE Consultores de Idiomas, Madrid, Spain.

Edinburgh Language Foundation, Scotland.
AMES Centre, Parramatta, Australia.
Universidad de Salamanca, Spain.
The Education Department, Trowbridge, Wiltshire.
The British Council Manila, The Philippines.
The British Embassy, Ankara, Turkey.
Textbook writers, Cambridge, UK, San Francisco, USA.
Director of Studies, Berlin, Germany.
The Library, School of Education, Exeter University.
Teacher Trainers in Benin, Portugal, Pakistan, Japan, Ecuador.

The Psychological Risks for Teachers at a Time of Methodological Change

by Tony Luxon

Introduction

This article is concerned with the effects of methodological change on the teacher who has to initiate that change in the classroom. It is not so much concerned with the different roles the teacher has to play, as with the effect that these new roles have on them as a person. Change is often painful and there is often resistance to it. Resistance may come from both the teachers and the students.

There are numerous situations at present (China, parts of Eastern Europe) in which teachers are either obliged, or strongly urged to change from a traditional, grammar-translation type of methodology to methods based on a more communicative approach. This means that the teacher has to change in an enormous number of different ways. In order to develop their class into a more learner-centred environment, the teacher may be being asked to give up an environment in which they would previously have felt comfortable and in command, for one in which there are as many possibilities of threat as there are changes.

These changes, that the teacher has to make, do not seem to have been considered in detail. For the last couple of decades and more, a large body of research has been carried out on the language learner. This research has included studies concerned with differences in motivation, personality, attitude, sources of anxiety ... in short, affective factors. We are concerned that we create the right atmosphere for the learner to acquire the target language. Quite rightly, we have not treated the learner like a learning machine which must be programmed to carry out a series of language learning functions; the learners are seen as sentient and emotional human beings, whole people who bring all the aspects of their humanity into the classroom. Because of this point of view, we realise that many of these affective factors have a direct bearing on the efficiency or otherwise, of their language learning.

It is also felt that learners can exercise a god deal of control and responsibility for their own learning. We have realised that learners do not always learn what teachers teach. Consequently, the roles of the student have changed, so that a 'communicative' classroom often neither physically nor affectively resembles a traditional classroom.

In the communicative classroom therefore, the students are given more control over, and more responsibility for, their own destiny, and this, many of us feel, can only be a good thing.

However, in order to accommodate this change, teachers who have taught in a traditional environment have to overhaul themselves radically. Their normal roles change, their traditional positions of authority and responsibility change. Ironically, the teacher is at the centre of the changeover in the shift from teacher-centred for learner-centred approaches.

Would it not make sense, therefore, to find out how teachers feel about all this?

Not in terms of changes in methods and techniques or in terms of change in roles, or the problems involved in the simple expediency of altering seating positions in class, (if this is possible), but in terms of how teachers feel as human beings? How do these changes influence the affective aspects of teaching? We care about the anxiety caused to individual learners by certain aspects of the language class, so why should we not also care about the anxiety caused to teachers in the language class? If teachers are asked or even obliged, in some cases, to change the environment of their working lives, would it not make sense to look at the psychological as well as the pedagogical effects on them?

Every day, even in a relatively safe and familiar environment, teachers take risks. In one sense, the whole activity of teaching is a risk. Teachers in whatever kind of classroom, are noticeable. Ninety-nine per cent of the time they are the only teacher in the room (except perhaps for when they are being observed), while there are any number of students. If things go wrong in the classroom, the ultimate institutional responsibility usually lies with the teacher. The success or failure of the class is felt keenly by a teacher, in some ways multiplied by the number of students present. Students may be very aware of their own failure, but on the whole they do not lose sleep over the failure of other students. Teachers, on the other hand, do lose sleep over the lack of progress of their students. It is possible for students to hide in a class; they can situate themselves in a place where, if they are careful, they will not be too noticeable. A teacher has no place to hide.

Most of the time, teachers are able to deal with these circumstances, but all of us have felt threatened at one time or another. If a class goes wrong, we worry and try to find out why. We then try another approach and hope that it works. But we can never be sure.

In this article, I would like to indicate the areas of possible threat and anxiety faced by a teacher who is undergoing a process of change. My purpose is to show that if we do not prepare teachers psychologically for the pain which may be caused by change, then the proposed change may be delayed, or retarded, or impaired, or indeed may simply not take place at all in the classroom. We must remember that when new material is introduced, the implied syllabus behind the textbook is not always the one which is followed. Materials writers, I am sure, often ask themselves the question, echoing Allwright, "Why don't teachers teach what materials writers write?" There may be a number of reasons why teachers do not teach in the way that materials writers would like them to, apart from pedagogical disagreement with the materials themselves. One of the strongest reasons may be the anxiety caused by the change of material. After all, if anxiety can affect students of language so much then perhaps teachers of language can be affected as well. Some teachers simple do not know which are the best techniques to use in order to teach their material effectively, and this is often a source of anxiety.

Sources of anxiety

We may be able to group these sources of anxiety into related areas. We can also see how these areas interact with each other, possibly to compound the anxiety. One of the main differences between a traditional class and a more communicative class is the relative position of the teacher as controller and source of authority. This is not to say that the teacher no longer has any control over the class, nor is it to say that the teacher is no longer the source of authority in the class. It may, however, appear to both the students and the teacher that the teacher has diminished powers to control, and less responsibility for the conduct of the lessons. This has strong implications.

We will look at each area in the traditional classroom and contrast it with what may be the case in the communicative classroom. In this way we may be able to see more clearly the possible causes of anxiety for the teacher.

continued.

Traditional Classroom

1) Control of Knowledge
Teachers control, and are responsible for, much of the language output, i.e. their own. They are the source of language knowledge, and so they have control over how that knowledge is transmitted. For example, they may have decided already, or it may have been decided for them, that the knowledge will be of a predominantly structural nature and that the best way to transmit this knowledge is through the use of the mother tongue.

2) Use of Target Language
Teachers use the mother tongue to explain grammatical structures or 'language points'. Vocabulary is translated and examples are usually provided by the textbook.

3) Knowledge of Grammar
Teachers explain complex grammar rules that the students don't know beforehand. Therefore, they are in control of the knowledge to be given. The teacher can give the students something that they don't have. The power relation is in favour of teachers.

4) Position of Authority
Teachers are the visible figures of authority. They may stand at the front of the class for most of the time. The desk is normally raised from the floor. From there, teachers can control the flow of language, either by explaining the text or by asking questions.

5) Distance between Teachers and Students
In the situation described above, there is more physical distance between the teacher and the students for most of the time in the lesson. This distance indicates the power relationship. The students have naturalised this and so have the teachers.

6) Indicators of Achievement
Teachers, through their control of the output, can determine the achievement of each individual class. For example, they can explain the required 'language points' for that particular unit and this means that they have done their job.

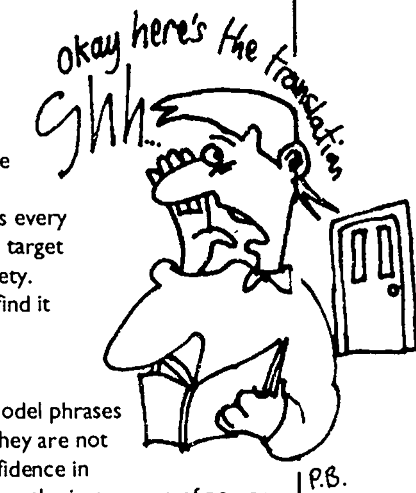
7) Teachers' Familiarity with Materials
Teachers are familiar with the old materials. They know the kind of structures they are required to teach. They have the security of the known quantity.

8) Teachers' Familiarity with Approach
The teachers are familiar with the approach implied or explicit in the textbook. They can arrange their classes for the week and they know where they should be by the end.

9) Roles of the Teacher
Teachers play fewer, more familiar roles. Much of the time, they are the source of knowledge. As they have possession of this privileged information it is a safe role to play. There is no confusion on the part of the teacher or the students about what they should be doing.

Communicative Classroom

(1) Much of the language output is produced by the students themselves, and while there is a range of activities from, strictly controlled to free practice, probably teachers will have less control over the output of another person compared to their own. The teacher can never predict entirely what the output will be. Therefore, there is a greater degree of risk than before.



(2) Teachers use the target language as much as possible thereby increasing the risk of making mistakes. If teachers have been used to using the mother tongue to explain things, there is every reason to suspect that using the target language might cause some anxiety. Furthermore the students may find it unsettling.

(3) Teachers perhaps have to model phrases or appropriate responses that they are not sure of. They may lack the confidence in their ability to do this. Therefore, the instrument of power (knowledge) is diminished.

(4) The teacher may be in a number of situations throughout the lesson. They may be participating in an activity with one group, or monitoring another. Whatever the situation, it may diminish their visible position of dominance.

(5) If teachers are performing the multiplicity of roles normally required of a communicative class, the distance from the students is inevitably reduced, again affecting the power relationship adversely for teachers.

(6) It is not so easy to control what will happen in a communicative class, no matter how particularly teachers plan, due to the less than predictable nature of relatively free communication. Therefore, teachers cannot forecast with comfortable certainty the precise outcome of the class.

(7) If they are required to teach communicatively, teachers may be unfamiliar with the material, or they may have to adapt existing material and teach it in an unfamiliar way. Either way, they lose the security of the known.

(8) If teachers are given new text books they immediately have to deal with the unfamiliar. The possibility of failure to do justice to the new material can quite easily cause anxious moments for teachers.

(9) Teachers have to play a greater number of roles in any one lesson. These roles are interactive and at times unclear. With a large class to contend with, these roles become even more problematical.

10) Students' Familiarity with Approach
The students are familiar with the traditional approach. They have a clear idea how teachers should do their jobs. They know what it is they are supposed to learn from a language class. They know the kind of exercises and texts the books contain. For example they know there is a word list to be learned every week and that after a period time, they will have memorised or tried to memorise all the vocabulary they need to pass the examination.

11) Teachers' Relationship with Colleagues
Teachers maintain solidarity with the other teachers who teach the same material. They know the same stories and the same language points to be taught. They will almost certainly be at the same point in the textbook at any one time, barring mishaps. They may make the same jokes about the texts.

Teachers may have the confidence of their colleagues. They may feel that they have the knowledge and experience to teach the material and perhaps even help other colleagues with possible difficulties. Other colleagues may have respect for them.

12) Teachers' Relationship with Superiors
The teacher may have the respect and confidence of their superiors. The headmaster, who is more than a custodian of English teaching and has other things on their mind, may be happy with a solid, reliable teacher who follows the set-down curriculum faithfully.

13) Teachers' Relationship with Students.
Teachers may have the respect and confidence of the students. The students expect a figure of authority who has a great deal of technical knowledge about a subject and can tell them about it.

14) Teachers' Perception of their Responsibilities
Teachers see the dispensation of knowledge as their responsibility. They are responsible for seeing that the students get as much knowledge as is contained in each unit. Therefore, if language points and vocabulary are designated to be learned from the unit, teachers have to ensure that everything is covered. Students are responsible for paying attention to what the teacher is telling them, so responsibilities are quire clearly demarcated.

(10) The students are unfamiliar with the new approach. They do not have a clear idea of what the teacher intends, even if they explain the methods; students are not methodologists. They may question teachers, who may not feel confident enough in their knowledge of the principles behind the techniques to be able to explain clearly.

(11) If teachers change their way of teaching, they may lose their sense of solidarity with other teachers. They may not be able to consult as readily with them about items in the text, nor will they be able to maintain the same attitude towards it.

Teachers may feel that by adopting new methods and materials they may lose the confidence and respect of their colleagues. They may think that the students will say something about the strange new way of teaching.

(12) Teachers may worry about losing the respect and confidence of the headteacher, thus threatening possible promotion, chances and damaging their career.

(13) Teachers may lose the respect of the students by refusing to satisfy their expectations of what a teacher should be doing, that is, dispensing information on a given subject in the curriculum. Students may also complain to their parents, who may then complain to the headteacher.

(14) Teachers should promote the idea of students being directly responsible for their own language development, which may mean that visible responsibility may not be as evident as before. The teacher may feel that their sense of responsibility is in question. The teachers' sense of responsibility may well be in question from students who are more used to clearly demarcated duties. Therefore, teachers may risk losing the respect of their students and the orientation towards where their own responsibilities lie.

These are all possible areas of risk, whether teachers negotiate them successfully or not. As can be seen, teachers perform their task in relation to a number of factors, all of which may be affected in a period of transition; teachers and their students (also parents); teachers and fellow teachers; teachers and their superiors; teachers and the textbook/materials.

Furthermore, the self-esteem of teachers is closely tied to this change. Issues of responsibility, recognition, reputation, and competence are areas of possible conflict. Previously held beliefs about teaching are questioned.

If teachers are psychologically unprepared for these things, they could be in for a hard time, both professionally and personally. It is therefore, not only time for a questioning of the pedagogical bases of introducing change, but also a closer examination of the social and psychological effects these changes may have on teachers.

In conclusion, there should be an awareness among trainers of the social psychological realities of teaching in a specific environment, and how new methods and techniques affect the position of the teacher.

Editor's Note

Tony has moved to Managua. Nicaragua where he and his wife Michele are managing an ODA project. They are hoping to develop there some techniques or responses for teachers managing change. They have promised to let us have their thoughts on this later.

Albanian babies and bath water

by Barbara Hyde

Introduction

An Englishman was walking along a village street in a remote part of Albania. A horde of small children came, showing great excitement-he was probably the first Englishman they'd ever seen. They were able to ask, and answer, 'What is your name?' but having done that they were stuck and extremely frustrated, desperate to communicate. They started flinging up their arms yelling, with great enthusiasm, 'This is a chair!', 'This is a table!', 'This is a pen!', None of which were in sight, of course[1].

This telling little incident underlines quite effectively the truth that while 65% of Albanian children are learning English at school, and foreigners are frequently impressed at the good English they encounter among adult Albanians, the methods of teaching may still leave something to be desired. The something being, the ability to use English appropriately in communication with others-knowing how to say, for example, in the above situation, 'Where are you from?' and 'What are you doing here?' "Ah!", Albanian teachers would probably say, "...if these children had reached Book 3, in year 3, they would have been able to". To which up-to-date methodologists would reply, "When is it ever appropriate to say 'This is a table'?" And so it would go on.

This hypothetical debate, unfortunately, rarely becomes a reality. You could probably substitute for Albanians, teachers from a number of other Eastern European countries, where there are now increasing n ıbers of native-speaking teachers and trainers attempting to introduce new teaching methodologies. If open debate on such issues as the one sketched above were more prevalent, some of the deep-seated preconceptions, on both sides, arising from very different educational and cultural attitudes, would become explicit[2].

This article is an exploration into the territory of cultural differences, as they affect trainers and teachers of foreign languages, based very much on my experience of training in Albania, but applicable to other ex-Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Western Trainers' Assumptions

The following are some examples of unwarranted assumptions made by teacher trainers coming to work in these countries:

1. Local teachers are using an outdated and ineffective methodology which they themselves want, and need, to throw out in favour of more up-to-date communicative approaches to teaching.

Even worse:

2. The Communist period and resulting constraints on teachers is mainly responsible for these 'bad' methods, and now that enlightened Capitalism has triumphed, economically and politically, nothing stands in the way of a complete take-over methodologically and educationally too.

(Both assumptions, of course, are crudely unhistorical and imperialistic. We may assume teachers want certain ideas simply because we think they are superior. More usually it is only some aspects of innovation that are welcomed. The second assumption also shows lack of awareness of long-established native educational traditions pre-dating Communism. In some respects the best of these traditions were more secure under Communism that they would be under a market-orientated Western approach to education.

3. The third set of assumptions come in the form of a question I have heard asked by trainers:

'How is it that in the countries we are working in, people have managed to learn English to such a high standard despite the highly traditional methods of teaching? If these grammar-based methods going back to the '50s have worked so well, aren't we in danger of throwing the baby out with the bath water if we prevail on teachers to adopt the new ideas?[3]

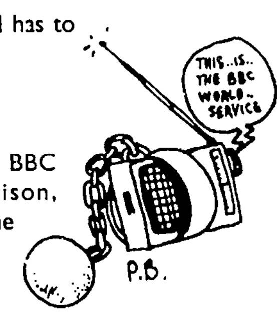
The assumptions here are that methodology always improves, newer meaning better and that a new methodology can be introduced totally, hook line and sinker, and existing practices discarded. There is also a touch of post-colonial guilt: should we be there at all? The achievements of students learning a language in very deprived conditions are recognised, but there is confusion about what the notion of 'good English' actually means. Many Albanians, for example, appear very fluent, with accurate pronunciation and grammar, and a serviceably wide vocabulary, but can be very hard for native speakers to communicate with. This is partly because receptive skills, particularly listening, lag behind the others, and partly because, as we shall see, the teaching methods did not promote communication.

Why Albanian English is so good

Nevertheless, this central proposition still has to be addressed.

Here are some explanations:

1. The forbidden fruit: listening to the BBC World Service could land you in prison, therefore, in silent protest, you learnt the language of Western Imperialism as assiduously as you could.



2. A small country, (like Hungary too?), with a language nobody else wants to learn, is forced to learn other languages as a way out of cultural isolation.

3. It was an elitist system focusing on the high achievers, so these are the ones we encounter speaking good English. There are plenty of others who don't speak it so well.

4. People expect learning a language to be hard work rather than pleasure, with a lot of rote learning, for example, and this pays off.

These answers take us partway towards understanding a very different system, which the next section explores more fully.

The Albanian background

Albania's rigid totalitarian system, its isolation and the Russian influence in the earlier phase of Communism are all factors. Knowledge of a Western language being potentially dangerous, the source of this knowledge had to be strictly supervised; thus the teacher and school text-book, shorn of any possible decadent or dissident idea, were the only official source of English, and any variation in methods or materials was effectively prevented. There was no climate for the airing of different ideas, perhaps even a systemic downgrading of intellectual life.

Education in general, and language learning too, seem to have been seen as the acquiring of knowledge by hard work and rote learning.

Methods of language learning

Classroom walls still bear the slogans, 'A foreign language is a weapon in the struggle of life' (Marx') and 'Imitation is the golden key to success in language learning'. In this environment, mistakes are something negative, to be avoided, not only for familiar, behaviourist reasons, but because what you offer to your teacher should be perfect, and because you shouldn't offend the ears of a native speaker of English by making errors. The aim is perfect English, but without a standard to judge this by.

The notion of testing, of coming up to a predetermined standard set by the teacher, not by yourself, permeates the whole activity. Learning is done before or after the lesson, not in it, and the results tested in the lesson, which may account for the impression an observer gets of somehow missing the moment when something new is learnt, when students are straining to understand something, when there is a creative tension in the air, so that the actual processes of learning and teaching are laid bare.

Ritual performances[4]

Teaching is overwhelmingly text-based, and the text of each lesson is presented through the teacher's explanations and comments, never given directly to the pupils. There is then a strong emphasis on oral work, in the sense of question and answer, teacher to pupil, reciting or reading aloud. Thus there is an inescapable feeling of ritual about lessons: rehearsal for a future performance, repeating what has already been learnt, monologue rather than dialogue.

The questions posed by the teacher are always pedagogical, designed to allow the pupil to display what she or he has learnt. The teacher already knows the answer, as the pupils know. To be asked a genuine question by a teacher throws them, the opposite of the situation Willis describes where the student 'wrongly' takes the teacher's pedagogical question to be real and answers accordingly[5]. Thus pupils as well as teachers appear to be going through a ritual performance quite unrelated to any real-life use of the language. After all, until recently there rarely was any chance of using the language in real life.

These procedures and habits entail a strange resistance to being introduced to anything new in a lesson and being expected to act on it. How can a student do this, they seem to feel, if they haven't had the text or material before the lesson so that they can get it right. The aim of 'getting it right' takes precedence over personal progress and individual reaction to ideas. The mixed ability classes encourage a tendency to aim at unreal standards of achievement, because the teaching methods do not allow for individual differences in learning styles. Briefly, the system is product rather than process-orientated, subject and teacher, not student-centred. This is not unnatural in a society which for historical and religious reasons has put the claims of the family or social group above those of the individual.

The Western Background

In Western liberal Protestant culture, on the other hand, the importance of the individual is very deeply embedded, and educational ideas reflect this. Individual development is fostered, measuring results not so much against others but by the student's own previous performance; individual autonomy, too, so that independence from the teacher and the ability to take responsibility for their own learning are encouraged from the earliest years. Closely connected is the value placed on authenticity and truth, in terms of student responses and ideas, and going along with this a respect for the responses and ideas of others. Co-operation in learning, then, is an acceptance of learning as experiential, evidenced by discovery learning and problem-solving activities.

Current EFL Methodology reflects this educational climate. There is the recognition of the need to accommodate the different learning styles of students from different cultural and educational backgrounds. Self-access learning is more prevalent. Group and problem-solving activities are enormously exploited. Mistakes are seen positively as evidence of the particular stage an individual learner has reached.

Teacher training frequently promotes such principles in both the style and content of sessions, using methods and techniques that are transferable to the language classroom. It is supposed that trainees will learn from the way trainers handle sessions, as well as from the content of sessions.

continued

This admittedly brief and selective contrast between two different educational cultures is intended only to suggest where the areas of mutual misunderstanding, or fundamental differences in attitude, might lie, and how they may hinder the process of innovation and development.

The next section presents specific examples of such differences between teachers and trainers in the Albanian context.

Eight Problems in Teacher Training

1. Trainers feel that teachers are going to learn something new in a session, and as a result of the session. Teachers, on the other hand, want to know the content beforehand so that they will be able to give a good account of themselves and not be 'caught out'. For practical and pedagogical reasons, trainers are more likely to give out handouts during a session than before. They may also favour the use of surprise tactics, to challenge or provoke, and tolerate the more unpredictable outcomes entailed by a learner-centred approach in training.

2. Trainers feel that during a session, teachers will learn from each other and that problem sharing is part of teacher development. Teachers expect to learn from the trainer only and do not easily listen to each other.

3. Trainers normally attempt to create an atmosphere where different viewpoints are tolerated and explored, where issues are not black and white. Teachers want to be told what the trainer thinks is right and wrong categorically (whether they agree or not), and find it hard to tolerate fuzziness, uncertainty, or the insistence on seeing both sides of a question. Also, out of respect for the 'teacher' (trainer) they do not want to show open disagreement with the trainer.

4. Trainers often want to put teachers into the role of students so that they experience a particular activity, and then ask them to switch roles and look at the activity critically as teachers. Teachers find this confusing, probably because they are not used to taking on different teacher roles in the classroom, or getting pupils to adopt different roles.

5. Trainers assume that the activities demonstrated in training sessions are central to language learning, and are aware of what stage in a lesson or sequence of learning they could take place. This may not be made explicit, so teachers are not able to place them as belonging to stages such as presentation, practice or further practice, and tend to regard them as peripheral, something extra to tag on to the end of the 'real' work.

6. Trainers tend to assume that teachers have the freedom to decide what to teach in their lessons, but teachers do not feel they have. Nor do they necessarily want it.

7. Trainers often value techniques such as eliciting, encouraging inference and guessing, as tools of language teaching and training. Teachers value telling and explaining as speech acts appropriate to teaching (colleagues enquired of a teacher about a new class, 'Did they listen to you?') and admire the ability to talk articulately at length.

8. Trainers use unfamiliar terminology, such as 'activity', developing skills', 'coursebook'. Teachers use certain terms to mean something other than trainers take them to mean. For example, 'lesson' for teachers means something in a book, what we would call a unit, not an event in real time. Moreover, the coursebook itself is called a 'method'. 'Can you suggest a good method?' means 'What book do you recommend?'.

All these factors tend to create a credibility gap between foreign trainers and local teachers.

Clearly there can be no easy permanent solutions to the problem of bridging this gap. However, I would like to offer here some short-term tactics I have used, interim measures towards longer-term innovation.

Practical Solutions to the eight problems

In Albania, the problems have been tackled both from the 'top' via meetings with Ministry personnel, local education authorities, academic and research bodies and directors of schools, and from the 'bottom' via direct contact with both pre- and in-service teachers. Of these two, "bottom-up" approaches tend to be more effective because a) the aftermath of communist totalitarian structures means that authority is somewhat discredited, and only lip service paid to directives from above b) the economic and political instability of the country creates uncertain conditions, such as the Ministry running out of the money needed to fund a course, or key personnel losing their positions because they belong or belonged to the 'wrong' party. Thus strategies that use minimum money and resources, and employ teachers themselves as agents of innovation, are more successful. One example of this is the grassroots activity of local branches of the new English Teachers Association, that have grown up quite independently of government or Education Authority instigation.

Ways of dealing with the cultural gap in training

I shall look at possible ways of dealing with the eight problems in teacher training in the context of the latter approach, working directly with teachers: more specifically and mainly, the context of optional weekly workshops for any Tirana English teachers. Taking the problems one by one.

1. Planning a longer series of workshops in advance was necessary here, so as to issue teachers with a programme of forthcoming sessions. Teachers were reassured that they weren't going to be tested; indeed, in evaluations after courses, teachers often made clear that they had expected to be tested and appreciated not being. In the future, it might be helpful to hand out some materials for a forthcoming workshop at the end of the session.

2. Getting participants to listen to each other is a vital training skill: one way of course is to make sure you listen. More specifically, I tried to set up activities which depended for their resolution on feedback from different groups, so listening to each other was built into the activity (e.g. jigsaw reading). With groups I knew better, I made this an explicit issue, turning it into a group as much as a trainer problem.

3. Again, the skill of the trainer in presenting issues undogmatically, remaining impartial, and drawing out of teachers what they really think is vital here. Teachers need to feel relaxed and unthreatened. A lot of concrete examples, showing how an idea or practice can work in some circumstances but not in others, are helpful. Values clarification exercises, where they answer questions individually first, are useful too in having teachers explore what they themselves really think before being influenced by anyone else.

4. Clear explanation of why it is important to adopt different roles helps. On full-time courses I included peer-teaching too which boosted teachers' confidence.

5. Teachers tended to see a lesson as an immutable series of steps, which was blocking their understanding of alternative ideas, and to understand this I needed to spend a great deal of time in their classrooms, watching them teach, seeing their supervisions of student teachers, and talking to them informally about their teaching. In time, I became aware of what needed filling in their frame of reference and my own.

6. This problem, from the teachers' point of view, has at least three aspects:

- access to new materials
- having permission to use them
- wanting and having the confidence to do so.

It was tackled on different fronts, by getting official permission from the Ministry, by raising teachers' morale, and by demonstrating the use of new materials.

7. Open discussion about what constitutes a good teacher or trainer was invaluable here, perhaps started off by a short questionnaire or a number of controversial statements. However, in a culture which values eloquence and articulacy in a teacher, I think for credibility one has to try and show these qualities too.

8. I defined terms I knew were unfamiliar, and drew attention to differences in the use of specific words-i.e. 'false friends'. I frequently asked checking questions since just asking 'Are you familiar with this term?' invariably drew a polite if puzzled 'yes'. I frequently incorporated new terminology into vocabulary revision exercises, or reading activities, so that there was ample recycling.

Demonstration lessons

The importance of 'showing' and 'demonstrating' became clearer and clearer: this led to a refresher course for Tirana teachers in which they watched me, and an American trainer, give a series of lessons to some of their own pupils in two of their schools. The aim of these was not to show perfect lessons but to demonstrate some techniques and to teach without using their textbook but in a way which could be combined with it. Small groups of teachers watched each class; this was immediately followed by a feedback session in which they were free to comment and criticise. We, the trainers, talked openly about problems, what we would have done differently and so on. These sessions were supplemented by videos of recent EFL lessons from other countries.

Summary: the need to adapt and compromise

A number of these practical solutions indicate ways in which trainers need to change their approach or come half-way to meet teachers' expectations. To summarise: trainers need to give as much information as possible in advance of sessions, including relevant reading matter. They need to be more explicit than usual about why certain training methods are used. They need to spend a lot of time discussing with teachers their own rationale for their teaching practices, and try to reach as broad a consensus as possible about what constitutes good teaching. They need to use and adapt rather than reject the prescribed text book. They should be prepared sometimes to give a lecture instead of a workshop. Getting to know teachers well personally and gaining their trust are of course essential prerequisites.

Conclusion

The implications are that foreign trainers, to be effective, need to operate in a climate of mutual understanding: they not only need to give time to learning about the local educational traditions and culture, they also need to examine the preconceptions behind their own educational beliefs, so often taken for granted.

References

1. An incident related by J. Hodgson, lecturer at the University of Tirana.

2. Agota Ruzsa Teaching from the Heart in Explorations in Teacher Training ed. Tony Duff, Longman 1988, p47.

3. This was a question formulated by colleagues at a British Council ELTECS conference, Potsdam, June 1992.

4. Peter Maingay Observation for Training, Development of Assessment? in Explorations in Teacher Training, as above, p19.

5. Dave Willis The Lexical Syllabus, Collins 1990, pp1-2.

Pre-Service teacher training undergoing major change?

From November 19th-21st, 1993 a conference was held by UCLES in Birmingham, England on the pie-service teacher training courses known as CTEFLA*. Almost eighty people came. Most were from the British Isles but there were representatives too from Switzerland, Portugal, Italy, Spain, The Netherlands, Hungary and U.S.A. What is interesting for readers of The Teacher Trainer (whether or not you have ever been involved in CTEFLA courses) is that the presentations and discussions at the conference centred on pre-service training: its aims, content, course models, outcome, affect on language students, and on teacher development. The pre-service schemes of the UCLES/RSA examination boards are undergoing a sea-change at the moment with a wide-ranging consultation amongst course tutors and assessors. The fact that the conference was held at all, its title (PPP-what are the alternatives...?) and the main thrust of many of the talks is a clear indication that things are shifting within UK, TEFLA, pre-service training.

The Teacher Trainer has over the last few years published many lively articles debating pre-service training in general and the CTEFLA scheme in particular. The editor's presentation at the conference drew on these and other sources. The journal will continue in this and future issues to keep the debate alive. Just to tune in readers who are involved in different kinds of pre-service teacher training, here is a short introduction to the subject.

The present model for teaching language

Most pre-service TEFLA courses in the U.K. take as their model for the teaching of language the 'PPP' or 'Three P's' model. The 'P's stand for Presentation, Practice and Production. In this model the central idea is that small pieces of language (often a tense, a conditional, a few exponents of a language function, or a small set of texical items) are isolated and 'presented' to language students. This is done by building up a situation (using pictures, objects...) in which the language might naturally occur, presenting a model sentence or sentences and checking understanding of the situation and the concept behind it. Next comes the practice stage which at first is tightly teacher controlled and often consists of students repeating the model. There is plenty of correction at this stage. If this goes well, practice becomes less controlled by degrees using such techniques as substitution drilling, pair practice, role play and dialogue building. The tendencies are to go from Accuracy to Fluency, tight teacher control to less control, and from listening to speaking to reading to writing. For fuller descriptions of the model see a) Gower R & S Walkers (1983) The teaching practice handbook. Heinemann b) T. Woodward (1991) Models and metaphors in language teacher training (CUP).

Questioning the present model

Over the past few years especially there has risen a chorus of questions about the present model. If you would like to listen to this chorus, the following reading will start you off.

Grundy, P. 1989 'A critique of accepted pre-service TT', serialised in two issues of The Teacher Trainer vol. 3, nos 2 & 3. (See also M. Parrott's reply in vol. 4, no. 1, 1990).

Kerr, P. 1993 'Language training on pre-service courses'. MET vol. 2, no.4.

Kuhn, T. 1970 The Structure of scientific revolutions, Chicago University Press.

Lewis, M. 1993 The Lexical Approach LTP.

Maley, A. 1993 'Finding the centre' The Teacher Trainer, vol. 7, No.3.

Morrow, K. 1993. 'From behind the barricades' The Teacher Trainer, vol. 7, No.3.

Nattinger, J & J DeCarrico. 1992 Lexical Phrases and Language teaching OUP.

Sweetman, J. 1993 'Higher thoughts on teacher training'. Guardian Education, Oct 4.

UCLES/RSA 1993. Consultation document proposal for pre-service certificates, Sept.

Wilberg, P. 1987 One to One LTP.

Woodward, T 1992. 'Training for medical general practice' Tesol France News, vol. 12, No.1.

Woodward, T. 1991 Models and metaphors in language teacher training CUP.

Wright T & R Bolitho 1993 'Language awareness' ELTJ. vol. 47, no.4 OUP.

And of course Gattegno, Asher, Dufeu, Curran, Lozanov, D & J Willis, Prabhu, Krashen, Terrell, Stevick...

Ways forward

In future issues of The Teacher Trainer we will be printing

* The CTEFLA is the Certificate TEFL (Adults), administered formerly by the (British) Royal Society of Arts now by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate. Courses normally run somewhat more than 100 hours including input sessions with a trainer, observed teaching practice (6-7 hours per trainee) and feedback on lesson planning. Assessment is continuous. There is no exam. The Dip. TEFL (Adults), or DTEFLA, is approximately twice as long in hours. There is a rigorous final exam to supplement assessment of T.P. Both certifications play a major role in the training of British EFL teachers.

different responses to this search for an improved model on which to base pre-service TEFL teacher training. In this issue Jim Scrivener who spoke at the November conference, explains his response. After noting some of his own dissatisfactions with the "three P's" model he explains "ARC" to us, thus showing us a way of re-categorising the types of activity we commonly find on pre-service training courses. The re-categorisation frees us from our "three P's mindset" especially in terms of the sequence of activities trainees can use in a language lesson.

PPP & After by Jim Scrivener

When considering ways of working with language in the classroom- What can I tell my pre-service trainees that is honest, comprehensible and useful to them?

One traditional and popular answer is: "PPP" (Presentation; Practice; Production). PPP is a very attractive, very persuasive and elegantly simple training model. It still underpins much of the work done on many CTEFLA courses. But it is very problematic:

1. It is not based on any coherent theory of learning (unless we assume it is behaviourist).

2. It adopts a jug and mug, "lockstep" attitude towards learners and learning.

3. It assumes that learning is "Straight-line" (that following a certain routine will guarantee the required results).

4. It is based on a highly questionable, atomistic, sentence-level theory of language.

5. It seems to assume that the speaking skill will arise naturally out of sufficient work on discrete grammar, functional, or lexical items.

6. It confines teachers. It seems to leave no room for growth or exploration. It is fundamentally disabling, not enabling.

7. There seem to be a limited number of teaching options, all of which can be pre-planned. In this respect we are training our trainees to not consider the range of options based on responding to real events in the classroom.

8. It is prescriptive. This prescription is not necessarily explicit but (as a result of offering trainees a fairly rigid model) is felt internally when trainees interpret it (rightly or wrongly) as the way their tutors expect them to teach. At the conference I outlined and discussed some of these problems with PPP. I then proposed a possible alternative model - one that is equally simple, but is descriptive and enabling.

1. What is ARC?

ARC is a simple descriptive model for teaching and learning. (See diagram below).

On a training course I'd like to be able to offer my trainees a simple description of the variety of approaches to language lessons that are possible.

2. ARC is applicable to all levels of experience, not only those in need of a simple model on a pre-service training course.

On a training course I'd like to be able to offer a description that allows me and the trainees to create lessons in the way that many experienced teachers do, by putting components, like building bricks, together in different orders. The three ARC building bricks are:

Restricted Use: (The language available for the learners to use or understand is in some way restricted). Authentic Use: (The language available to the students to use or understand is unrestricted).

Clarification and Focus: (The part of a lesson where learners focus in on a language item - to see it, think about it and understand it better).

3. ARC is an enabling model for training, not a restricting, constraining model.

On a training course I'd like to be able to offer a description that enables: that allows us to analyse clearly what is going on during a lesson - to see the gaps, the alternatives and the possibilities without evaluating, judging or condemning; that allows us to explore, try out different alternatives, to develop greater insight and awareness into teaching and learning and to grow and mature as teachers rather than one that straitjackets us into one workable but restricting formula.

4. ARC is based on a redefinition of what the component parts of a lesson are and, essentially, on a removal of prescription.

I propose ARC as a descriptive alternative to PPP. ARC, incidentally and importantly, can equally well describe PPP without having to prescribe it.

Using ARC

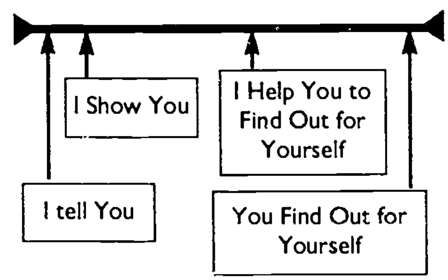
By ordering the ARC components in different ways we can describe a wide variety of lessons. For example: CRRA describes a lesson that begins with Clarification and Focus and is followed by two Restricted Use activities then by Authentic Use. This route-map is essentially the same as PPP. The difference here is that the components can easily be reordered, or added to, or omitted. The arrangement: RCR is another lesson type commonly offered on training courses, often characterised as "Test-Teach-Test". Similarly we can describe many other lessons, including observed lessons that seem problematic. For example, CRCRCRCRCR describes a class I observed by a trainee who alternately explained and set written exercises for the whole of her hour. Setting out the sequence in this way allowed us both to see more clearly what had happened and to consider alternative approaches.

Participants at the conference showed great interest in the model and seemed to feel it was a valid and preferable alternative to PPP. A number of trainers present said that they hope to try it out on future CREFLA courses. I would be very pleased to hear of any use made of the ARC model.

continued

A R C

Authentic Use	Restricted use	Clarification & Focus
for: Meaning, Communication, Fluency, Real-life, Pleasure	for: Form, Practice, Accuracy, Testing, Display	



Example Activities:

	Authentic Use	Restricted use
Speaking:	Communicative Activities Discussions Conversations	Drills Language Practice Activities Elicited dialogues Jazz Chants, Poems, Texts
Writing:	Stories Poems Essays	Copying Exercises Guided Writing
Reading:	Novels Newspapers, Articles Stories Leaflets, notices, Ads.	Examples Coursebook, Texts Exercises
Listening:	Conversations Radio, TV Narratives	Discrete sounds, words Sentences Coursebook tasks Examples from Coursebooks

Tools and Techniques

Rules
Examples
Reference Information
Diagrams, Time Lines
Substitution Tables
Translation
Questions about Meaning (Concept Qs)
Questions about Form
Questions about Use
Problems and Puzzles
Error analysis
Sentence analysis
Explanations, Lectures
Demonstrations
Gestures, Mime
Pictures, Flash Cards, Visual Aids
Cuisenaire Rods, Building Bricks
Contexts and Situations
Repetition
Elicitation
Voice, Intonation, Silence
Discussion
Personalisation
Models, Toys

If you would like more information I'd be delighted to send you some. Please send an A4 SAE to: Jim Scrivener, International House, Palace Court, White Rock, Hastings, TN34 1JY

Acknowledgement: Many thanks to Pete Redpath and Vic Richardson for their help.

Jane Willis also has a response to the present dilemma: task-based language learning. Jane's article, written after attendance at two different conferences, nevertheless deals with exactly the same issue-present dissatisfaction with the 3P's model as a basis for pre-service training. After detailing her own understanding of the PPP model and some reasons for questioning it, she goes on to explain her favourite alternative, task based learning.

Preaching what we Practice - Training what we teach:

Task-based language learning as an alternative to P.P.P. by Jane Willis

Jane Willis reports on an experiment in Teacher Training conducted by Barbara Garside with her CTEFLA trainees in the British Council Centre in Izmir, Turkey.

1 Background

At IATEFL, Lille, in 1992*, in a paper entitled "R.I.P. P.P.P.", Peter Redpath drew attention to the conflicting demands of the present RSA/UCLES CTEFLA and DTEFLA syllabuses: The CTEFLA quite clearly mentions "Presentation and Practice of New Language - the ability to select and divide language items...into learnable units...appropriate activities for controlled and free practice..." In short, all the ingredients of a P.P.P. approach. The DTEFLA syllabus is far more flexible. In fact, as Peter pointed out, to do well at Diploma level, a teacher has to "unlearn" what she/he was taught at Certificate level.

Second Language Acquisition Research now casts huge doubts on the effectiveness of a P.P.P. approach, which after all stems from behaviourist theories now largely discredited (Ellis 1993). Not all trainers nowadays believe that P.P.P. is effective, or use a rigid P.P.P. cycle themselves when teaching, so why do many still feel that trainee teachers ought to be trained in the P.P.P. cycle? Does it stem from the implications of the CTEFLA syllabus? Or from the lack of a simple alternative methodological paradigm for novice trainees?

The same theme was taken up again at the International House Teachers Centre Teacher Training Day in March, 1993.

In this article, then Barbara and I want to outline two approaches to language teaching, explore common reasons for dissatisfaction with one, report trainee teachers' reactions to the other, and invite readers to consider a question at the end.

2 What do we mean by PPP?

By PPP, most people mean:

PRESENTATION STAGE

The teacher presents to the class, in a clear context, the form and one use of a particular grammatical pattern,
e.g. *the present simple for daily routines,*
or
ways of expressing a function or notion
e.g. *inviting & refusing politely.*

PRACTICE STAGE

The teacher leads controlled practice using different activities: e.g. drills, grammar games, dialogues for role-plays.

PRODUCTION STAGE OR FREE STAGE

The teacher sets up an activity where students are encouraged to use language freely, the aim being to "produce" the new language learnt in a given situation.

3 What's wrong with PPP?

Many teachers and trainers (and some text-book writers) have been trying to break out of this paradigm and adopt a less rigid and more learner-centred approach to language teaching. What reasons do they give?

a) Classroom experience tells us that learners do not necessarily learn what teachers teach in PPP lessons. they get things right in lessons then wrong when control is removed: They also seem to learn things we don't mean to teach them.

b) At the production stage, students either overuse the new language items, (e.g. using will for every future action regardless of meaning) or manage to complete the communication activity without using any of the new language at all. In other words they either see it as a further controlled practice activity, or as a truly "free" activity.

c) PPP gives an impoverished and often distorted input of isolated language items. When students are confronted with naturally occurring language, even in small doses, they cannot cope: Neither can many students actually use in real life what they have learnt at school.

d) The realisation that learning a language is not a matter of just adding on new items. It's more of an organic growth. Language does not equal the sum of its parts.

e) The use of PPP - presenting learners with easy to grasp bits of language, and practising until they gain near native perfection of form, actually seems to prevent learners from thinking for themselves and forming their own hypotheses about language as system.

f) The stress on learning bits of grammar 'correctly' from the start, inhibits experimentation and risk-taking - both of which are essential for interlanguage development. (Rather than going from accuracy to fluency, shouldn't we take the more natural road of fluency to accuracy)?

If we take into account the findings of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research, and reflect objectively on our classroom experience, we realise that PPP does not work as effectively as we thought it did.

4 What can SLA research findings tell us about how people learn?

Although the learning styles of individuals may differ, the overwhelming evidence is that, in order for anyone to learn a language effectively in a classroom, there are four essential conditions to be met.

* A conference of the International Association for the Teachers of English as a Foreign Language.

KEY CONDITIONS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

EXPOSURE
to a rich but comprehensible input of real language i.e. the kind of language they will be needing to understand and use themselves.

Opportunities for real
USE OF LANGUAGE
- chances for learners to experiment and test hypotheses, to mean what they say and express what they mean in a variety of circumstances

MOTIVATION
to process the exposure and a need or desire to use the language.

FOCUS ON LANGUAGE
in order to prevent fossilisation and to challenge learners to strive for individual improvement, they need chances to reflect on language and try to systematise what they know.

These concepts are useful for trainees and teachers alike since they offer principled ways to plan and evaluate any lesson.

The vital questions are: How far are these conditions being met in our lessons?

- How appropriate is the exposure language students are encountering? Isolated units of language, or language in use?

- Are students getting enough chances to use the target language to express themselves and interact freely? To do more than just make an odd response? To have a whole conversation?

- Are learners being motivated to listen to and use the target language?

- Is there a focus on language as an object of study?

- Are there times when students feel the need to strive for more accuracy?

- And how are these four conditions balanced? (Teacher Talk can be very useful exposure but students also need their share of talking time).

5 An alternative framework: Task-Based Learning (TBL)

What do we mean by "task"? A task is a goal-oriented activity in which learners use language to achieve a real outcome; they can use whatever language they can muster in order to solve the problem, play the game, share the experience etc.

What does TBL consist of? A basic four stage task cycle is proposed below. (*ITALICS* show which conditions for learning are being met at each stage).

1 INTRODUCTION TO TOPIC AND TASK

T. helps Ss. to understand the objectives of the task e.g. brainstorming ideas using pictures, mime, personal experience, using a recording of a sample task, or a short text.

Exposure to useful language

2 TASK

done by Ss, (pairs or groups), using whatever language they can muster to express themselves, T. encourages in a non-threatening way but does not correct. Emphasis on fluency and building confidence.

Private (informal) use of language.

3 PLANNING

To prepare for stage 4, when Ss., report in public how they did the task, T. goes round to advise students on language: corrects, suggests phrases etc. Emphasis on clarity, organisation, accuracy as appropriate for a public presentation. Students often use this chance to ask questions about specific language items.

Stress on language form and accurate use.

4 REPORT

T. asks some pairs to report to the whole class so they can compare findings. (There must be a purpose for others to listen). T. chairs, comments, rephrases perhaps but no overt public correction.

Exposure to others speaking; Public use of language.

This cycle so far gives students opportunities to use language to express what they want to say, to gain practice in turn-taking, controlling the interaction, interacting spontaneously, and the challenge of drafting and perfecting their "report". Exposure and input come from teacher talk and students listening to each other, and there is a natural focus on language form as students prepare to "go public".

The two final components provide more varied exposure and a stronger focus on language form,

5 INPUT

Ss. listen to a recording of fluent speakers doing the same task, or read a text based on the topic. T. helps Ss. to identify key points and guess meanings. (This input phase can also come after the Introductory phase).

Exposure

6 LANGUAGE ANALYSIS - REVIEW & PRACTICE

T. sets up language focus task for Ss. to do in pairs. For example S's are to find words ending in s or 's and to say what the s means, to find all the verbs in the simple past, or circle and classify the questions in the transcript of the recording heard earlier. T. goes round to help; Ss. can ask individual questions. In plenary, T., reviews the analysis and conducts practice activities as needed.

6 TBL for trainee teachers?

For a teacher or trainer used to the control of PPP, starting to experiment with Task-Based Learning requires a leap of faith. It is not radically different. No new techniques are needed. But it takes a lot of self-control to set things up in class then let go the reins, stand back, smile encouragingly, and let students get on with tasks on their own. At first teachers often feel they aren't "teaching" enough. Some students complain (the ones who like being spoon-fed). But gradually the quality of the learning becomes apparent, and certainly a larger number of students improve faster and become far more confident than before, and also show a far greater ability to talk about language itself. (And surely language is a useful topic in a language classroom).

But can we introduce TBL to novice trainee teachers? Armed with the doubts and questions about PPP in section 2 above, and firmly convinced by the arguments in section 3 above, Barbara Garside, trainer at the British Council Teaching Centre in Izmir, decided to give TBL a trial.

She began TBL halfway through the Certificate course, after trainees had some experience of basic classroom techniques and the PPP cycle as found in current EFL text books. She first set a reading task (Willis 1991) which introduced some principles of TBL, the way in which it attempts to provide optimum conditions for language learning, and to stimulate varied types of language in the classroom (both private, spontaneous, exploratory talk and public, planned, final versions. (Willis 1987). Trainees then discussed how TBL differed from PPP, and what the two approaches seemed to have in common.

The trainees' initial comments (after the reading):

Similarities:

"TBL is like a sort of PPP up-side-down. The steps are there but in a different order".

"Most of the teaching techniques are similar".

"There is attention to both accuracy and fluency".

"They both include a focus on language form and meaning".

Differences:

"TBL doesn't teach isolated chunks of language then attempt (often unsuccessfully) to put them back into the 'whole body' of language". Language comes out of what learners know/can do/want to do, and out of the task".

"The skills are really integrated and include what other methods call 'micro-skills' as well as 'the four skills".

"There is a real need to communicate and to listen".

"TBL distinguishes between private communication (fluency based) and public communication (accuracy with fluency together)".

Trainees then experienced some TBL cycles for themselves - one based on comparing pictures, one based on a short newspaper story. Finally for Teaching Practice they planned and shared the teaching of their own task-based lessons with their T.P. class of basic, elementary, adult students.

Trainees' subsequent comments (after experiencing and teaching TBL):

"Tasks are intrinsically interesting".

"You can do a lot with this approach"

"You never know what the students have in their heads - it's amazing what comes out, and you find they have a lot they can build on".

"Recordings of spontaneous spoken English - of people doing the same task - a radical departure from other coursebook tapes because they are genuinely authentic; easy to understand because of natural repetition. Students are motivated to listen because they have just done the same task and they want to compare how they did it".

"The language focused work was a bit too analytical for beginners - a focus on key phrases might have been better for them".

"You're using what learners know and can do. Much more learner-centred in a genuine way".

"The students really talked a lot... and were very responsive and involved throughout".

"TBL is more natural and exciting than PPP. Let's do more."

The trainer said:

"It went better than a PPP lesson would have gone at this stage". (Perhaps because TBL rests on natural communicative behaviour, rather than the tightly controlled teaching behaviour of PPP).

"Trainees found the language analysis component hardest, and were not always sure when to correct and feed in new language - but this was their first time". (Having a written transcript of the recording would have helped both trainees and learners).

"In spite of the hitches, which seemed largely due to trainees having to 'unlearn' PPP, the lesson flowed and the students loved it".

"The question now is - can we do without PPP altogether"?

It is abundantly clear from Prabhu (1987) that we can.

Conclusions

The TBL approach above is somewhat different from Prabhu's 'communicational approach'. Both centre round the use of tasks, but Prabhu's classroom is more teacher led, and avoids any direct focus on language code, relying entirely on learners acquiring naturally through use. In TBL, the language focused work comes after the task cycle, when learners have had direct experience of the

continued

language in use and have become aware of what they as individuals, need to learn.

A TBL framework is less rigid and offers students far richer learning opportunities than PPP. It requires no radical new techniques. Unlike PPP it rests on sound theoretical principles (Pit Corder 1986). And since it gives learners experience of language in use before studying language in detail, I would not call it PPP "up-side down" but "PPP the right way up"!

Acknowledgements: My thanks to Barbara Garside for conducting the experiment. Our joint thanks to British Council, Turkey, the trainees and students at the British Council Centre in Izmir and video camera-man Yusuf Ozkaya who video-recorded the whole experiment for us to present at IATEFL Swansea, 1993.

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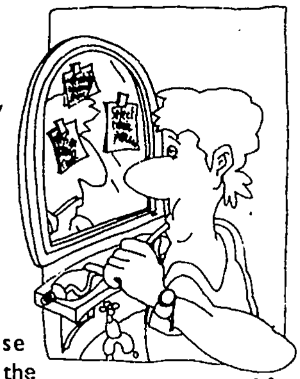
Planning Training Sessions

Simon Borg

Introduction

This article stresses the importance of systematic planning in teacher training and describes an approach to the planning of training sessions which can increase trainers' awareness of their own practice and improve training effectiveness. Approached in this manner, planning, it is argued, is a means of trainer development.

Three Stages in Planning



P.B.

I have found it useful to view planning as a three-step procedure:

1 identify training principles

2 define training content

3 select training processes

Below I will discuss each of these steps, explain their function within the overall planning exercise and illustrate their practical implementation with reference to my own experience.

Identify training principles

By training principles I refer to a set of beliefs which trainers possess about training and which underlie in a global manner the approach to training which they adopt. These principles constitute the trainers' philosophy of training, and making this philosophy explicit should be the first step in any serious planning exercise. Trainers need to be aware of their own training principles because these, as I will show below, will provide a rationale for subsequent decisions related to both training content and training processes[1]. Establishing training principles is thus the basis of a coherent planning process. To illustrate this point, here are the principles on which I currently base my training[2]:

1 Learning is more effective when it exploits relevant existing experience (both cognitive and affective) which the trainees possess.

2 Training should enable trainees to become more aware of themselves on both the personal and the professional levels.

3 Interactive learning is richer than non-interactive learning.

4 Definitive methods in language teaching do not exist. Training should thus concern itself more with alternatives in teaching than with absolute solutions.

5 Training should encourage trainees to develop their own critical ability and their own decision-making skills

6 Teaching is a practical activity, and trainees should be able to perceive training as being directly relevant to classroom practice.

7 Good relationships between trainer and trainees and between trainees themselves facilitate effective learning

.8 To be effective, training has to be based upon an awareness of the practical constraints of the training situation.

Some trainers may feel that they have an instinctive knowledge of their own training principles, that these operate subconsciously when training is being planned and hence need not be made explicit in the way suggested here. This may be true, but principles, although relatively stable, are not necessarily permanent; in fact, it is hard to think that any trainer who regularly examines his or her principles in the light of new experience and continued development will fail to feel the need to modify these in any way. Professionals in all fields tend to "move on" in terms of their thinking. Personally I find the most powerful initiator of such change to be my trainees' reaction to and evaluation of our work together; the less expected or less favourable aspects of such feedback always force me to reconsider the principles on which my training was based and to make adjustments where necessary. Approaching planning in the manner I am suggesting here then, immediately puts trainers in reflective mode, for it engages them in an on-going process of analysing their own practice and making explicit the principles on which they believe effective training can be based. These principles provide the basis for planning decisions related to training content, to which we now turn.

Define training content

The next step in the planning process is often seen as the only step-selecting the content of the training session. Here I shall interpret training content on two levels. The first sees content simply as the topic under study[3]; the second refers to trainer's perception of what the trainees should obtain during the session (i.e. the training objectives). Planning involves the trainer in making decisions about content on both these levels and I want to suggest that such decisions can be made more effectively in the light of specified training principles.

To start with the question of training topics, it may not seem immediately clear how these can be influenced by one's training principles. Maybe this example will help: if asked to cover a short (e.g. 6 hour) component on "Teaching Grammar" with pre-service trainees completely new to the topic, different trainers would probably differ in their choice of topics to address: possibilities would be "The English Verb", "A History of Grammar Teaching", "The Role of Grammar in Language Learning" and "Grammar Learning Activities". In explaining this diversity of opinion it seems plausible to suggest that an important factor may be differences in the trainers' underlying principles. That is, the selection of topics may reflect certain beliefs trainers hold about learning, teaching and training[4]. The 6 hour component on Teaching Grammar referred to above was actually a training experience I recently had, and I opted for topics like "Exploring trainees' experience of grammar learning" and "Evaluating grammar learning exercises" as these provided more scope for adherence to my principles (see above) than predominantly historical or linguistic approaches to Teaching Grammar would have. Explicit knowledge of my training principles provided a framework within which training topics could be chosen in a rational manner.

Trainers are also faced with planning decisions related to training objectives - i.e. as to what they expect the trainees to obtain during the training session. Many trainers view objectives purely in cognitive terms (for example, in terms of the factual information about a topic the trainees will obtain). Others prefer to emphasise affective training objectives (for example, those related to the trainees' attitudes towards a topic). Issues like these need to be explicitly decided upon by trainers as part of the planning process and a rationale for such decisions can be found in the training principles previously specified. My own principles indicate the belief that both cognitive and affective factors are important in training, and accordingly the objectives I set for the training experience referred to above included "experiencing and analysing different kinds of grammar activities" (mainly cognitive) as well as "enabling trainees to reflect on and to share their own experience of learning grammar and to become aware of their own attitudes towards grammar" (mainly affective).

Selecting training content in the manner described here allows trainers to identify what subject mater to cover (topics) and what they expect the trainees to obtain (objectives) in a principled manner. The link it creates between principles and content contributes to a more coherent planning process overall, and makes the decision-making process explicit, logical and justifiable.

Select training processes

By training processes I refer to the methods trainers adopt to reach objectives (e.g. discussions, lectures, workshops - see Woodward 1992). In a coherent planning exercise, training processes address training content in a manner which is compatible with training principles. Here I shall look at the manner in which processes can be chosen more systematically on the basis of previously identified principles and content. One problem with training processes can be that they tend to be chosen without a proper understanding of their underlying assumptions about learning and training. A first step in selecting processes is for trainers to become aware of these assumptions. This will put trainers in a position to choose those training processes which are compatible with their underlying principles. At this stage trainers can identify a pool of processes which reflect the beliefs about learning, teaching and training embedded in their own training principles. Clearly, the latter need to have been previously specified for this to occur.

From this pool of training processes, trainers will then need to select those to be adopted in individual training sessions. This is where reference to training content at

continued

the level of both topic and objectives can help the trainer to make systematic decisions. Although training topics do not necessarily hold implications for training processes ("The role of grammar in language learning" can take the form of a straight lecture, a reading assignment or a small-group discussion), certain topics may logically discourage the use of particular processes. For example, "Group and Pair Work" seems less amenable to trainer-driven processes (e.g. a formal lecture - see Wallace 1991:45) than to trainee-centred processes of some sort. Even if the choice of training process is unaffected by topic, though, it certainly needs to take training objectives into account. That is, how a trainer approaches the topic will depend on what the trainees are expected to obtain during the session. For example, a trainer whose objective is to convey as much information to the trainees as possible will adopt different training processes from the one who wants to elicit and analyse the trainees' personal response to a topic. As inappropriate processes will clearly hinder training effectiveness (e g. objectives may not be reached), systematic planning as described here should involve trainers in a clear analysis of their training content and its implications for training processes[5].

When covering the topic "evaluating grammar learning activities" the processes I adopted involved the trainees in experiencing the different activities, in reflecting on them, in discussing their conclusions in groups and in participating in plenary feedback. These processes reflected my training principles, were compatible with the topic under study and enabled the specified training objectives to be reached[6].

Conclusion

The three-step approach to planning outlined above stresses the importance of systematic planning on the part of teacher trainers. I believe it is important for inexperienced and experienced trainers alike. When it involves a regular evaluation of one's work, an analysis of one's beliefs about learning, teaching and training, and explicit decision-making based on this analysis, planning for training becomes a cyclic, reflective experience which enables trainers to become more aware of their own practice and the effect it has on trainees. Approached in this manner, then, planning is in itself a tool for trainer development.

Notes

1 Apart from the contribution it makes to the planning process, an explicit statement of training principles can be communicated to the trainees in order to make them aware of the beliefs on which their training is based. Trainees who can perceive the rationale underlying their training will be able to make sense of and critically evaluate this training in a manner the uninformed trainee cannot.

2 This list of principles is presented to exemplify the application of my argument to my own practice and not as a model which I want to prescribe. Principles arise from each individual trainers' life-long experience of learning, teaching and training, and thus different trainers in different situations are very likely to have differing views of what makes for effective language teacher training.

3 I am assuming that although trainers may have no say in the selection of course components, they are able to select those aspects of course components (i.e. the topics) which will provide the focus for their training sessions.

4 I am not implying that trainers with differing principles cannot address identical topics; often, differences between trainers may only become apparent at the level of training process (i.e. training methods). This issue is discussed in the final part of this paper.

5 Selecting training processes also includes selecting the training materials through which these processes are to be realised (e.g. a task sheet). The factors which influence the content of training materials will be those which determine the choice of training processes.

6 The objectives for this session were making trainees aware of the features of different grammar learning activities, improving their ability to work together, developing their critical skills and encouraging them to reach conclusions independently of the trainer.

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Bibliographical Note

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1. Improving Teaching Practice in situ by Spontaneously Adjusting Learning Activities

Teh Pick Ching

Some first time teachers face the class with confidence and communicate with the class effectively. The reasons for the good performance in teaching of these 'first timers' are attributable to their personality and preparedness. Many of these trainees would have spent many hours in preparing their lessons, involving writing comprehensive lesson plans, making teaching aids and worksheets for the pupils. However, even these successful lessons of first time teachers can be improved if certain adjustments are made to the learning process. These adjustments involve on-the-spot or impromptu actions or decisions that the student-teachers can take as the need arises. Frequently, due simply to inexperience, the student-teacher could not sense the need of adjustments to his or her teaching strategy or take immediate action to capitalise on an on-going situation.

I would like to suggest a more interactive type of supervision of teaching practice. The supervisor can from time to time interact subtly with the student-teacher giving suggestions in situations which can be improved In order to offer spontaneous suggestions, the supervisor must always be conscious to the nature of the on-going activity and the prevailing learning environment If the class is active and enthusiastic, the pupils will be ready for more rigorous activity. If the class is passive and unresponsive, there may be a need to change the teaching strategy itself. The suggestions can be made to the teacher when he or she is monitoring pupils' work. This can be done at the back of the class without disrupting the lesson. The student-teacher will decide whether to take action or make adjustment to the learning activity. Most likely if the student-teacher decides to take action, the pupils may not realise that the cues come from the supervisor. This interactive type of supervision in situ can directly enhance the quality of the lesson. It can make learning more meaningful for the pupils as well as the student-teachers themselves. Given below are several episodes of lessons that have been enriched by the supervisor during the progress of the lessons.

Episode 1

The lesson was on rice growing for a Grade 5 class (10-11 years old). The student-teacher was discussing traditional and modern methods of cultivation using colour charts showing the various stages from ploughing to harvesting. The discussion was followed by a colouring activity and note making by the pupils. The subject matter was in line with the content of the textbook. At that time, I felt that it would be more realistic for pupils to recognise that there were other alternative methods. This could probably be elicited if the teacher posed the question, "Have you seen other methods of cultivation different from these traditional and modern methods?". I immediately had a brief discussion with the teacher on this as he walked around monitoring the colouring activity. The teacher took the cue. After the pupils had finished their work on colouring, the teacher drew the attention of the class by posing a similar question. A pupil replied that he had seen a farmer ploughed his land with tractor but harvested the padi with knife. The response clearly showed an awareness of a combination of these two methods. Although not mentioned in the textbook, the combination of modern and traditional methods is the more prevailing way of cultivation in the East.

Episode 2

This was another lesson on Geography for a Grade 5 class b the same teacher. The lesson was on the life cycle of a chicken. By asking questions and using charts showing eggs, chicken, hen and cock, the teacher explained the life cycle. This was followed by group activity in which the pupils were only required to colour the photo-copied pictures provided by the teacher. The pupils were required to arrange the pictures to show the life cycle. I felt that this was a simple exercise which did not involve much thinking on the part of the pupils. While the colouring activity was going on, I had a discussion with the teacher. I suggested to the teacher to ask the pupils to give their own description of the life cycle. Each group would then come to the front to present its report. The teacher soon incorporated this suggestion by giving new instructions to the groups on the new expectations. When the work was completed, every group was eager to be the first to present its report. I was really surprised that no group repeated exactly what the other groups had said. Each group used some additional words and slightly different sentence construction.

The above episode clearly shows that with a slight modification to the strategy as planned by the teacher, the learning experience of the pupils was greatly enriched. This could be seen from the excitement and enthusiasm shown by the pupils. The pupil presenters and their helpers greatly enjoyed the moment when the teacher commented, "You are going to be teacher now". The teacher admitted to me later that he had underrated the ability of the pupils.

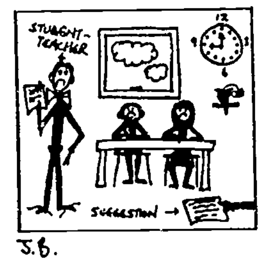
From these examples it can be seen that adjustments to the lesson plan can be smoothly integrated in the learning process without disruption to the main activity. This can be done if the supervisor looks for suitable opportunity and interact with the teacher at the proper time. These adjustments are usually in the forms of an extended discussion or an add-on exercise. The additional input only takes a little extra time but could contribute greatly to the quality of the lesson ash shown by these two examples.

Conclusion

This interactive supervision of teaching practice was carried out in many occasions with two examples cited above. Each

continued

time the student-teacher was receptive and made appropriate adjustment in his or her teaching strategy without the pupils realising that the suggestion came from the supervisor. On all occasions the pupils enjoyed the additional input which seemed more challenging to them. The student-teachers also agreed that the additional inputs were meaningful and rewarding.



The point is that the supervisor should not dominate and interruption on-going learning activity. At no time should the student-teacher be embarrassed in front of the class. Suggestions on the spot will be given only if there is an opportunity to greatly enrich a learning experience and hence immediately enhance the effectiveness of the lesson itself.

2. A framework for feedback

Ruth Wajnryb

In my experience as a TESOL trainer, as well as a trainer of trainers in this field, I have found that by far the most difficult aspect of the job is the feedback interaction conducted between trainer and teacher or teacher trainee after an observed lesson. This is so whether the teacher being observed is in training, is inexperienced or is very experienced; and whether the observation is for assessment or for professional reflection and development. There are differences of course, but not large and substantial ones. Likewise, I feel the fact that the feedback is immediate or delayed does not significantly reduce its difficulty. Overall, it seems to me that feedback as a communication event is inherently fragile, and as such benefits from having a number of supports and safeguards.

There is little mystery in why the interaction is so difficult. It's all bound up with people, their psyches, their needs, wants, goals, their self-perceptions, the fears, anxieties and insecurities. It is largely about 'face' (Goffman, 1972) and teacher supervision per se is entirely face threatening (Brown and Levinson, 1978). To compound matters, this applies as much to the trainer as to the trainee. The more research is conducted into this field, the more we find out about styles of feedback and notions of appropriateness in relation to pre-and in service (e.g. Gebhard and Malicka, 1991; Freeman, 1990, Wajnryb 1992a). Such guidelines can only help trainers and teachers reap the maximum rewards from the feedback interaction.

This article offers a framework for feedback which I have found serves me well for the post-observed lesson interaction with a teacher and allows us to maximise the benefits of the time spent. In a sense, the framework is 'idealised' for, with appropriate adjustments it may serve most interactions (Wajnryb, 1992b).

It has five steps; negotiation, climate-setting, review and problem-solving, goal setting and closure, and the last, a stage for the trainer, personal reflection, borrowed from the last stage in the cycle of clinical supervision (Cogan, 1973).

Step 1 - Negotiation

At the outset, I find that it helps to establish between the two participants what the time limit is and how the process is expected to develop. Establishing the time parameters allows both parties a sense of 'finiteness' and highlights the need to use time wisely. Establishing the process is a form of sign-posting that allows the teacher to gain security from knowing where the feedback is heading. You can suggest an agenda and elicit a response, leading towards an agreement on how to proceed. Or the agenda can be arrived at more openly, with the trainer eliciting the teacher's suggestion for an approach ('How would you like to approach this?'). Generally, the more experienced the teacher, the less the need for direction; but personality factors play a role here too (see Wajnryb, 1992a).

Step 2 - Climate-setting

Working to achieve a positive climate might start happening before the negotiation and this does not matter as long as it does happen. It is axiomatic that the teacher needs to feel as relaxed and comfortable and unthreatened as possible. Secure a place that is private, where you won't be interrupted. I find it helps to begin by focusing on some third/neutral ground. A handy one is a comment about the learners themselves - start off with something like 'They're a lovely (OR: cheerful, noisy, bright, unruly, etc.) class, aren't they?' This serves as neutral but necessary phatic communion and eases you onto the next phase.

My experience with the well-worn trigger 'How did you feel about the lesson?' is that it is a non-starter. It doesn't relax the teacher; on the contrary, it often makes them edgy to start talking about the lesson without having an inkling of where the trainer 'is at'.

Step 3 - Review and Problem Solving

It's important here to remember that your feedback is finite - twenty minutes or whatever, and most probably you have far too much on the potential agenda than could be 'covered'. Remember that often a written report will follow the feedback and there is room in this for peripheral comments.

Bear in mind, too the concept of 'saturation': there is a limit to the number of items a teacher can absorb/accommodate in a personal interaction. (In one feedback that was videoed, I counted 107 'bits of advice', handed down by trainer to trainee. Not surprisingly, the trainee himself shut down long before the feedback did).

It is therefore crucial to focus on specifics and to prioritise these. Some helpful elements are;

- working from the tangible to the hypothetical: this is what you did...this is what resulted...what alternatives exist?...how might they work?
- focusing on a cause-effect approach: looking at outcomes and linking this with processes. This encourages a reflective approach to teaching and helps teachers understand that 'things don't just happen' and that they DO have control.

- eliciting and gently steering the teacher towards the key points rather than imposing.
- using 'raw' descriptive data as evidence in which to ground your comments, e.g. scripted language - to present a point.
- avoiding the language of regret: 'you should have...', 'you could have...' (Woodward, 1989).
- developing verbal cues for reducing trainer talk, e.g. 'talk to me about...', 'you have a great way with...', I was wondering about the way you...', 'the class really seemed to respond to...'. As in the classroom, learning to manage silence encourages a reflective, co-operative ambience.

Step 4 - Goal Setting and Closure

At this stage, the trainer is hoping to consolidate and set the agenda for what the teacher will be working on after the feedback. Perhaps have the teacher summarise where they feel they might now focus their attention. This can be expressed in terms of objectives: 'I'm going to work on organising my board in a more focused way'; 'I'm going to script my instructions before the lesson and see if that makes them clearer', etc.

It is vital that the teacher emerge from the feedback with a sense of progress and a sense of purpose; armed with a tangible and specific grasp of the key issues, as well as the means (a 'handle) for continuing to learn. It is important, too, that the experience be placed on a continuum or chain of experiences and be perceived as a step, among others, within a developmental frame.

Building in a 'concept check' to ensure that the 'trainee's message is the teacher's message' sometimes pre-empts later problems. Sometimes teachers fill in their own self-evaluation report or complete a diary or journal. If the trainer is able to access these, they may serve as a vital means of determining whether the trainee or trainer are on the same wavelength.

Step 5 - Reflection

Trainers, themselves on a learning curve, need to reflect on the experience and whether it was successful in terms of its priorities and objectives. Ideally it helps to sit down with another trainer and have them guide you through the process:

How did the feedback go? Were there any difficulties? Did the teacher have similar perceptions? Would you handle anything differently next time? What follow-up is called for?

Especially in a case where you perceive some resistance, it is important to air this and determine its nature, as it is often easy for a trainer to perceive as resistance what is in fact the overt signs of learning - of a teacher re-appraising sets of knowledge and understanding (Byrnes, 1985).

It helps, too, if the trainer keeps a written record of the feedback as this will help where follow-up is appropriate. In sessions where there has been anything at all upsetting on the part of the teacher - disappointment, defensiveness, rejection, it is important that the trainer 'stay on the path' of the teacher (albeit tactfully and unobtrusively), monitoring them over the next few days or week to ensure that, ultimately if not immediately, the experience is an affirming one.

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3. Observation from the Other Side

by Mark N. Brock
Bartholomew S.K. Yu
Selina Tam

Department of English
City Polytechnic of Hong Kong

Introduction

While there is a large body of research documenting the benefits for teacher trainees of observing classes in action, there has been very little written about the possibility that the observed teachers benefit too. This article explores that possibility.

As part of the BA-TESL programme at the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong, we and other members of the English Department who teach ESP and EAP classes are

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occasionally observed by pre-service BA-TESL trainees as part of their three-year degree programme. In this article, we will document our experiences of being observed by pre-service TESL trainees during eight weeks of a ten-week term and consider how this experience may have enhanced our own development as teachers. Data were drawn from three sources: our own teaching journals, observation exercises completed by the trainees and occasional conversation (1) among teachers and (2) between teachers and the observing trainees.

Influence of Trainee Observation on Teacher Behaviour

Many teachers feel that the presence of any observer in the classroom is potentially threatening. While none of us felt seriously threatened by the presence of the observing trainees in our classrooms, we did feel at least some sense of unease, particularly at the beginning of the term. This unease was apparent in our occasional hesitation in how to proceed when problems came up during a lesson. For example, in the first week of the observation Selina reflected on her hesitancy, owing to the presence of the trainee observers, in keeping her students on task:

"Two students kept talking all the time while other students were presenting their answers or I was talking. I was definitely annoyed but I only stared at them. Normally, I would remind them to keep quiet and pay attention. But I was unsure how it would seem to the trainees if I started disciplining adult students".

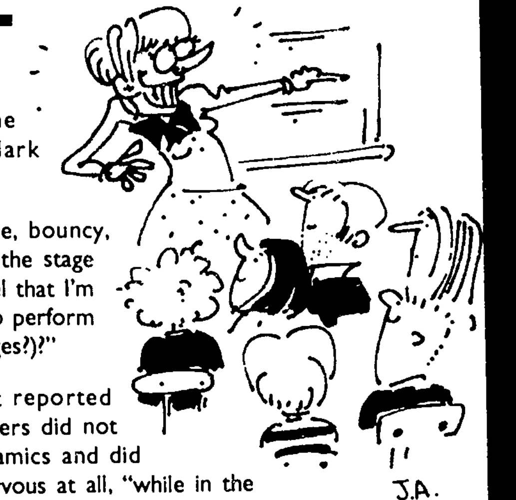
Mark reflected on a similar experience in his first week of being observed:

"When we first began to watch the video, a couple of students on the left of the class persisted in talking. I don't know what I would have done if the observers hadn't been there (may be just ignored them and waited for them to stop on their own), but with the observers in the class I felt somewhat in a dilemma. What do I do? What will they think if I do something or don't do anything about this?"

Unlike Selina and Mark, Bart had participated previously in a peer observation project with other members of the Department of English. While in the first week of being observed Bart reported feeling somewhat more alert or energised during class - as other teachers have reported in their experiences of being observed - by the second week he reported feeling "used to" the presence of the observers and going about his teaching as he normally would. Bart did , however, report some slight change in normal routine resulting from the presence of the student observers. About the second week, he wrote:

"I still carried on with my class in the same way I would do normally without being observed. I must admit, however, I walked around the groups more than the other times. I had a faint intention of impressing the observers that I was a good teacher, giving the signal that my mind was not wandering at all or I was doing something else. I wanted to kind of impress them I was conscientious".

Bart wasn't alone in his desire to impress or perform well in the presence of the observing trainees. For example, in the first week of the observation, Mark reported being



"...a bit more talkative, bouncy, funny that usual. Is it the stage syndrome, where I feel that I'm on stage and I have to perform for the observers (judges?)?"

By week three, Bart reported that "the two observers did not intrude on class dynamics and did not make me feel nervous at all, "while in the second week Mark reported less of the "on-stage feeling I had last week". However, for Selina, her level of anxiety did not subside as quickly. It was only near the end of the term that she could write:

"I have noticed that there was a change in my attitudes towards the observing trainees. I have ceased to view them as a possible threat; in addition, I just cannot afford to pay attention to them anymore. I also believe that my students have ceased to be aware of their existence which I definitely am very pleased about".

There were a few times when each of us felt our decisions about how to structure a lesson were directly affected by the presence of the trainees. For example, both Bart and Mark produced more explicit, detailed lesson plans than they normally do several times during the observation period. And for the first observation, Bart provided the observers with a written lesson plan, even though this was not his normal procedure. Another example of how the presence of the observing trainees influenced us is seen in Mark's journal entry written near the middle of the term.

"I did something I don't always do during class today. I wrote a skeletal outline of the lesson on the board, giving students a broad overview, from the beginning, of the lesson structure. Though I have done this on occasion, it is not my normal practice. Perhaps this illustrates what the presence of observers, even trainees who have no say over my employment or promotion, can have on a teacher".

Some Advantages of Trainee Observation

Even though young pre-service teachers may be unaware of the various factors in classroom teaching, their presence as observers can still trigger critical self-reflection in experienced teachers. As Wallace (1993) has noted, the routine, unexamined behaviour that most teachers automatically call upon in their daily teaching can become "novel" when seen through the eyes of a trainee. The simple act of seeing one's classroom routines named and described by someone else can cause the teacher to pause, reflect, and question why it is she/he does what she/he does.

Another potential advantage of being observed by teacher trainees is that it is generally less threatening than observation by a peer or a supervisor. A consequence of this may be that there will be little or, at least, less effect on classroom procedures and teacher and student behaviour.

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At City Polytechnic, two trainees usually observe one teacher for two class hours each week over the course of one term. Thus, the trainees have a good opportunity to understand the general teaching pattern of the teacher being observed. This also enables the teacher to develop rapport with the trainees and so feel more comfortable over time. Repeated observations over time may not always be feasible for peers due to the demands on their time. And this may deprive the peer observer of gaining a comprehensive view of a teacher's class performance and the strategies she/he uses in teaching.

A final advantage of being observed by trainees is that pre-service teachers may observe more from the perspective of students, and this may then enable the teacher to reflect on his/her teaching from the students' viewpoint. As our trainees at City Polytechnic share similar backgrounds with those of the students in our EAP and ESP classes, their perceptions of how a teacher structures and directs the lesson may be closer to our students' perception than, for example, that of a peer observer or supervisor.

Some Limitations of Trainee Observation

There are, of course, some limitations in using student teacher observation as a tool for teacher development. First, teacher trainees may not be experienced enough to examine some of the more complex variables that have an impact on the teaching event. Thus, they may not be able to provide adequate feedback for reflection and teaching improvement. In fact, at various times during this project each of us expressed at least some disappointment with the lack of depth in the observations made by the trainees. For example, Mark stated that...

"...it seems all they have done is write a step-by-step description of what is going on in class. Specifically they have focused on me and what has transpired from my talking and interaction with students. The teacher no doubt is important in the classroom but there is so much else going on".

Another limitation is that the primary purpose of observing experienced teachers is to provide trainees with the opportunity to examine some of the ways that classroom learning activities are structured and managed. Any attempt to use the experience of being observed by a trainee as a means of examining one's own teaching has some potential for misdirecting and distorting the intended purpose of the observation.

Some Suggestions for Trainee Observation

In order for practising teachers to take full advantage of trainee observation as a tool for their own development, we make the following suggestions.

1. To help pre-service teachers examine the interactive nature of teaching, some observation tasks should focus their attention on the causal relationship of particular classroom events. This approach might enable the trainee and the teacher to reflect on what influenced the teacher's decision making within a specific classroom context.

2. Teachers should be given the opportunity to participate in the development of at least some of the observation exercises trainees complete in observing their classes. This allows teachers to focus the trainee's attention on areas of particular interest and value to them.

3. Teachers can keep journals to record their feelings and reactions to being observed. Although teachers can and do reflect anyway, keeping a journal is an important aid in thinking about one's teaching systematically.

4. Teachers can periodically video-tape lessons in which they are being observed. This allows another viewpoint on their teaching and on student responses to learning tasks. It also provides a means of comparison with a trainee's observations.

5. To help teachers feel more comfortable about being observed, observing trainees should be trained to avoid using evaluative terms in describing classroom activities. In our project, even though the observation exercises were worded to be neutral and descriptive, the trainees were sometimes unable to distinguish evaluative from non-evaluative comments. As a result, Selina was irritated when one trainee discussed her weighting of assignments with what she perceived to be a negative tone:

"One of the trainees looked at the weighting of each task and remarked that I allocated 40% to the report (i.e. 25% for the written report and 15% for the oral presentation of the report). And it was at that point that I felt a little uncomfortable because he seemed to be questioning the suitability of allocating 40% of the total assessment to the report. It was from then on I felt the need to justify why I design the lesson the way I do".

Any hint of negative evaluation may disrupt the level of trust between the teacher and the observing trainee, thus possibly affecting the teacher's performance.

6. After each observation session, if time allows, we suggest a short follow-up discussion about what happened during the lesson between the teacher and the observing trainee. It is important the discussion not be an occasion for evaluating the teacher's performance. Rather it should be a time for trainees to ask questions about classroom activities and about decisions made and actions taken during the lesson. This can help the trainee understand some of the complex thinking that goes into teacher decision-making and can aid the teacher in becoming more aware of what she/he did in the lesson and the variables that prompted this behaviour.

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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of special interest or relevance to teacher trainers are:

The Story of my life by Helen Keller (1958) Hodder & Stoughton, ISBN 0-340-02108-X. A double account of what must surely be one of the most successful one-to-one learning/teaching encounters of all time. The first account is by Helen Keller who was permanently robbed of sight and hearing after an illness in early childhood. At seven her teacher Anne Mansfield Sullivan came to live with her. She had no colleagues or trainers to help her in her work. The teacher, Sullivan's account comes second in the book. Helen first learned what language was. She then used a manual spelling system then braille. She later learned reading and writing, languages, then how to speak and lip read and eventually went to study at Radcliffe. A remarkable story from both sides.

Classroom observation tasks by Ruth Wajnryb (1992) CUP ISBN 0-521-407222. A bank of 35 tasks (for observing, analysing and reflecting on language teaching) focusing on the learner, language, learning periods, teaching skills, class management, and materials. Grids, charts etc. are small-scale and will need to be swiftly re-drawn for reader use.

Literature and language teaching by Gillian Lazar (1993) CUP. ISBN 0-521-40651-X. Another in the series of task-based teacher training and development bodies from CUP under Ruth Gairns and Marion William's editorship. The tasks here explore issues such as what literature is, how it can be used with language learners, the selection and evaluation of materials, cross-cultural issues, materials design and lesson planning. Notes are given to the trainer using the tasks on a training course. Consistent with the approach of this series, ideas raised via the tasks are not ranked, corrected or checked against any lists or input in the book.

The Cambridge handbook of copy-editing by Judith Butcher (1992) CUP ISBN 0-521-4007-0 HB. A new edition of this classic reference guide for all those involved in preparing typescripts and illustrations for publication. Thus useful for authors, editors of teacher centre/group newsletters, proof-readers and those interested in specific writing problems such as non-sexist or inclusive language, spelling consistency or bibliographical references.

Essentials of English language teaching by Julian Edge (1993) Longman. Another in the useful, slim, practical, straightforward "keys" series. A general book this time, running through components of ELT such as people, language, materials, managing, methodology, testing, all in 140 short pages, well laid out for easy reading.

Teachers on Teaching Ed. D.A. Hill. No date or ISBN. Nine pages arising from the work of the staff at The British Council, Milan (and available from there), as the outcome of the ongoing staff development programme in which colleagues provide workshops and seminars for each other. One section is on teacher development. Interesting to have a peep into the staff development programme at someone else's institution.

Longman Language Activator (1993) ISBN 0-582-040930. A new type of dictionary to help intermediate and advanced students produce language rather than look up words they come across and don't understand. You look up a general word first, such as "healthy". There, you are signposted to more specific sub-areas e.g. "words for discussing someone who's usually healthy" and there you find 'robust'. 'excellent constitution' etc. Corpus based but with added pedagogical examples. Excellent for native speakers solving crossword puzzles too!

Longman dictionary of English language and culture (1992) ISBN 0582-08676-0. I looked up "brainbagging", politically "wet", "tiffin", "Wallah", "pom", "Ninja" turtles, 'eleven-plus' and the differences between the UK and US education systems. They are all in there! Weaker on terms like "pogy", "chinook" from the N-west Americas. A terrific dictionary for anyone who wants to understand the sorts of words and phrases that make up the complex fabric of many English-speaking cultures. Corpus based with added information on connotation.

Longman dictionary of Language teaching and applied linguistics by Jack Richards, John and Heidi Platt (1992) ISBN 0-582-07244-1. For those on courses in TEFL, applied or general linguistics. 2,000 entries. I looked up 'aspect', 'scanning', 'componential analysis', 'X-bar theory'. They were in. 'Fronting' and 'lemma' weren't. Still, great for most pre-and-inservice teachers boggled by terminology.

A practical guide for translators by G. Samuelsson-Brown (1993) Multilingual Matters Ltd. ISBN 1-85359-188-2. Mostly for those with little or no practical experience of translation in a commercial environment and wishing to go freelance. It covers equipment, setting up, reference materials, storage, quality control, presentation, delivery, what to do if things go wrong and has useful lists and glossaries at the end.

The Centre for Information on language teaching has moved to 20, Bedfordbury, London WC2N 4LB but continues to provide new, inexpensive publications for modern language teachers (see below). Orders for CILT books to CILT Mail Order, P O Box 8, Llandysul, Dyfed, SA44 4ZB, Wales.

The Adult language learner edited by L. Arthur and S. Hurd (1992). Practical advice on planning lessons and developing materials as well as discussion of attitudes of adult learners and tutor self-development.

Letting go, taking hold: A guide to independent language learning by teachers for teachers edited by B. Page (1992). Based on the experience of teachers of modern languages in British Secondary and Tertiary schools, the book answers basic questions such as 'How do I get the room organised?', 'How do I form groups?' 'How do I make sure people aren't wasting time?' 'How do I learn not to interfere?'

Continuous assessment and recording by J. Thoroughgood. **Fair Enough? Equal opportunities and modern languages** by Vee Harris. **Information Technology in the Language classroom** by Blamire, Bourne, and Jones (+ video) and **A toolkit for talking** by D. Sidwell are some of the other titles available from CILT.

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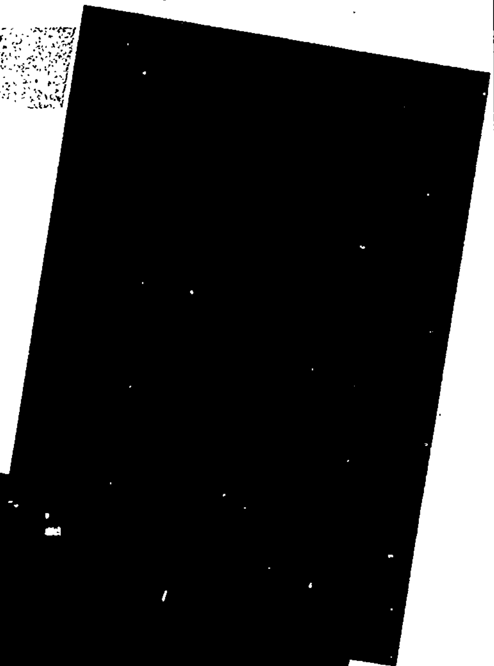

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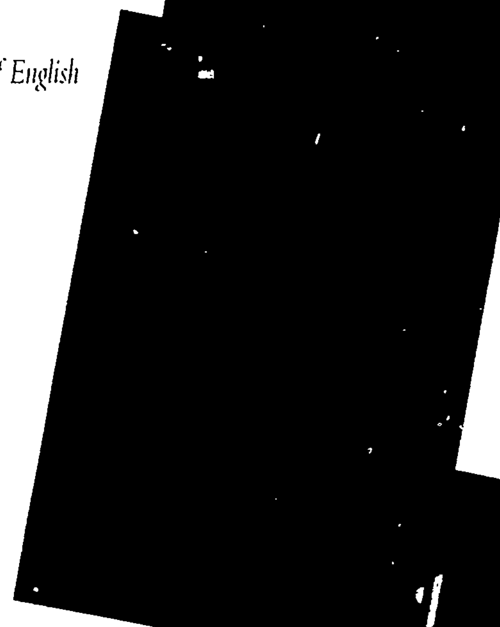

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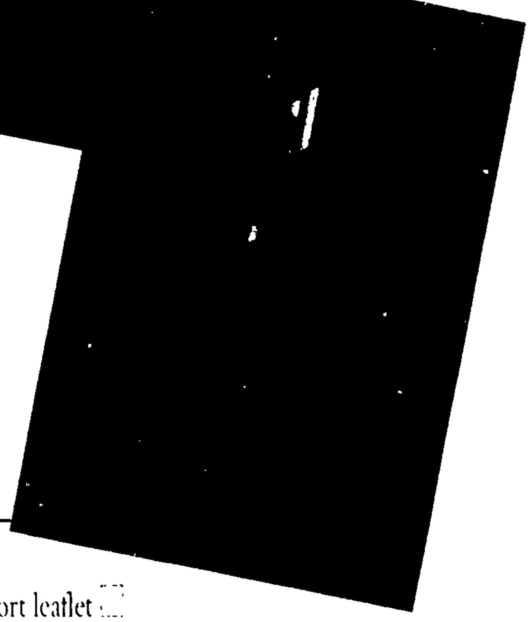

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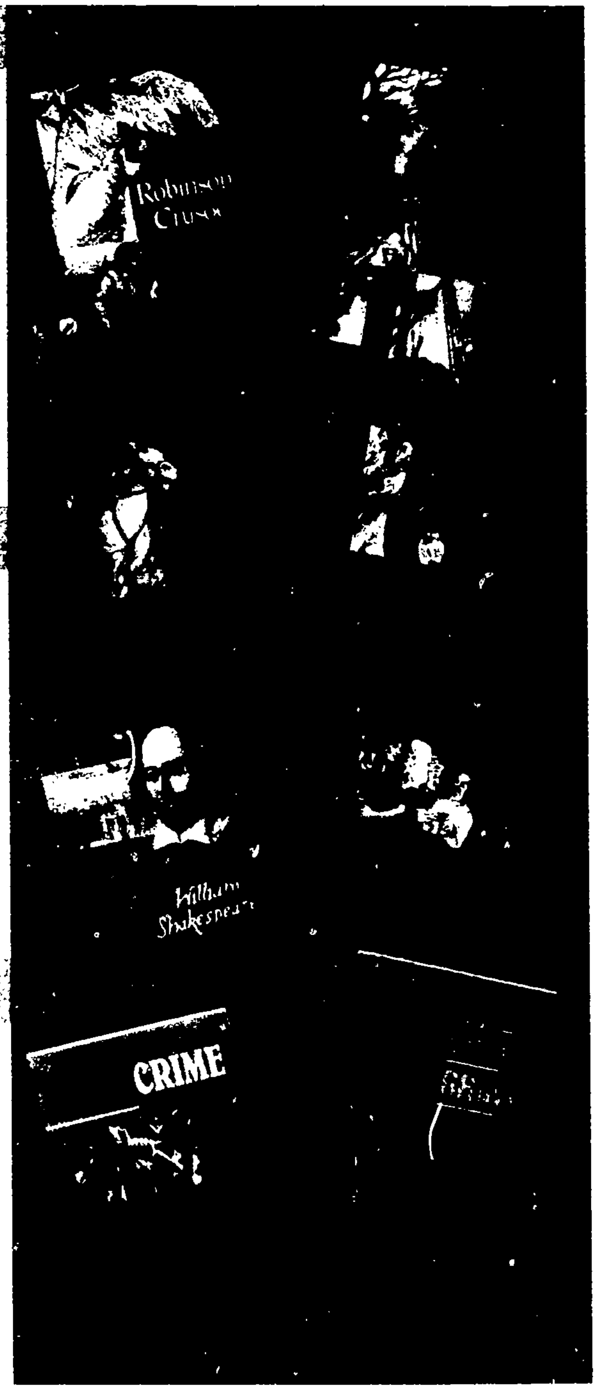
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INSIDE!

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ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staffroom, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal comes out three times a year and makes use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

Editorial

Thanks to our new layout and production method, we are able to squeeze more articles into our thirty two pages and still improve legibility! So welcome to a full Volume Eight, Number Two.

Our lead article this time comes from Brian Paltridge of The University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. Brian tackles the sensitive issue of teacher assessment and gives a thorough account of the use of portfolios as a joint means of assessment in his Institute.

An article that I wrote in 1988 on activity analysis has been reprinted in this issue (by popular request!). The article is "green" in that it discusses the analysis and creative re-cycling of known language teaching activities. "Splitting the atom", as this analysis is playfully called, leads to a positive explosion of good ideas touched off by teachers themselves. The idea is that a little can go a long way. Next, two friends from the Cultura Inglesa-Rio, Brazil share with us their pleasure of finding how tutorials can be helpful rather than stressful times on training courses. We have three articles in our Observation and Feedback series this time. The first is from Neil Williams who describes a way that peers can work together to teach, observe and be observed, warts and all! Mario Alfredo Moreira uses anonymity in feedback to take the heat out of post-observation meetings and uses sequences of procedures as the focus for observation notes and feedback discussion. Finally, Gloria Vasconcelos encourages us, with swift and low-tech means, to gain feedback on our training courses from our participants. With a similar desire to stimulate discussion of trainer performance, Simon Le Fort looks at the grip that the timetable (of pre-service CTEFLA courses) has over trainers and encourages us to be more independent of them and more inventive.

Valerie Ainscough, fairly recently returned from the Congo, shares with us her worries about the insensitivity of some ELT projects, set up by outsiders, to local conditions. She has some suggestions for "outside experts".

Anne Burns tells readers about a short, intensive course she has been developing in Australia for trainer-training, which includes a section on presentation skills.

The Teacher Trainer has regularly included articles from various "feeder fields" such as transactional analysis, psychodrama, general medical practice and human resources development so that insights on training and learning can be drawn from parallel fields. We are thus happy to welcome back Tim Murphey to the journal with the start of a three-part series on neuro-linguistic programming and its relevance to language, teaching, learning and training.

Martin Parrott, another returning contributor to the journal, writes from his Author's Corner about his book on tasks for language teachers in training. This book will also be reviewed soon in the journal.

Our publications received pages are full again as there seems to be a lot about of potential interest to trainers. And just in case you want to know what we all look like, I've included some "mug-shots" on Page 14 too!

As usual I've tried to include ideas and writers throughout the surviving, secure, analytic and dynamic continuum (see Page 21!) but if you see that I've left you or your situation out then please rectify the situation by writing an article that you would like to see in these pages.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Enjoy this issue!

Tessa Woodward, The Editor.

Portfolio assessment and the second language methods course

by Brian Paltridge

1.Introduction

Recent years have seen increased attention being given to the issue of assessment in books and articles on language teacher education. Wallace (1991), for example, devotes a chapter of his book on the training of foreign language teachers to the issue of assessment in teacher education programmes discussing, principally, the rationale for assessment schemes, assignments, examinations, grading systems and the assessment of professional action. Woodward (1991), also, devotes a chapter to the evaluation of language teachers with a discussion of models for evaluation and alternative ways of evaluating the effectiveness of the training process. The collection of articles edited by Richards and Nunan (1990), further, discusses approaches to supervision and observation within the context of language teacher education.

2.Approaches to assessment in language teacher education programmes

Assessment in language teacher education programmes may take a number of forms Woodward (1991) discusses objectives and process models of evaluation where achievement is measured against pre-stated performance objectives (in the objectives model) or on the basis of "non-observable, non-behavioural criteria such as 'attitude change' and 'degree of personal development' " (Woodward 1991, 213) (in the process model). Woodward also discusses the use of action research methods in evaluating the training process. Wallace (1991) describes kinds of assessment tasks which may be appropriate in language teacher education programmes, including individual exercises, presentations, essays, materials reviews, learning contracts, projects, guided reading assignments, workbooks, folios and dissertations. Murphy-O'Dwyer (1985), Bailey (1990) and Thornbury (1991), further, discuss the use of teaching practice logs and learner diaries in language teacher training programmes. Uber-Grosse (1991), in her study of assessment procedures in language teacher education programmes in the United States, lists examinations, research papers, reading-related activities, class participation, materials and/or curriculum development, materials evaluations and teaching observations and demonstrations as other forms of assessment used in language teacher education programmes.

Assessment in language teacher education programmes, thus, may be carried out in a variety of ways. The assessment of students' written work in second language methods courses at the University of Waikato Language Institute focuses, primarily, on the use of *portfolio assessment* (Belanoff and Dickson 1991, Hamp-Lyons 1991, 1994); that is, the end-of-course presentation of a number of pieces of work that have been submitted earlier in the course and revised on the basis of feedback provided by the lecturer, or course tutor, for the particular programme. Provisional grades are provided for each piece of work as well as details of the criteria employed for the awarding of each grade. The final grade for students' work is given on the basis of the re-worked presentation.

3.Portfolio assessment

Portfolio assessment is increasingly being used in the assessment of writing in colleges in the United States. It is also being increasingly used in second language writing programmes in universities in the United States (Hamp-Lyons 1991, 1994). Portfolio assessment does not appear to be widely used, however, in language teacher education programmes.

As Hamp-Lyons (1991) points out, portfolios allow a more complex view of complex activities and, therefore, have a higher level of validity than single, isolated instances of evaluation. They, thus, provide a better view of students' abilities than do single instances of students' work (Elbow 1991). Portfolio assessment, further, provides an opportunity to draw together objectives and process models of evaluation by focussing on both the process and product of learning (see Belanoff and Dickson 1991). It also provides a context in which assessment is regarded "not merely as a means of measuring results but also as an aid to learning" (Brindley 1989, 5).

4.Portfolio assessment and the second language methods course

This article describes the use of portfolio assessment in the second language methods course of the postgraduate Diploma in Second Language Teaching taught at the University of Waikato Language Institute. The example that will be described represents the writing requirement of a course entitled 'The Language Programme: Materials, Methods, Testing and Evaluation'. Other courses in the Diploma programme include 'Linguistics for Language Teaching', 'Social and Psychological Aspects of Language Teaching and Learning' and 'Language Teaching: Observation and Practice'. Assessment in these courses includes the observation of teaching practice, teaching practice logs, observation journals, seminar presentations, language awareness tasks, essays and various other kinds of assignments. The use of portfolio assessment, thus, complements, rather than replaces, other forms of assessment used in the programme.

continued →

5.Assessment Guidelines

In 'The Language Programme', students present five pieces of work for feedback and assessment. The progression of these pieces of work reflects the pattern of input in the particular course.

Assessment guidelines require students to produce:

(i) A course outline including a general description of the course, details of the target learner group, course format, aims and objectives of the course, course content and an overview of assessment procedures and resources that will be drawn on for the delivery of the course;

(ii) A theoretical rationale and justification for the programme in terms of curriculum framework and syllabus design;

(iii) Two sample lesson plans and sets of teaching materials for the particular course. One lesson must be based on a course book but adapted as necessary for the particular course and/or learner group. The other lesson must be based on authentic material (written or spoken). Both lessons must contain communicative activities and must have, at some point in the lesson, a language focus. Both lesson plans, further, must be written in a way which clearly illustrates the role of the teacher and the learner at each point in the lesson. The two lesson plans must be preceded by a discussion of the theoretical rationale which underlies the methodology employed in these two particular lessons and a justification for its use in the particular circumstances. The two lessons must be linked to each other in some way with the relationship between them being clearly described in the rationale. They may be lessons which have already been taught, in which case, comments on how the lessons went should be included;

(iv) Sample assessment materials and course evaluation procedures for the particular course. Assessment materials should relate to one particular section of the course. Evaluation materials should relate to the course as a whole. These materials should include a discussion of the principles which underlie the particular approaches to assessment and evaluation employed and a justification for their use in the particular circumstances;

(v) A portfolio presentation representing re-worked examples of the course outline, theoretical rationale and justification, sample lesson plans, teaching materials, assessment materials and evaluation procedures.

Examples of courses students have presented include English for new settlers, English in academic contexts, Spanish for travel and tourism and basic conversational Japanese. Whilst most assignments have focussed well on language tasks, skills, and activities, most students have paid less attention, initially, to language itself. The opportunity to re-present their work has enabled students to concentrate more tightly on this particular aspect of their course and present portfolios which cover all of the required areas comprehensively and at an appropriate level of detail.

6.Evaluation of the assessment

Student evaluation of the approach to assessment has been extremely positive. In the end-of-course evaluation, all students agreed they had found the approach to assessment extremely useful. They commented, in particular, on how the approach allowed for them to learn from 'work in progress' as well as to gain credit for their on-going development. They also felt the approach to assessment enabled them to demonstrate their potential for future development in a way that more traditional means of assessment might not.

Lecturers also felt the approach to assessment was extremely useful in that it enabled them to guide students in their development of knowledge and skills in the particular area. It also enabled them to provide students with an end-of-course grade which more closely reflected their learning potential than perhaps might do other more traditional forms of assessment. The approach to assessment did, however, place greater demands on lecturers in terms of the amount and type of feedback required of them as well as time involved in the actual marking. Lecturers felt, though, that the quality of improvement demonstrated by students made these extra demands worthwhile.

Jane Andrews

7.Conclusion

The approach to assessment employed in this course has been received positively by both students and staff. All students have taken pride in the preparation of their portfolio presentations, paying attention to both detail and quality of presentation in their final piece of work. Further, the fact that they are given credit for their on-going development has proved extremely motivating and contributed, importantly, to the quality of the work presented. The approach has, thus, demonstrated the very positive results of the use of evaluation as an aid to learning.

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Splitting the Atom- A Way of Avoiding Consumerism in Language Teacher Training

by Tessa Woodward

Many teacher trainers use an interesting new teaching activity to "hook" teachers, to attract them, encourage them to start reflecting on their work, and then to try out new techniques. Many teachers go to conferences, read teaching magazines, and talk to colleagues, precisely in order to gain new ideas that they can try out "tomorrow" in their classrooms. The motivation of both teacher and trainer is easy to understand and definitely not to be condemned. There is, however, one disadvantage to this constant search for and demonstration of "new" ideas. There is a danger that "new" will come automatically to mean "good" and that a slightly blasé attitude will set in with regard to anything that has been heard or seen "before". This "consumerism" in the world of language teaching has been humorously described elsewhere (de la Motte 1985). I would like to outline one way of avoiding this slightly superficial tendency to skip from activity to activity.

Splitting the atom

This is what you do:

Take one teaching/learning activity. It could be something as unfashionably standard as a dictation or a drill, or else perhaps a roleplay or other idea. Experience the activity once as a student would, so that you are completely clear on all the steps and materials involved, the timing, the language necessary, etc. Once you have a definite feeling you know how the activity works, break it down into the following components:

1. Organisation. How are the people and the furniture arranged?
2. Materials. What is needed by the teacher? By the students?
3. Process. What do the students (Ss) do? What does the teacher (T) do?
4. Time. What preparation time is involved before class? How long does the activity last in class? Is any follow-up time desirable or necessary?
5. Language. What language is necessary: (a) for T to set up the activity? (b) for Ss to get into the activity (e.g., S1: "Do you want to start?" S2: "OK...")? (c) for Ss within the activity? (d) for Ss to get out of the activity and, perhaps, report back? What weighting of skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) is involved?
6. Level. As the activity stands, what level of Ss is it good for?
7. Before and After. What could happen the minute/lesson/week before the activity? Any homework? This component thus deals with the sequencing of the activity within a teaching/learning programme.
8. Correction Policy. is direct T-S correction, or S-S correction a good idea in this activity, or should the zero option (no correction) be taken?
9. Topic. Is any particular subject or theme implied?
10. Beliefs. What beliefs about learning, people, language, or teaching are implied by the activity? For example, a standard drill would imply, among other things, that people learn from repeating things after a model, don't mind doing this, and will be able to apply this knowledge to future situations.
11. Reasons. The most important component, this one is concerned with why an activity is used at all.

There may be other categories or components that you would like to add to this list.

The grammar of an activity

Once you have considered an activity in the light of the above components, you have a "recipe" for the production of that same activity anytime in the future that you want to do it again. It is "recipes" like these, although not usually as detailed, that can be found in teachers' resource books, manuals, and magazines.

One can use a recipe, however, not just to bake the same cake twice but, with some changes made, depending on what you have in the cupboard, and a little creativity, to produce a similar cake with a very different flavour. By breaking an activity into all the components above, a teacher has a framework. By changing the details within the framework, new activities can be created. Just as a substitution table can lead to the creation of new (to the S) sentences, just as a knowledge of English grammar and syntax may lead to the production of new utterances, so the component framework of a teaching activity can lead to the creation of new classroom activities.

A sample activity analysed.

Let me give an example of a language classroom activity analysed. Here is a game that I learned from a colleague in Japan.

1. Organisation. Students stand in two lines or teams. The first person is near the blackboard but behind a line. All other members of the team stand behind the leader. The part of the room near the blackboard is free of furniture.
2. Materials. Chalk for each team and a blackboard laid out like this:

	Team A	Team B
City		
Country		
Girl's name		
Boy's name		
Composer		
Car		
Object (with four or more letters)		

3. Process. The teacher calls out a letter-e.g., "B!" The front student of each team runs to the board and writes one name starting with "B"-e.g. Bombay or Birmingham or Boston or Bangkok...The student goes back behind the line, hands the chalk to the next person in the team, then goes to the back of the line. The person with the chalk runs to the board and writes in one country that starts with a "B"-e.g., Brazil or Burma or Burkina Faso-and so on through all the items in the list. When one team has finished, the teacher shouts "Stop". All check the spelling of the words on the board. The team that has the most correctly spelled words is the winner.
4. Time. Two minutes to get the blackboard ready. (The students can be forming teams at the same time). Each round of the game will take about five minutes; checking two or three minutes.
5. Language. This can be very simple. The teacher can set up by mime and demonstration. Ss may need "Quick", "It's your turn!" "How do you spell...?" or "Help!" Reading and writing mostly.
6. Level. Elementary to intermediate.
7. Before and After. This could be a short break activity to relax the class after an intensive phase. It could be used as a warm-up game and lead in to work on any of the themes on the left-hand side of the board.
8. Correction Policy. None till after the competition. Then team-to-team or T-to-Ss correction is possible.
9. Topic. See the words at the left-hand side of the board. Also, "Spelling".
10. Beliefs. Students like competitions. The board belongs to students as well as teachers. General knowledge is useful. The spelling of place names, etc., is important and needs work.
11. Reasons. Fun. To quicken the pace. To diagnose spelling problems and general knowledge. To introduce certain topics.

Making new activities from the analysed activity

By altering as little as one detail of one of the components, a radically different exercise can be created. As it stands, the black-board team game above creates a fast pace and a fairly noisy classroom where speed is valued. Let's change some details of the first component. Instead of using the board, let each student do the game in his/her own notebook. Immediately it's quieter. Students can sit at their desks and need not say anything. They can copy the categories from the board, so the activity will take a little longer.

Let's change a detail of the process component. Instead of scoring for speed, give a high score for "unusualness". Thus if students come up with the same city name beginning with "B" as another student, they receive no points. If they come up with a city name that no one else has thought of, they get a point. This will again make the game more leisurely in pace as students discard the cities they first think of and mentally search for unusual ones. Now let's change the topic/theme component. On the left of the board, write vocabulary areas that have been taught recently-perhaps sports, hobbies, animals, furniture, colours, plants, clothes-and play the game with these categories. We have, at a stroke, changed the game into a vocabulary review exercise. One more change in the process component has team members spelling out words to a "scribe" at the board. Now we have a very active spelling game where listening to and writing words spelled out is important.

I am certain by changing other details of the exercise's components you could come up with many different exercises. I have tried out this technique in teacher-training groups, and participants have produced literally scores of variations from one given exercise that they have analysed.

The advantages of splitting the atom and changing the components.

In addition to helping teachers to look more closely at teaching ideas that they meet, so that they will have a better chance of remembering them and being able to use them again, this technique gives teachers the confidence to create their own activities. Instead of an ("I could never use that in my classroom!") response, it encourages teachers to see that they can change given exercises to fit their own classrooms. It also helps to create a feeling of choosing between "options" depending on what the teacher's aim is in any given lesson (Stevick 1986). It means, too, that a little idea can go a long way. To paraphrase a famous saying: "If you give a teacher an idea, you help them with their next lesson. If you show them how to make ideas you help them with a lifetime of lessons!"

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The Use of individual tutorials on an in-service training course

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We would like to give an account of our experiences as tutors on the Certificate for overseas teachers of English COTE course offered to the teachers at the Cultura Inglesa-Rio, the language institute in Brazil we both work for.

The course was planned to last two terms and the teachers were to attend two intensive weeks - one in July '92 and the other in February '93 - and weekly input sessions on Friday mornings for the duration of the course. Besides attending these sessions the teachers were also required to do 10 assignments and teach six lessons which would be observed for development and evaluation purposes.

To emphasise the developmental aspect of the course, each teacher was assigned a tutor with whom they would work during the course. The teachers would have one or more individual tutorials per assignment as well as tutorials to discuss their lesson plans and for post lesson observation chats. Tutorial time for assignment preparation was usually spent on discussing the content of the topic to be developed and on the organisation of the piece of writing. Lesson planning tutorials comprised a discussion of the aims to be achieved, the procedures and techniques the teacher had chosen, the teaching aids they would be using and the feasibility of fitting everything into a 50 minute lesson! Post-lesson observation chats were held either immediately after the lesson or preferably a few days later, when both the tutor and the teacher had had time to think over the lesson. It is this very positive experience of working on a one-to-one basis with our tutees using different techniques for assignment preparation and lesson observation that we would like to describe here.

In the course of the assignment preparation tutorials we felt that our tutees' needs lay mainly in the areas of text organisation and use of appropriate terminology including register for academic writing rather than in that of the content itself. Our tutees would come to us with lots of useful ideas but had a certain amount of difficulty in putting them down on paper. We felt that this could be due to the fact that although they had lots of teaching experience it had been quite some time since they had last written academic work and were therefore a bit out of practice. We then decided to concentrate our efforts on developing this area.

One of the techniques we used was to conduct an initial brainstorming session with the tutee, during which we discussed the different features to be focused on, thus forming the basic framework for the piece of writing. At home the tutee would then write a first draft which in the following tutorial we would read together and discuss bit by bit. Although this process proved to be rather time-consuming we felt it was highly effective, especially with the less confident candidates, who required greater linguistic support.

Another technique, which focused on content only, consisted of asking the tutee to tell us what had been written in the first draft in as much detail as possible. The effectiveness of this technique lay in the fact that by talking about the topic it drew on the tutee's major strength i.e. spoken language, enabling them to articulate ideas and develop arguments which could then be further developed in written form. This also helped make clear an issue which often caused anxiety among the tutees: confusing not knowing the subject with simply not knowing how to put it down on paper.

As regards the pre-lesson observation discussions, a technique we regularly used was to start off by asking the tutee to explain the aims of the lesson and describe the procedures by which these were to be achieved. We would then together analyse the lesson plan and check the extent to which the aims and procedures were reflected in it and make whatever adjustments were felt to be necessary.

In some cases we would also ask the tutee to select one or more areas on which they would like us to focus special attention and give detailed feedback. This procedure was effective in helping candidates to become more aware of areas, especially in classroom management, which could be developed or improved.

Regarding the post-lesson observation chats, our very first concern was to reduce the natural level of anxiety by making a few positive general comments about the lesson. The next step would be to ask the tutee to describe the lesson as they had felt it, commenting on the effectiveness of the planning and its implementation. We would then give our own views on it and together we would discuss the lesson. We would also give information on the special areas the tutee had asked us to concentrate on.

Throughout these tutorials we got to know our tutees better, on a professional and personal basis, and they got to know us better too. This relationship helped develop an atmosphere of trust between us which in turn gave the teachers an increasingly greater feeling of support. They saw in us the person they could turn to in order not only to clarify doubts about the input sessions or to discuss assignments and lesson plans but also to talk about personal problems which might be affecting their progress on the course. On more than one occasion, when we realised that our tutees were feeling a bit too anxious, we took the initiative of ringing them up for a chat and to give them a bit of reassurance. This was especially true of the week preceding the exam.

Now that the COTE is over, the general feeling of both tutors and teachers is that the relationship we developed over the course of a year through the one-to-one tutorials created a bond which professionally enhanced learning and development and personally has been most rewarding to all of us.

I. PEER MENTORING: A LENS OR A MIRROR?

by Neil Williams

Introduction

Recently, I was at a presentation where teacher training gurus were: 'exploring various ways of perceiving and understanding the teaching act'. For twenty minutes I and about three hundred other nosy parkers watched a video of a pre-service teacher's lesson, before listening to the gurus' comments. (The teacher was not present, though her supervisor assured us she had given permission for the tape to be shown). The session presenters/gurus reacted in many and varied ways to the video - pointing out the ritual-like nature of the lesson; asking "Where were the opportunities for learning?"; giving a typology of why and when we should observe; commenting, "First I would tell this teacher what I saw, and then I would describe what I expected but didn't see"; or refusing to comment since there was no way to know from the teacher what she was trying to accomplish in her lesson.

My reaction to these guru-reactions was mixed. Even though I was glad to see video tape of a real teacher teaching a real lesson in a real classroom, where things could and did take unexpected turns, I was reminded that there are as many aspects of a lesson to see as there are ways of looking at it. I was also reminded quite forcefully of how easy it is to theorise about "teachers in classrooms", even to make fun of them, since they aren't in a position to defend themselves. As the audience laughed with the experts' comments, I wondered how I would have reacted had any of them been in my classroom, mouthing the same generalities and undermining my teacher ego. Of the nine presenters there, only one made explicit reference to the teacher as a person teaching a lesson, rather than as an example of the species "Teacher" observed in its natural habitat.

It is so easy to objectify teaching - to believe that there is such a thing as "good", "correct" (supply your own quasi-scientific adjective) teaching, performed by practitioners who have received the truth from us trainers.

Now I recognise that this was a pre-service teacher and that to a certain extent pre-service teachers are fair game for trainers, given their desire for guidance and for techniques that "work". However, I wonder if we don't accept this state of affairs because it's easier and neater for us to give trainees "answers" (if not THE answer), rather than have them reflect and experiment, as they attempt to see what "works" for **them** (or even for that matter to get a clear idea of what "works" means...). As a step in this direction, I'd like to describe a project which you might consider using with pre-service trainees, even though it was set up to be used in a peer context.

Peer Mentoring

Peer mentoring lays emphasis on the teacher as a person in her own space, her classroom, looking to see a lesson from different perspectives; being observed, observing and observing herself observing. It was originally set up not to solve problems or answer questions, but as a means of breaking isolation between the colleges in my institution. All of us were comfortable teaching classes, and had been doing it for quite a while. What bothered us was that we knew nothing about what was going on in other people's classrooms. Most of us, too, shied away from talking about our teaching as well as "Teaching" in general. We decided to set up a system in which we could visit each other's classes, without feeling uncomfortable or defensive. We called it peer mentoring, because we wanted to see each other as "experienced and trusted counsellors" (Oxford English Dictionary definition), there to help each other learn by looking. We started from the premise that there would be no such thing as a "good" or "bad" observation; we were observing in order to learn what we could for ourselves. In the spirit of becoming non-judgmental we expunged the word "observe" (with its overtones of evaluation) from our vocabulary and replaced it with "visit".

The System Refined

After three years we have now refined the system considerably. The common elements are: the VISITING ROUND, the CONTROL, the FOCUS, the INSTRUMENT, and the WRAP-UP.

The visiting round is at the heart of the process, since it is this which keeps the seeing on a non-judgmental footing. Over the course of a week, each group member is first visited and then visits. So, if the group is Andrew, Beth, Chuck and Di, then Andrew visits Beth on Monday, Beth visits Chuck on Tuesday, Chuck visits Di on Wednesday etc. Di visits Andrew, who is therefore the only group member to teach a class after visiting one. This teaching before visiting is an important aspect of the round, since what you see often affects what or how you teach your own lesson. All classes are videotaped.

The group agrees on the CONTROL, FOCUS, and INSTRUMENT, for the round. The control is a constant for all the lessons taught. It is the content of a lesson or what is taught. it can be precise ("expressing regret", "using the same text") or vague ("humour, "word order", "music"). Thus when we chose 'humour' as our control, we all tried to teach what English humour was. Control thus provides a common aspect to the lessons. The focus, on the other hand is how we teach things. This is the aspect of our teaching which will later become a springboard for our discussions on 'Teaching'. The discussions of focus are what we use to get at our belief system or teaching habits, and comes closest to Trainer/Trainee feedback. In this model however, we are both "trainer" and "trainee", and so more likely to use

continued

the focus for awareness-raising (which, in turn, may lead us into an action research cycle*). To date under 'focus' we have looked at teacher questions, student questions, setting up activities, transitions, interaction with touchstone students (the student we tend to use to check how well the lesson is going) and student perceptions of the class being taught. it is not uncommon for a focus to be used over two or three rounds as we compare what we are doing now with what we saw ourselves doing earlier.

The final device, the "instrument", delimits what we see and so serves to heighten our perceptions as we look. An "instrument" is any constraint you put on the way you look at a lesson. Unlike most instruments aimed at measuring a specific aspect of "Teaching" or uncovering a generalised "truth" ours are nonce creations, never used more than twice. Once you become familiar with a low inference instrument like FOCUS (Fanselow, 1987) or (FIAC (Flanders, 1970) it's true that categorising an activity becomes easy. That in turn can lead you into the mistaken idea that you are actually describing "reality" rather than a version of reality set by the limits of the instrument you are using. With a new instrument it is sometimes very difficult to fit what you see into its strictures. That struggle to get things to fit, along with your explanation (later) of why you categorised the way you did, at speed in the lesson, often reveals a great deal about your beliefs. We have chosen to capitalise on this disparity between reality and category using instruments that involve a forced choice. Discussion of the visiter's way of filling in these instruments has often revealed more than the data the instruments themselves yielded. (I've included a couple of instruments at the end of the article if you fancy trying them out).

Immediately after the visit, the visitor simply describes what she saw through the instrument and no more. The visited teacher watches the video of the lesson, using the instrument, and compares her results with those of the visitor.

Once the visiting round is completed, the group meets for the final phase, the wrap-up. It is here that we finally get to talk about our classes (the people and the lessons) our teaching, and "Teaching". The discussion always generates an enormous amount of enthusiasm and wrap-ups often continue long into the evening.

Starting with the first class, visited teachers describe their reaction to the visit and what they learned from looking through the instrument at their class on tape, comparing their results with what the visitor saw. Visitors then explain why they put teacher behaviour into the categories they did. Then it's their turn to describe their experience as a visited teacher. before **their** visitor in turn explains her categorising strategy. The cycle repeats itself. After this initial stage, we return to the videotapes of each lesson, to look together in terms of the focus. As a results of the first phase (seeing and been seen) we are all aware of our vulnerability (we are looking at "warts-and-all" lessons, none of them perfect), and so paradoxically we find it easier to trust each other. Through our own vulnerability, we see the lesson as a teacher teaching, not as a good or bad version of "The ELT Class". Insights often come as we attempt to clarify with the visited teacher what we are seeing in the context of our own belief system. This is when the discussions really take off, but in a spirit of co-operation, rather than confrontation, of learning rather than teaching.

*Author's Note: Action research is a branch of classroom research where a teacher observes herself teaching, identifies a behaviour she wants to change, changes it, observes the results of the change in a specific class, and after reflection, decides whether the change was justified or not.

The benefits of peer-mentoring

What has peer-mentoring done for us? Well, first of all it has helped crack the isolation of teaching alone behind locked doors. We have learned about **ourselves** as we visited others. We have become aware that perfect lessons don't exist, just lessons in which students and teachers engage in learning. More than anything else, we have come to reflect on what we are doing, and to look at ways of broadening our teaching. Now, we try to see how what we do is either a product of or was counter to our belief system.

Much has been made of the need for teachers to have a personal philosophy which informs their teaching. But how can a beginning teacher ever acquire one other than by remembering their own schooling or adopting the ideas prevalent in their initial training? Engaging in the peer mentoring process might help trainees reflect on what they are doing and thinking. It might also start a process of reasoned professional development that arms them against the platitudes of the "Teacher gurus".

Instruments Opposite

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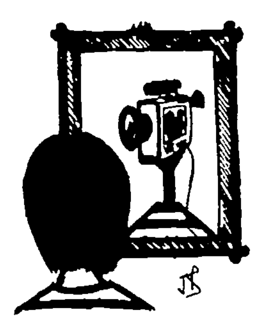


INSTRUMENTS

I QUESTON TYPE

TALLY QUESTIONS ACCORDING TO THEIR FORM: Y/N WH—, RISING INTONATION, OR NONVERBAL. DO THIS FOR FIVE MINUTES THEN SPEND FIVE MINUTES OBSERVING WHERE THE TEACHER WALKS. SKETCH THEIR "FORBIDDEN ZONE" THEN TALLY QUESTIONS AGAIN, AND SO ON.........

5 MINUTE PERIOD	Y/N	WH—	RISING INTONATION	NONVERBAL
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

SKETCH THE CLASS AND TEACHER MOVEMENT

II QUESTION CHUNKING

OFTEN A TEACHER REPEATS THE SAME QUESTION, FOR THE SAME INFORMATION, MANY TIMES. IDENTIFY QUESTION CHUNKS. TALLY HOW MANY TIMES THE QUESTION IS ASKED. NOTE IF THE QUESTION IS MODIFIED. HOW MUCH TIME ELAPSES BETWEEN EACH QUESTION IN THE CHUNK? DO THIS FOR FIVE MINUTES. TAKE FIVE MINUTES TO OBSERVE A SINGLE STUDENT (FIELD NOTES). TALLY AGAIN...

CHUNK	NO. OF QQS	SAME ?	MODIFIED?	TIME LAPSE					
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									

TALLY WHICH QUESTIONS ARE THE SAME AND WHICH ARE MODIFIED FIRST. TOTAL THEM AT THE END OF TALLY PERIOD. NOTE TIMES AS I (IMMEDIATE), B (BRIEF, 0.5-1.5 SECS.), OR L (LONGER).

2. Using Discussions of Technique/Procedure-sequences in post-observation meetings

by Maria Alfredo Moreira

This technique first came to me after having had a series of post-observation meetings with trainees from the University of the Minho, the teacher training institution where I work as a supervisor of English teachers in pre-service programmes. Although my aim as supervisor was to help create reflective teachers of English who improve their practice by looking back and reflecting on it, I had noticed that some trainees showed resistance to having their classes thoroughly scrutinised by someone they do not know very well - me, their supervisor from university...or even by their own colleagues. They ended up by 'seeing' their classes through the trainer's eyes and were thus always afraid of commenting on them.

My aim was thus to make post-observation feedback less threatening. It came to me that I could achieve this purpose by having trainees discuss the appropriacy of someone else's procedures rather than their own. Rather than having their supervisor point out to them "mistakes" in their own choice of procedures, the trainees become the ones who discuss the good and not so good teaching strategies of someone else. Let me explain how it works.

I start by selecting data from my observations of trainee classes. I then distil this information into procedure-sequences that focus on the aspects of teaching which we have already decided in the pre-observation meetings to focus on. This data is presented to trainees as a worksheet (see Figure). The trainees' names are replaced by code symbols to avoid focusing on the person and to help them question teaching procedures more actively.

During the post-observation session I give the group of trainees a list of procedures they used during the observed classes. They then discuss the (in)appropriacy of sequences according to the situation they occurred in. As they do not know whose strategies they are being presented with, they feel rather free to comment on them. For example, I ask them to comment on the adequacy of the first sequence (uncontrolled wh-question → silence → reformulated question → mass response) bearing in mind their own and their colleagues' classes. They are asked to discuss the outcome of certain procedures: why would the question be uncontrolled? Why did the silence occur? What might the teacher have done instead of reformulating the question? How could the same question change so that the students would answer? We discuss the sequences one by one.

I also ask them to reflect upon what happened, to think of situations where these teaching sequences would be suitable, and if appropriate to change the sequences into more effective ones to follow in their own classes, with

Post observation worksheet

Focus: Questioning Strategies

Task: Read the following questioning strategies taken from your classes. Reflect upon their appropriacy according to the various situations given in the right hand column.

(The symbols $, & #, and *stand for your names. They key can be given to you after the discussion if you wish).

Questioning Strategies

a) uncontrolled wh-question → silence → re-formulated question → mass response ($).

b) uncontrolled wh-question → mass response → Teacher (T) names Student (S) → solitary response ($&).

c) isolated wh-question → mass response → controlled wh-question → solitary response ($#).

d) controlled yes/no question → silence → T asks for other Students' (SS) help (#*).

e) controlled wh-question → silence → T asks for other SS help (#*).

f) isolated wh-question → silence → T asks S2 S1 responds (*).

g) uncontrolled wh-question → silence → uncontrolled yes/no question → mass response → controlled wh-question → response (*).

Situation 5

Questions:
1. routine, fairly easy questions
2. difficult, high level questions.

Students:
1. weaker students
2. confident students

Class:
1. small classes with no discipline problems
2. large classes with some discipline problems
3. my class

Content:
1. presenting new structures/vocabulary
2. revision drills
3. checking reading/listening activities.

Key to the terminology above:

Controlled: Teacher asks a question, and then chooses one student to answer.
Uncontrolled: Teacher asks a question, and then lets students call out answer.
Isolated: Teacher first chooses a student, and then asks the student a question.

their own pupils. Possible prompting questions here could be:

- Was a mass response the intended result?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of uncontrolled questions?
- Is strategy a) appropriate when you are asking routine, fairly easy questions? How do confident students react to it? Is it appropriate to large classes with some discipline problems?
- Would sequence b) work if you were presenting new structures? If not, how would you use it with your own pupils?
- In what way could you improve sequence g) in order to save time and effort for you?

Though its focus was questioning strategies, this worksheet can also focus on other areas of teaching procedure for example: presentation of language items, eliciting the meaning of words, error correction (oral and written), using questions on a text (oral and written).

I believe that this technique may be useful when you do not want to impose your view on the trainees. As they become more autonomous and self-confident, your role becomes secondary. You provide the data for discussion, create the situation for open discussion of alternative teaching/learning strategies, ask questions in order to stimulate discussion, present other perspectives, enlarge the trainees' horizons. Trainees are left to think and discuss freely. They are at the core of their only professional development.

3. Trainee feedback by Glória Vasconcelos

At the end of a training course, after the trainees have been graded, when they are sure that nothing could change their marks, I ask them to fill in the following handouts in order to give me some feedback on my work.

Feedback Sheet 1
Fill in the following table please.

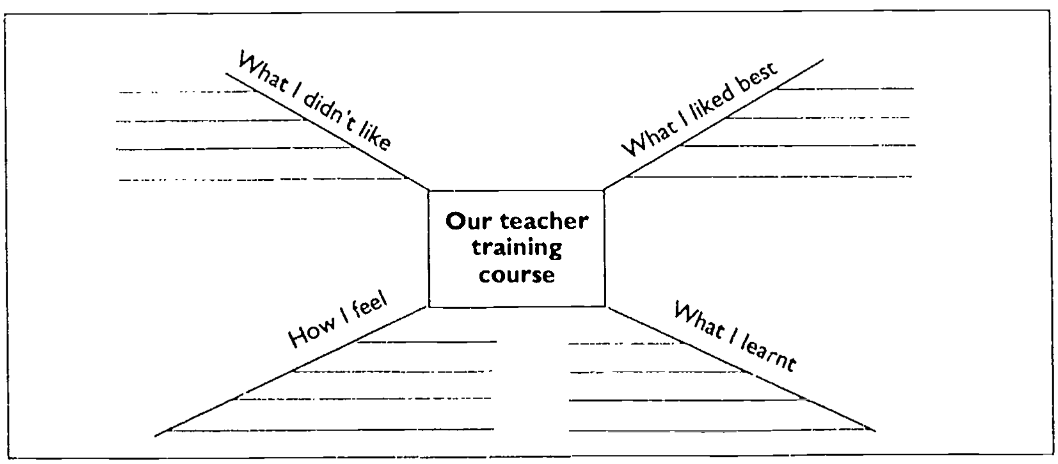
Our teacher training course

		Lesson planning help	Classroom		Seminars	One to one tutorials	Private reflection
			Observation	Feedback			
What	to maintain						
	to change						
	to eliminate						

Feedback sheet 2 (a)

Complete the following mind maps

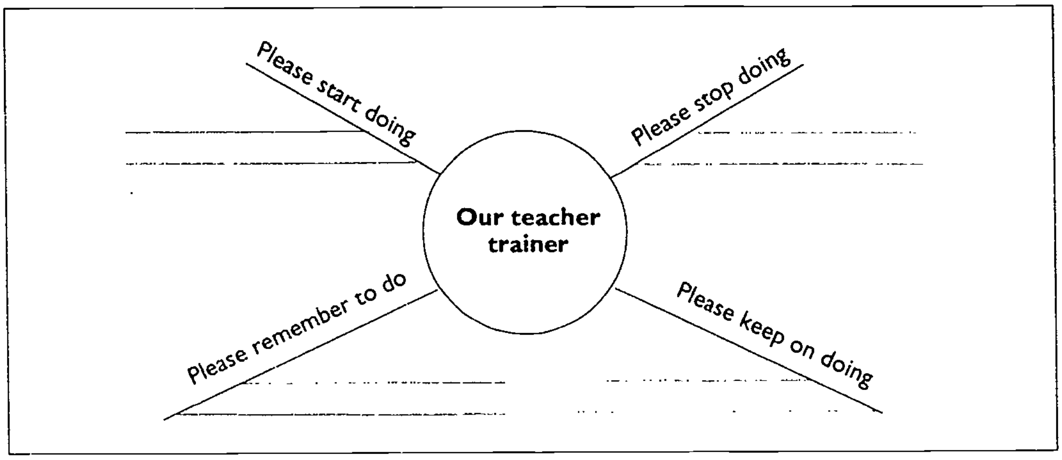
Feel free to write exactly what you think/feel



continued

2 (b)

Add as many sub-branches as you need



Feedback Sheet 3

Other comments

Thank you

The faces behind the journal

Joan Driver, subscriptions, information and mailing.

Lynn Pymm, stalwart back-up on all fronts including typing.

Mario Rinvolucri whose idea it was to start up a "newsletter for trainers".

Tessa Woodward, editor.

James Dixey, the founder of Pilgrims, our publisher.

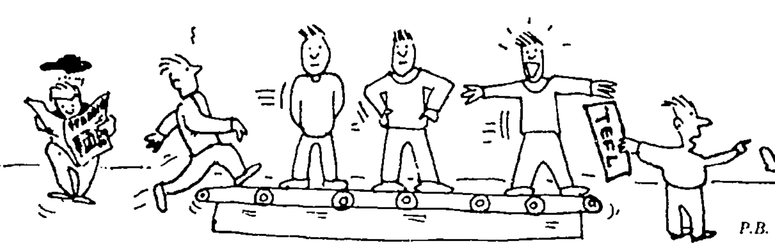
Lesley Farr, who designs and lays out the journal.

Chris Lancaster of the UKC print unit.

Why The Sky Mustn't Be The Limit

by Simon Le Fort

A glance at any Tuesday Guardian will reveal ever increasing numbers of centres advertising places on RSA/Cambridge CTEFLA courses (Royal Society of Arts/Cambridge University Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults). New centres look to offer an easy-to-run teacher training course, even as a loss leader, to add respectability and variety to the otherwise limited range of programmes that can be offered by the red-brick language schools which have sprung up over the last twenty years. Overseas centres tempt native English speakers to spend four weeks in exotic-sounding locations with affordable accommodation packages. And alongside them are long-standing centres, their stranglehold on the market now threatened, they're compelled to make an effort to fill their roll-on-roll-off production lines.



In addition to seas of newly-trained teachers, this growth has spawned teacher trainers galore. A product of this baby boom myself, as a teacher trainer I too have fought off the critics of the CTEFLA scheme and done my little bit to try to improve the level of training. As a trainer I have developed my own styles and interests and, no doubt, prejudices and bad habits to boot. And, as a staff-room colleague to fledgling CTEFLA holders, I've unjammed photocopiers, located books and even, on occasion, provided academic support.

Isn't it time for a review of our own performances as trainers on these courses? A good point to start could be the syllabus, which offers scope for many different realisations. The RSA/Cambridge specify in broad terms the content of courses, but course directors in different centres are then free to produce timetables which may differ greatly in terms of content, sequencing and emphasis.

Studies into second language acquisition and sociolinguistics have contributed much to TESOL methodologies in recent years. Apparently mindful of this, the RSA/Cambridge has incorporated such factors as culture and motivation into its specifications for the course. But their importance is seldom reflected in timetables, if input session headings are anything to judge by.

In the UK at least, a popular timetable seems to have evolved with increasingly similar sequencing and content of input sessions. Could it be that too few trainers are given the authority or confidence to be able to try out their own models? Or are they afraid of falling foul of assessors who themselves may be working religiously to "the" model handed down on tablets of stone by their predecessors in the seventies?

As a quantitative example of the grip this popular timetable has on the imaginations and creativities of the New Testament trainers of the nineties, take phonology. Just look at almost any CTEFLA timetable and you'll find four or five phonology sessions with remarkably similar titles. Sessions on 'Sounds', 'Wordstress', Intonation' and 'Connected Speech' are the norm. Sometimes trainers are so keen to provide scientific knowledge and jargon that they even end up teaching novice teachers about concepts they have no clear grasp of themselves. Assimilation and juncture spring to mind. And what do our labours produce? Well, if my research (Le Fort, 1993) is at all accurate, novice teachers seldom even try to incorporate phonology into their teaching. Bowen and Marks (1992) go further: "We have found that many teachers, consciously or unconsciously, avoid teaching pronunciation because they regard it as 'difficult'". (p.2) It seems that the largely ineffective phonology training at this pre-service level dictates the fate of a teacher's professional development in this area. There is too much scientific knowledge introduced to trainees in too short a time. They become afraid of phonology. The result is that successive generations of teachers neglect the important area of pronunciation teaching in their work.

Continuing with the example of phonology, surely trainees only require enough awareness to be able to cope with the demands of high frequency teaching situations? Take assimilation. It can be great fun for native speakers to discover that they've been saying/tem pens/ (ten pence), /gug gə:/ (good girl) and /hop bred/ (hot bread) all their lives. But such optional features of Connected Speech (Roach, 1983) are scarcely essential at this pre-service level. For me, assimilation is significant morphosyntatically with the present (/-s/, /-z/) and past (/-t/, /-d/) simple tense markers, which can be taught to generate the correct pronunciation (...whatever that is!) of most verbs.

Similar principles apply in many other syllabus and timetable areas. Trainers should look critically at what they include in their little over 100-hour CTEFLA courses and prioritise what the trainees can realistically be expected to take on board at this pre-service stage. After all, how they perform in their six or seven hours teaching practice largely determines trainees' grades and subsequent career prospects. Shouldn't we give them every possible chance to acquit themselves as best they possibly can?

continued

For my own part, I have developed a Model for Integrated Phonology Training which emphasises the need for suprasegmental phonology, reduces phonemic analysis and charts to a reference level, and integrates various elements of pronunciation work into language or methodological areas where they play significant roles. The morphosyntactic assimilations above are one example. Introducing elision in vocabulary teaching seminars is another. The Model may or may not work, but at least challenges a currently ineffective approach.

Remember that until 1979 only one RSA TEFL course existed. Trainers had little more than 100 hours to impart all they could and in so doing frequently completed all the formal teacher training their charges would ever receive. But now there's a Diploma, too, and soon there'll be four certifications instead of two with intermediate and post-Diploma levels and time for novices to graduate to the delights of delayed plosion, glottal stops, soft palates and the rest. Yet the pre-1979 style timetable still seems to thrive. Trainers have not made clear distinctions in their own minds, it seems, about which content is necessary at each stage of development. Let's ease off, try to do a little well, visibly show the How-can-you-claim-to-train-a-teacher-in-four-weeks-Harries that we are like the more successful racehorse trainers, leaving something to work on at a later date. At this stage of their development, teachers do not need to concern themselves with every aspect of language teaching - the sky doesn't have to be the limit. The Diploma trainers might even be glad of having something to introduce rather than everything to revise...and in the long run trainees and employers might thank us, too.

Yes, it is time for us trainers to think more independently about how best we might transform the CTEFLA into a valuable 4-week course, where trainees are confronted with manageable units of methodology and language, rather than dauntingly unpalatable lumps which take years and years to become clear in teachers' minds...by which time they are in any case forgotten!

PS! If you're interested at this micro level in exploring how the Model for Integrated Phonology Training works, or, more generally, in reviewing the limitations on quantity and nature of other syllabus areas on pre-service training courses, the author can be contacted through The Teacher Trainer.

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Sustainable methodologies: A call for more sensitivity to relevance in E.L.T. Projects.

by Valerie Ainscough

Introduction

Much thought is currently given to the sustainabilty of projects in the Third World in general, and E.L.T. projects are no exception. To what extent can innovations introduced during the life of a project take root and continue after the project has ended? To a certain extent this will depend on the degree to which the need for change has been identified by the workers in the country concerned, and their role in the negotiating process. But it also depends on the 'educational infrastructure' available in a country. In the past, projects were criticised for pulling out of countries without leaving in place the necessary systems, financial support and hardware for the local 'counterparts' to carry on the work. In 1988, Woods listed twelve tips for project planners to bear in mind when thinking about sustainability, and in recent years more emphasis has been placed on the handing over process.

It is proposed here to make a case not only for more awareness of the need for continuing support in concrete terms as outlined above, but also to place more emphasis on considering the appropriacy of new methodologies introduced by the project in terms of their long-term sustainability after the project has pulled out.

The Role of the 'Expert':

E.L.T. projects are typically involved in curriculum renewal. A Ministry of Education in a country with an out-of-date, somewhat fossilised approach to teacher training and the English curriculum wants to update its methods in order to improve the efficiency of English language teaching. Outside experts are called in.

The first appeal for sensitivity arises at this point. An E.L.T./'expert' has been formed by his/her experience in a variety of situations, but comes to the current project far from being an expert in that country's particular history and experience of English teaching. Moreover, he/she comes with:

i) native speaker proficiency

ii) a Western ELT practitioner's professional experience characterised by:

a) training and background in communicative language teaching where games, songs, varieties of interaction patterns, humour and the like are basic to the teaching method.

b) a large repertoire of teaching techniques.

c) the ability to use a resource centre in order to plan his/her lessons, courses and even syllabuses.

iii) a fair amount of professional self-esteem and job-satisfaction.

On the other hand, the local colleagues with whom he/she will be working have:

i) varying degrees of English language proficiency, often poor.

ii) a training in ELT often inadequate in content, narrow prescriptive and rule-based (To quote: "Six vocabulary items should be taught from each reading text").

iii) a limited repertoire of teaching techniques: for example grammar-translation, vocabulary from text, 'open' comprehension questions based on the text.

iv) few text books and no access to resource centres and libraries.

v) low self-esteem caused by low, often irregularly-paid salaries and poor working conditions

The outside expert is often shocked by what he/she sees in initial observations, judging from the norms and standards of his/her own ELT background. However, the teachers being observed are also experts in their own way at coping with the realities of their own teaching situation. Before setting about reform the outside expert should think carefully about why and how the present situation has arisen, both by introspection and open dialogue with the teachers, and then set about embarking on a programme of innovation.

Appraisal of Project Constraints:

At the outset of the project basic questions need to be put based on a realistic appraisal of the current state of English teaching and of the limits within which the project operates. These include:

- *the probable duration of the project*

Three or four years may seem a long time at the outset, but much time is spent on collecting data, understanding the systems, getting to know the key personnel and bringing people together. Then follows the lengthy process of identifying the needs and formulating a programme. The more time spent in reaching harmony and on co-operative decision making at this initial stage, the more likely any innovations introduced under the project are to take hold. In any project there are several different interest groups who will be significantly affected by changes at various stages in the project. It is vital that time is spent on negotiating changes with them not only to get 'the product' right, but to ensure a smooth passage for reform. Though slowing down the process initially, there will be more chance of long-term success than by taking a more cavalier approach.

- the number of people working together on a project and the size and capability of the local teams they are working with

Changes in methodology require intensive teacher training, both pre-service and in-service if they are to take hold. The number of people involved will affect the rate at which change can be introduced.

- *financial limitations*

The financial resources of the local Ministry of Education, together with the financial inputs donated to the project also determine what can be done. How much money can be spent on books for teachers? What ration of books per teacher? How much is available to fund seminars? Is there a publications budget in the project to fund local production of books and other teaching materials?

- *the local conditions*

A whole complex of local conditions influences the pace of change: the length of the working day, local commitment to work, strikes, political unrest and even the weather all play their part.

At this point two types of expertise are called for. The first is the purely 'professional' one, that is, to analyse what is wrong with the present English curriculum in view of the perceived needs and to provide, working in harmony with local colleagues, a new, modern approach in line with world-wide developments in ELT which will help alleviate the dissatisfaction with current practice. The second involves assessing, as far as possible, the degree of change which can be achieved within the limits of the project and which will stand a good chance of being accepted, understood and continued after the outside experts have left.

The Case of the Congo Project in In-service Teacher Training and Materials Development

In order to give some concrete examples of the sort of compromises that might need to be made, I propose to look at the above project which ended in July 1993. I was responsible for the Upper Secondary phase which lasted four years. It is not necessary here to outline the whole revised programme, but rather to draw on certain elements which illustrate the present argument. There being judged no single textbook suitable for the Congolese context, the Upper Secondary (lyce_) English programme was divided into four components according to the perceived needs of the pupils: grammar, reading comprehension, writing and conversation.

Grammar:

The teaching of grammar was cited by many teachers and inspectors as being a problem area. They felt they did not know how to teach grammar and, as became apparent, the teachers' own grammar was weak in many cases.

continued →

Training sessions in the form of workshops were held to discuss and demonstrate the teaching of grammar. In order to make grammar more interesting, and to increase oral interaction in the class, we opted for a method of lifting structure out of the text and presenting structures through a visual or aural presentation stage. The grammatical point would be contextualised in a clear, non-written presentation as opposed to a written context (the traditional way). The procedure was:

- selection of a grammatical point taken from a logical sequence- presentation stage to elicit a key (marker) sentence
- focus on repetition and form
- concept checking
- substitution exercises
- extended practice through listening and reading texts containing the grammatical form being taught.

However, for teachers to understand and put this into practice required an enormous revolution in approach, and, with a few notable exceptions, failed to teach grammar efficiently. The reason for this was that all their previous experience of grammar teaching had evolved from examining structure as it occurs in a written text. This structure would then be focused on, occasionally a few similar sentences would be manipulated, and the structure had been 'taught'. Generally whether pupils learned a structure and in what sequence was very much a random decision depending on the texts they were studying.

It soon became obvious that teachers would best be helped by having a textbook with a clear progression of grammatical points, understandable explanations, simple illustrations and mechanical exercises for the teacher and the pupils to work on. Eventually 'English Grammar in Use' by Raymond Murphy, was chosen and proved highly successful.

Reading:

To teach reading, home-produced books for each level were decided on. We wanted texts that were culturally relevant, cheap enough for pupils to be able to buy, and which would enable us to train the local team in materials development. At first I wanted to introduce a varied format for each unit, a wide variety of exercise types focusing on different sub skills of reading - scanning in one unit, reading for summarising in another and so on. Again, adjustments needed to be made because teachers could not cope with such a varied approach, and a compromise in the form of a standard approach to reading was decided on:

- pre-reading discussion questions to orient pupils to the topic and vocabulary
- extensive reading with one or two pre-set questions
- intensive reading involving answers to True/False or multiple choice questions
- grammar and vocabulary focus
- a final stage of open questions based on a deeper understanding of the text.

This approach was decided on as being an improvement in the translation of texts by the teacher which had led to total learner dependence. In the translation class the pupils can passively write down a translated text without needing to make an effort to go through various stages and levels of comprehension. In examinations or out-of-class reading the learner cannot function effectively since he/she has not acquired the necessary skills to function independently when meeting a text for the first time.

From observations and interviews with teachers this rather pedestrian approach was generally accepted and worked well. It represented an improvement on simple translation of the text. Nonetheless, certain problems were observed which we had not anticipated. These resulted mainly from the teachers' lack of understanding of the reason for doing a certain activity even though this had been clearly stated in the introduction to the book and in preparatory workshops. Pre-reading discussions would sometimes go completely off the point, take up too much time and no effort was made to introduce new vocabulary. Some teachers failed to see that a True/False/Don't Know exercise was meant to help pupils to comprehend a text, and would simply say "right" or "wrong" to whatever answer was given rendering it a completely futile exercise. This was later remedied by insisting that pupils be asked to justify their answers. Unfortunately what came out was that some teachers themselves had ill-prepared texts and could not cope with unpredicted answers.

Conversation:

In the Congolese English class the oral component had been almost totally lacking apart from straight teacher-to-pupil question and answer patterns. In addition to making the teaching of the other skills more oral-interactive, we had hoped to introduce a small but separate conversation slot using a programme based on selected units from 'Conversation' by Nolasco and Arthur. Some teachers experimented with certain units but many were put off by the amount of preparation needed to do the activities in class, and, more fundamentally, found it difficult to adapt to the free communication activities which are at the heart of the communicative approach. Such activities are demanding of all teachers, but especially in cases where the teachers themselves have a poor command of the language. They find it difficult to cope with spontaneous language production too and feel more secure where language is predicted and thereby more easily controlled.

In aiming for spontaneous, dynamic and more authentic interaction in the class we missed out on the chance to give pupils simple, formulaic dialogues which might at least have given them a glimpse of English as it is spoken.

Limitations of the Communicative Approach to the Congolese Situation

When asked why resource books such as 'Conversation' and many other 'ideas' books which had been put into the school resource centres were not being taken up by the teachers to the extent anticipated, a common reply was that they were difficult to follow. Here we can see a clear distinction between what is perceived by teachers as difficulty of approach and difficulty of language. Ironically teachers often seemed happier translating really difficult texts than manipulating far simpler language in a new way. This was clearly seen in the attempt to introduce the 'Enterprise' series into the Technical lyce_. The rational for introducing 'Enterprise' was that the aim of the course would be to produce learners who could communicate in commercial English. The language content was easy compared to the dense texts being taught prior to the project, but the difficulty encountered by the teachers in using the books, and their obvious resistance to the methodology required often proved too much. Unfortunately by the end of the project there were clear signs of resistance because nothing in their previous training and experience had prepared the teachers for this kind of course.

As Dove (1986) says,

If their training has not provided them (the teachers) with understanding and sympathy for the crucial part they can play in translating curriculum plans into reality then they are likely to resist attempts to impose on them additional and unconventional tasks.

Another aspect of the problem can be seen in item writing as opposed to teaching. Teachers in many parts of the world suffer from lack of materials which means that they inevitably produce their own exercises and tests. Certain exercises such as blank-filling and, more obviously, multiple choice items, are notoriously difficult to construct. When the teachers' own level of English is poor the results can be worse than simple open-question exercises.

Conclusion

The list of examples of the ways in which innovation has to be sensitive to the realities of the local situation could go on. But what conclusions can be drawn?

1. To place more emphasis on, and time allocated to, understanding the methodologies in use and reaching consensus on all aspects of curriculum change. Above all the changes must be realistic. It is better that less ambitious changes are introduced if they stand a chance of sustainability than to introduce methodologies which will meet with resistance, be poorly taught and result in complete disorder after the project has pulled out.

2. That more evaluation is carried out to monitor how innovations are received, understood and put into practice both during the life of the project and, where possible, to follow up the long-term consequences on teaching after the project has ended. An important aspect of this is involving local colleagues in the evaluating process in-project and helping them to find ways of evaluating for themselves after the project has ended. The process of innovation is dynamic and new systems and methods need constant adjustment.

3. To emphasise the need for general language improvement for teachers by setting up regular language development classes (in which varieties of teaching techniques can be experienced first-hand) and by providing resource centres with not only pedagogical books but reference books, dictionaries and general reading matter for teachers.

4. To carry out more intensive training with a core team of local experts in the more theoretical aspects of language teaching and materials writing so that they will be able to analyse future problems more clearly when the project has ended. When new techniques are introduced and questioned by teachers, there must be those who can explain why one method is preferable to another. Personal experience has shown that even colleagues who have undergone post-graduate U.K. training often return using jargon for things they have not fully understood and therefore have difficulty in transmitting the ideas to others. Ultimately, sustainability rests on the local expert being able to replace the outside expert for good.

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Nolasco R and Arthur L. *Conversation* Resource Books for Teachers Series O.U.P.

COMMENT..........

Another voice from an RSA Diploma course

I read in the Teacher Trainer, Volume Seven, Number One three trainee voices: one saying she passed but suffered nightmares, another saying he passed but was most unhappy with the course, and the third says he left the course after five weeks seeing it as a rush to a qualification rather than teacher development.

I'd like to add a fourth voice, mine. I was a participant on an RSA course in Switzerland and failed to pass one part of the exam. For me the course was teacher development in a supportive, relaxed and creative atmosphere. I finished the course with so much more than when I started, but not the Diploma. On reading the comments of the three trainees I began to ask myself if I was really a loser at all.

Training the Trainers: Suggestions for a short Trainer Training Course

by Anne Burns
NCELTR, Macquarie University, Australia.

Why and how do teachers become teacher trainers?

Teachers move into teacher training for many and varied reasons. They are generally, however, highly experienced teachers, likely to have worked in a variety of English language programs and having broad experiences of language teaching at home and perhaps also in overseas locations. Often they have undertaken special language projects which have involved action research, materials development or curriculum development in a particular area, for example developing programme for low level learners or working on materials for assessment and evaluation. They are also professionally aware and reflective, keeping up to date with relevant professional reading and volunteering for professional development activities through inservice workshops and conference attendance. Many of them undertake further studies in Tesol, often at Graduate Diploma or MA level. Generally, they are adept at using the professional and theoretical knowledge they acquire to reflect critically on their own practice and to share their insights with others working within the same language programme.

For many teachers the movement into teacher training occurs with little opportunity to undertake formal preparation for the role. While some training opportunities may be available within larger institutions, the majority of trainers find that initial formal training is either not available to them or is ad hoc. The more common experience involves self reflection, learning on the job, or at best, co-training with other new or more experienced trainers. There may be opportunities to observe, be observed and to get feedback from peers but many new trainers draw largely on their teaching experience, transferring the skills gained in the classroom to the training situation.

For some teachers, in the initial process of moving from teaching to training, one of their major concerns is setting themselves apart from and above their peers. They often experience tension, wanting to be respected by their peers as good classroom practitioners, but not wanting to seem to place themselves in a position of superiority.

The 'Train the Trainer' Course

The initial Train the Trainer course which I have been involved in developing over the last few years within the Australian Adult Migrant English Programme (AMEP) is intended to provide an opportunity for teachers who are interested in becoming trainers to receive some formal preparation.

The course is offered over 18 hours and is generally held over 3 days or 6 half days. It aims to combine theoretical insights and concerns with discussion of training issues within the organisational context of the Adult Migrant English Programme. A further aim is to provide participants with practical and experiential tasks and activities which will help them to explore some of the major processes and issues in conducting training sessions while receiving the support of the group.

The course goals can be summarised as follows:

- to assist participants to gain an understanding of the role of professional development within the AMEP.
- to identify the qualities, skills and knowledge needed by teacher trainers.
- to discuss personal and professional motives for becoming a trainer.
- to discuss the balance between content and process in training.
- to identify the role of course evaluation and self evaluation in training.
- to explore fears and concerns in relation to training.

In the following sections, I will outline in more detail the way in which the course is organised.

Day 1

The first day of the course focuses on the individual trainer's role within the AMEP, which is a national programme providing English classes for adult immigrant learners in Australia. It has adopted a needs-based, learner-centred approach which means that teachers within the programme need to develop a broad range of skills not only in the usual area of practical classroom teaching but also in course planning and design, learner assessment and programme evaluation.

As well as discussing these broad organisational issues, the participants consider the qualities, skills and knowledge they consider to be needed by teacher trainers. These were the responses collated from group discussions during the last course:

Knowledge needed by a trainer

Adult learning principles
Subject matter - theoretical and practical
Teachers - motivation and experience
How ESL fits into the wider context/bigger picture
Cultural differences between learners and between L1 and L2 cultures
Resources

Skills of the trainer
Teaching
Resources utilisation
Planning
Pacing
Group management
Incorporating participant contributions
Conflict resolution
Assertive communication
Thinking on your feet

Trainer Awareness of
Body language
Own level of confidence
Own weaknesses/gaps
Own development
Group dynamics
Constraints and resources

The first day ends by considering the broad range of teachers in the organisation, their roles and responsibilities and what their various training and professional development needs might be. In thinking about the different needs of teachers on in-service courses, we have found it useful to consider stages or phases of teacher development along a continuum (Lockwood 1984, after Fielding 1983. (See also Huberman 1989).

Surviving Teacher	Secure Teacher	Analytic Teacher	Dynamic Teacher

Newer or more inexperienced teachers may be thought of as 'surviving teachers'. This is a teacher-centred phase where the teacher is still gaining skills and confidence in the everyday processes of the language classroom. Secure teachers are those who are developing a greater sense of control or security in the classroom and can therefore focus more on learners' needs and the relationship between theory and practice. Analytic teachers are those developing a greater understanding of the broader social and political context of the classroom, greater interest in course design and the general curriculum and educational processes involved in language teaching. At the end of the continuum will be dynamic teachers who are highly skilled at linking theory and practice and reflecting analytically on their own classroom processes. They are likely to have had experience in educational management or professional development. Teachers moving into teacher training would be likely to be in the last two categories. This continuum could perhaps be applied to trainers too, i.e. surviving trainer, secure trainer and so on.

Day 2

On the second day of the course, we aim to follow on from the broad discussion of teachers' various stages and needs by focusing on the planning, design, content and evaluation of training courses. All the participants in the course are highly experienced teachers with well developed skills in course design. Many of them have also had some experience in presenting workshops or conducting action research projects. As a result we adopt an experiential and task-based approach to this session, which draws on the participants' collective experience and which gives them an opportunity to develop skills in planning for different teacher target groups.

For their task in this session, the participants are given a range of resource material, such as previous course and session programmes or timetables, suggestions for tasks and activities, information on workshop delivery modes, for example pair and group work, panel discussions, role plays, case studies, and samples of evaluation proformas, tasks and the relative advantages and disadvantages of each. The major focus for the day however is to work in small groups of no more than four to prepare a full day's programme which forms part of a training course for a specific group of teachers, for example newly appointed teachers, experienced teachers moving into new programme areas or teachers working in programme management or curriculum support roles.

Day 3

On the third day of the course, each group presents the programme they have prepared to the rest of the participants and then role plays one of the programme sessions . The other participants act as the target group of teachers for which the programme has been prepared and also as observers. They are provided with an observation checklist devised and extended by successive groups of Train the Trainer participants which considers various aspects of presentation skills and strategies, for example the pacing of the presentation, the involvement of the participants or the use made of visual aids or concrete examples. They use this to give the presenters feedback on completion of their presentation.

Both the programme presentation and the session presentation are videoed. The outline below summarises the guidelines given to the participants before they prepare the presentations.

Training Programme Presentation Task

1 The group presenting will have half an hour to give an overview of the overall programme and half an hour to role play the session segment.

2 Each of the groups observing will reflect on one aspect

continued

of the presentation, for example the pacing of the presentation, the presentation strategies used, use of handouts etc.

3 For ten minutes after the presentation, groups will reflect on the presentation with the presenting group.

4 The presenting group will give their evaluation of their own presentation, noting their reflections on:

- the things which they think they did well
- what they think they could have done better

5 Each of the observing groups will then present their evaluation of the presenting group, noting their reflections on:

- the things they thought the group did well
- what they think the group could have done better

Conclusions

For most of the participants, the Train the Trainer course appears to provide a valuable starting point for considering the move into teacher training. It introduces them in a collaborative and supportive way to their first experiences in reflecting upon and participating in teacher training. Course participants have indicated that they appreciate the opportunity to go beyond their own teaching contexts into the tr..ining room and, as one participant commented, 'to look at the big picture' of training issues, policies and approaches within the organisation, as well as to practise training strategies. The opportunity to actively plan and co-deliver a training session was particularly appreciated. As some of the participants said it 'threw us in at the deep end' and 'it was demanding but good'.

Participants also commented that, because of the need to collaborate, working with a group of other trainers could be 'difficult but also challenging and stimulating'. They were able to reflect on the realities of the training situation and also had the opportunity to think about strategies for dealing with problematic or stressful training situations as well as to discuss with others, the new roles and relationships which a move into training brings with it. Perhaps the value to prospective trainers of such a course can be summed up in a final comment by one of the participants themselves:

Certainly the three sessions provided an awareness of the skills required in teacher training. Our group was highly critical in a positive manner and the feedback for most presenters was welcomed and encouraging.

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NLP Series Part One

NLP and Some Potentially Useful Maps by Tim Murphey, Nanzan University, Japan

Introduction

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) deals with how we form our beliefs, strategies, and states to get the behaviour we get. It's about the connections between our neurology (neuro), the communications we receive and make (linguistic but also in other ways), and the behaviours that are programmed in the interaction between our neurology and communications.

The word "apple" is represented in a neural network in your mind, which for many may include a picture, sound (of a crunching bite), a taste, a feeling (of the weight and smoothness) and smell, all of which are available to you now as you simply read the word. Notice, however, that the word is not the thing. The word may also be represented and you may actually hear it pronounced with a certain voice. Language of course with its power to evoke images, sounds, and feelings, is of central interest to NLP practitioners.

Neural networks - physiologically based thinking

Neuroscientists have found that our brains, in addition to taking in information from the outside through our senses, make internal models of external experience such that we can perform operations and look at results internally. In other words, our mind may act like a video recorder to a certain extent, but is also capable of representing this information in the workshop of the mind and changing it. Our brains are capable of deleting, distorting, and generalising information so that our internal films may be quite other than what is actually out there. We can add in things that were never present, like imagining your mother wearing a cowboy hat and playing saxophone with Bill Clinton. While this internal representation seems self-evident, neuroscientists have found that these mental operations actually have a physiological basis in the neural networking and strength of individual synaptic firings through completely internal feedback loops.

Meaning, then, is a question of the physiologically connected neurones in our brains which are fired through experience and reinforced through experience. Experience is not just what's "out there", however. We can also experience internally and create just about any of the special effects that you have ever seen on a movie screen, and more. That is the power behind such things as negative and positive repeated self-talk. On the negative side we can create and experience phobias, obsessions, and traumas, and on the positive we can also create and experience thinking similar to Einstein, Disney and Mozart. NLP deals with figuring out how these neural structures are formed and changed and how people can learn to control the structuring of their own experience for the benefit of themselves and others. While it originates in the therapeutic fields, it also deals with modelling excellence and finding effective ways to teach excellence to others.

It's whatever you make it

Some NLP trainers softly say with a twinkle in their eye and a hand on your arm, "You know, NLP doesn't really exist. It's only my NLP, or your NLP, or Bandler's NLP". In other words, each of us makes our own internal map of the territory that we perceive, for any territory, not only NLP. Since "The map is not the territory" (Korzybaski 1933 Ref.2) is a major tenet of NLP drawn from general semantics, it seems justified to apply the idea to itself. So, whatever you think NLP is, it's okay - it's just your map. If you don't know about it yet, relax. Filling in maps can be fun.

From what I have constructed of my own map of NLP, I realise more and more that it has drawn many ideas from many fields. It's electic. Also, I feel that many good teachers are very NLPesque already. NLP, applied linguistics, and other fields merely provide frames in which to view our teaching and teacher training, often giving new names to wonderful things that you are already doing. The names and descriptions are important, I believe, because they allow us to talk about the wonderful things and spread them around.

What I would like to share with you in this series are a few NLP concepts and how they might apply to teacher training. As such they are neither right nor wrong, merely different perspectives. They may help you grasp your territory differently, see different aspects of teacher development, and through questioning old maps render them richer and more valuable.

Some academics have been somewhat sceptical of NLP thus far, claiming that not enough research has been done to validate it. But I don't think teachers need to wait for research to confirm what they are doing. If we did wait, we might wait forever - and life isn't quite that long. In a more holistically intuitive way, you know when something works and doesn't, when you can use it, adapt it, and develop from it. It is in this spirit that I'm offering these maps. I would only urge teachers to explore the deeper presuppositions (see the Activity sheet below), which in any case are more generative of quality development, than to simply grab a few techniques for Monday morning.

Some people simply learn and apply NLP techniques while disregarding the deeper presuppositions and this can cause problems. However, just because we discover a few irresponsible doctors does not mean we will discount the whole field of medicine. Instead, we learn how to question and get second opinions and discover more choices.

Structure

Some people refer to NLP as the "study of the structure of subjective experience and the modelling of excellence" and are interested primarily in finding people who do things excellently and then modelling them, i.e., discovering the internal structure of their beliefs, states, and strategies and how these affect their behaviour and allow them to do what they do. The material our brains use for structuring experience are pictures, sounds, feelings, tastes, smells and words (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, gustatory, olfactory, and auditory digital stimuli). With all this information, our brains select some to generalise, distort, or delete, making us more or less efficient at monitoring the world and coping with it.

A particular combination of this data in a particular sequence is known as the syntax of a strategy and can result in the creation of certain states. Even more precisely, the "submodalities" within any one modality (e.g. visual submodalities would be location, size, distance, colour, clarity, motion, etc.) will have different results for different people. When you think of a particular person that you like, what are the characteristics of that picture in your mind and the resulting feelings compared to how you visualise a person who is just so-so? Here we are interested in the structural qualities of the internal representation that let your brain know "to like". Just for fun, what would happen if you visualised the so-so person in the same way as the person you like? I invite you to explore this option now, placing the so-so person in the place where the "like" person was and to notice how your feelings change. Just for fun, try it now, remaining aware of any shifts in your internal feelings.

Attitude, methodology and technique

Others call NLP "an attitude and methodology that leaves behind it a trail of techniques". The attitude is one of immense respect for other people's models of the world and voracious curiosity concerning how they can do what they can do. The method is "modelling" others' uniqueness, which would include their strategies, states and beliefs. Modelling people with inappropriate behaviour allows therapists to understand what they are doing with their brains and to help them discover other options that might be more appropriate for their goals. Modelling excellent performers allows us to teach their behaviour to others. NLP actually started when Bandler and Grinder modelled the therapists Fritz Perls and Virginia Satir, and later Milton Erickson. Techniques from these therapists and NLP practitioners since then have provided tools to help us understand, model, change, and help others and ourselves. Refreshingly, NLP has no qualms about borrowing from a variety of fields in order to be effective.

Outcome, sensory acuity, and flexibility

O'Connor and Seymour in their excellent introduction to NLP (1990 Ref. 3) say that if NLP were to be presented in a three-minute seminar it might include only three things: "outcome, sensory acuity, and flexibility". In other words,

continued

"know what you want, be able to notice what you are getting, and have the flexibility to keep changing until you are making progress toward your outcome". NLP techniques show you how to choose outcomes that are proactive and within your control, how to increase your sensory acuity so that you can notice what you are experiencing, and how to increase your flexibility so that you can choose different ways to act that may lead you to your outcome.

So what can NLP help you do as a trainer?

It can help answer questions such as:

- What are well-formed outcomes in different pedagogical situations for me and my trainees? (i.e. Are they positive, specific enough, and under my control? Can I actually see them happening and finishing? Do I have the necessary resources? Is the size challenging but not so great it is overwhelming? Does it take into consideration the effects on the rest of the systems that I and my trainees belong to?)
- How can I increase my and my trainees' sensory acuity, to see quickly what is working and what isn't in the classroom?
- How can I increase my and my trainees' flexibility so that we have a wider choice of behaviour and feel confident to risk doing different things?
- What are the effective and ineffective strategies, beliefs and states of teachers while teaching and planning their lessons?
- How can I best elicit the structure of excellent teachers' behaviour and teach it to myself and others so we have more choice and increased satisfaction and effectiveness?
- How can I best be a model and resource for the teachers I am working with?

My Map

In my terms, NLP is about how we make internal maps, how we change maps, and how we can improve and augment the excellence in our lives. So we might call it a "MetaMap", mapping out our processes of map-making, of meaning-making.

Having shared with you MY map of NLP, I wouldn't necessarily expect all of you to agree with it entirely. It's just a map, it is neither right nor wrong, merely my perspective. As any map, it may help us to mentally grasp a bit of territory, NLP territory and your territory, and to see different aspects of them. And if you question old maps while you learn new ones, the old ones may somehow become richer and more valuable. A lot depends on how much you release all the wonder and magic in you. If you wish to stimulate that "wonder" further, you might try to go over the activities that come at the end of each of the articles in this series. If you do them with a friend or training group, the interactive experience will make them much more meaningful.

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Activity Sheet

Some people refer to the NLP presuppositions as "useful lies". They are not true or false, they are beliefs that have been found to be useful when working with people. Many people already have a lot of them and act upon them. You don't have to believe them to use them, they can be just as powerful through pretending they are true. Those presented here include the ones that have come up repeatedly in different training sessions. I've done with different trainers. Lists, like maps, will change depending on whose they are.

Some questions you may want to talk about with your partners are:

- What do each of the following statements listed below mean for you?
- Can you create a context in which believing them would be useful?
- What does believing each of them presuppose about the believer?
- What impact on the believer's behaviour would each of these presuppositions have? How would they act?

(If one or two are not understandable, skip them. Go to the ones you can talk about).

NLP Presuppositions List.

1. The map is not the territory. (Internal representations of external events and things are not the events or things; words, especially, are not the things they describe).

2. Everybody is doing the best they can do within their model of the world. (Each has their own "map" or model of reality and has performed certain deletions, distortions and generalisations in constructing that map). Other people say: Behaviour is geared for adaptation, and the present behaviour is the best choice available (within their map of the world).

3. The meaning of your communication (to others) is in the response you get.

4. The most important information about a person is that person's behaviour.

5. A person's behaviour is not who they are (accept the person, change the behaviour).

6. People have all the resources they need to succeed. (There are no unresourceful people, only unresourceful states and programmes).

7. I am in charge of my mind and therefore my results.

8. The element in the system with the most flexibility will control the system (e.g. a queen in chess).

9. There is no failure, only feedback. Whatever happens is interesting!

10. Resistance from someone is a sign of lack of rapport. There are no resistant clients (students), only inflexible communicators (teachers).

11. Behaviour and change is to be evaluated in terms of context and ecology.

12. Respect other models of the world!

Tim Murphey, Ph.D. is a certified NLP trainer and teaches courses in NLP, Alternative Learning Forms, and Applied Linguistics at Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan. He conducts seminars internationally. He is the author of Teaching One to One (Longman) and Music and Song (OUP). NLP is one of several fields he has pursued in his own continuing teacher development. Thanks to Herbert Puchta, Judith Baker, and Tessa Woodward for their sensitive insight and suggestions on previous drafts of these articles.

!News!

English Teachers Association, Switzerland

Convention 1994

Place: University of Berne, Switzerland

Date: September 17 and 18, 1994

For further information contact:
J. Josi Kräyigenweg 56, 3074 Muri, Switzerland.

Author's Corner

Martin Parrott: Tasks for Language Teachers

Ruth Gairns, a colleague of mine in International House, was asked to be co-editor of the new Cambridge Teacher Training and Development Series in 1989, and she first put the idea of writing something into my mind. I confess that at first I didn't have a very clear idea of what I wanted to write, and in fact I spent the best part of a year playing around with various ideas and only finally put together a coherent proposal after a great deal of encouragement, guidance and help from Ruth, Marion Williams (who was now Ruth's co-series editor), and Annemarie Young at CUP.

I think that was one of the first and most important of a number of valuable lessons I learnt - that the author doesn't have to come up with a complete blueprint of what they want to do, but that the editorial people are there to help and facilitate, even during the earliest stages.

Although I didn't set out with any kind of conscious mission, I think and hope that 'Tasks' does reflect and will have the effect of furthering some of my most fundamental beliefs about teacher training (particularly in-service training) and development - that:

- the experience teachers already have is of value
- this experience provides the richest and most fertile basis for any subsequent changes in belief, attitude or teaching behaviours
- what is appropriate teaching behaviour depends on the learners, the circumstances of learning and the preferences of the teacher - that what is appropriate in one context may be inappropriate in another
- small-scale, controlled experimentation is often the least threatening and most effective of all the factors which may contribute to changes in teachers' beliefs and modification to their standard classroom practice

I very much wanted to avoid what I see to be the pitfalls of some programmes for teachers - that:

- they undermine the confidence of teachers by failing to acknowledge and value what they already believe, do and do well
- they are so theoretical that teachers have difficulty in relating the content to their own teaching circumstances
- that they promote an approach (usually the so-called communicative approach) or set of techniques and activities irrespective of the appropriateness of these to their working circumstances.

'Tasks' provides input with regard both to theory and practical ideas. However, it also asks teachers to explore, discuss and test this input out according to their own circumstances and it provides structured opportunities for teachers to learn from each other. Most of the tasks

continued

are adapted from materials I had devised over the years for use in my work with teachers from all over the world who attend courses in International House (short specialised courses and also the RSA/Cambridge Diploma) and also in the Universities of London and Bristol, where I have worked on Masters and Diploma programmes. The really big challenges in writing the book, though, were firstly to adapt these tasks so that they could be used by other trainers in other circumstances, and secondly, to write supporting notes so that these tasks can be used profitably and easily by trainers with little experience or with little time to prepare, or even by a teacher or group of teachers with no trainer. Writing these notes was a difficult and very valuable experience for me as I was obliged to make explicit a lot of my own assumptions about learning and teaching, and in doing so I found I was often obliged to question them. Even when I thought my assumptions were rock-solid and incontrovertible, Marion Williams, who was by now editing the book, would return what I had written raising all kinds of questions I had never considered and requiring not only that I consider them but that I resolve them - to her satisfaction as well as my own!

In addition to the five chapters of 'Tasks', I also had to write three chapters for trainers, dealing with issues in teacher training. In a way these were the most difficult - I was used to writing training materials, but had relatively little experience of writing continuous prose other than in the essays I wrote as a student. Quite apart from the difficulty of being clear in my own mind about what I wanted to say, I had to find a way of expressing this which avoided being obscure on the one hand and patronising on the other, which avoided being too chatty but also avoided being pompous - writing for such a large audience I became hypersensitive about my style and about the tone of what I was writing.

What did I learn from writing 'Tasks'?

- thanks largely to Marion Williams I re-thought and in some respects changed what I think and believe about learning and teaching
- I learned a lot about how books get written:
- I learned that you don't need to begin at the beginning (and in fact I dotted around all over the book in the early stages and, as I wrote different sections, I would make changes to others and, indeed, to the overall design of the book)
- I learned how to compile an index (and only through doing this did I really discover how much was in the book!)

To my knowledge 'Tasks' still hasn't been reviewed*, and I am quite anxious about what people in the profession may think. So far a handful of people have told me that they have used it and have found it useful, and this has reassured me and given me a lot of satisfaction.

The training of teachers is increasingly taking place through programmes of distance learning and I very much hope that 'Tasks' can play a role in these, providing materials that teachers may use on their own to help them reflect on their teaching and to make changes to it, providing a focus for assignments and also providing ideas for the trainers to use and to change and adapt for use in their own circumstances. The tasks in the book are all photocopiable, and I hope that this enables the book to be used in situations where there simply isn't the means to buy sets of expensive materials.

Tasks for Language Teachers is published by Cambridge University Press. Martin Parrott is Director of Teacher Training at International House.

* Ed. Please see the next issue for a review of 'Tasks'.

Initial Teacher Training Research

I am doing some research into Initial Teacher Training in EFL. I would like to hear from anyone who has recently completed an initial Teacher Training Course (RSA/UCLES Cert. Trinity Cert. or others) or from trainers who could put me in contact with trainees. This would be with a view to filling in a questionnaire about their experiences on the course and in their first job. There would be some small reward as an incentive. If you would like to help please contact:

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Journal Exchanges

"The Teacher Trainer" has arranged journal exchanges with

IATEFL Newsletter (UK)
English Language Teaching Journal (UK)
Modern English Teacher (UK)
English Teachers' Journal (Israel)
RELC Journal (Singapore)
The Portuguese Newsletter (Portugal)
Forum (USA)
Practical English Teaching (UK)
Focus on English (India)
TESOL Matters (USA)
University of Hawaii Working Papers in ESL

and is abstracted by 'Language Teaching', The British Education Index, the ERIC clearing house and Contents Pages in Education.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of special interest or relevance to teacher trainers are:

The Leverhulme Primary Project, based at Exeter University is a major survey of primary teacher education in the U.K. since 1988. It has amassed information on what actually happens in classrooms and how teachers are reacting to current changes in education. A variety of publications have come from the project including the Classroom Skills series published by Routledge, 1993, and written largely by E.C. Wragg and G. Brown.

All the books in the series are slim, readable and focus on essential classroom competences. They are helpful for teachers in all stages of their professional development. The books include transcripted snippets from real classroom exchanges as well as activities which have been tried out and revised by practising teachers. Although the books are about primary mother tongue teaching, the skills discussed are so basic to any teaching endeavour that I have found them very useful in TESOL teacher education. Example titles are: Questioning, Explaining, Class Management, Talking and learning in groups and Effective teaching.

An introduction to classroom observation by E.C. Wragg (1994) Routledge. ISBN 0-415-096278. This book is written in an attempt to make the business of classroom observation important, for trainee teachers, seasoned practitioners or those responsible for training/supporting teachers or running schools. Including chapters on both quantitative and qualitative methods, the book gives most of its examples from English speaking primary and secondary schools. So although you won't find many TESOL/EFL examples in the book, reading it will give you an interesting change of subject matter and a feeling of involvement with other subject teachers.

Talking to yourself in English. An alternative approach to EFL by Chris Sion (1993) Desert Island Books, The Netherlands. ISBN 90-74645-01-1. Book 1 (Intermed:) Book 2 (Advanced). Both small paperbacks are for self-study. They contain roughly 100 activities each. A language student can start anywhere they like, choosing activities that appeal. I chose "Front door" and was helped to visualise the front door of my home and think how I would discuss its look, its sound, in my target language. The approach to self-study in these books will really appeal to some students. Personally I love it and am very happy to see Chris in print at last.

Language and Culture edited by D. Graddol, L. Thompson and M. Byram (1993) British Association of Applied Linguistics (BAAL) and Multilingual Matters Ltd. ISBN 1-85359-207-2. This paperback draws together the papers from the BAAL Annual meeting at the University of Durham 1991. Example titles are: Cultural considerations in linguistic description, Discourse and social change in the enterprise culture, Cultural studies for advanced language learners, What is the Russian for Perestroika? The importance of eclectic illumination of language use rather than pure linguistic description is one of the dominant themes of the collection.

English around the world, sociolinguistic perspectives edited by Jenny Cheshire (1991) CUP. ISBN 0-521-39565-8. "English" includes pidgins, Creoles, 'new' English and a range of standard and non-standard varieties spoken in many different countries. This thick book takes 12 areas of the world (e.g. New Zealand, S. Asia, The Pacific). Specialist authors survey the social context in which English is spoken in the area (e.g. 'Social constraints on the phonology of N.Z.'). Case study papers then provide examples of the empirical research into English there (e.g. Maori English). Dense and Scholarly.

The Study of Language by George Yule (1985) CUP. ISBN 0-521-31877-7. An introductory course for the non-specialist reader on the nature of human language. Text divisions are: The origins of language, the development of writing, properties of language, animals and humans, sounds, words and word-formation, grammar, syntax, semantics and pragmatics, discourse analysis, the brain, FLA, SLA, signing, etc. Although reprinted in 1993, the further reading at the end of each chapter has unfortunately not been updated. Still, if you want somewhere to re-find Genie, Washoe, SHRDLU or Sapir-Whorf, this is a lot lighter to hold than an encyclopaedia!

Bibliography of Research in English for Business Communications 1988-92 by Chris Kennedy, Julianna Dudas, and Martin Hewings, Centre for English Language Studies (CELS) University of Birmingham. As part of the development of a Business English computer corpus, the authors have produced a bibliography of 230 theses and research articles in the area of Business English. The bibliography can be obtained for £3 (cheques payable to University of Birmingham) from: Centre for English Language Studies, Westmere, Edgbaston Park Road, University of Birmingham B15 2TT.

English People by Colin Evans (1993) Open University Press ISBN 0-335-09359-0. The author recorded semi-structured interviews with 50 staff and 53 students in University and Polytechnic English departments in the U.K. to build up a picture of the discipine's culture. There are many direct quotations in the book and they cover areas such as why people chose English as a subject, the female/male balance in the job and what forms of teaching and learning there are in English departments.

Adults with learning difficulties by Jeannie Sutcliffe (1990). The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education with the Open University Press ISBN 0-335-09609-3. This handbook is for people working with adults who have learning difficulties or for the adults themselves. 'Learning difficulties' is the term adopted to overcome the stigma attached to the label "mental handicap". The book documents good practice by using case studies as well as prompting

continued

reflections on local situations and possible improvements to them.

Instructed Second Language Acquisition by Rod Ellis (1990) Basil Blackwell. ISBN 0-631-16202-X. The book is aimed at teachers and applied linguists wanting to develop their theoretical understanding of how learners learn a second language in a classroom. It reviews a wide range of research before concluding with a theory of classroom language learning. Perfect for people with no time to read the original research who are looking for swift summations of results.

Teaching monolingual classes by David Atkinson (1993) Longman ISBN 0-582-061105. Another in the slim, practical "keys" series. Written for both teachers who share and don't share the L1 of their monolingual group it covers very useful topics such as World English, percentage use of L1, translation, learner training, and dictionaries. The book is based on the "presentation and practice of grammar and vocabulary" model of teaching. There is a useful chapter on pair and group work although unfortunately it omits discussion of interaction language for students settling into their work.

Language, Minority Education and Gender by David Corson (1993) Multilingual matters. ISBN 0-7744-0406-X. This book examines the taken-for-granted language policies and practices in education oppressing those of little power, namely, women and girls, minority cultural groups and minority social groups. It then presents recommendations for school action. Dense but very readable with a stout bibliography.

Nightshift: ideas and strategies for homework by D. Buckland and M., Short (1993) CILT. ISBN 1-874016-19-4. Positive homework tasks in the four skills for language learners of all ages and abilities. The booklet is written from the point of view of teachers of German, French etc. within modern languages departments in U.K. schools and so mental flexibility is required to adapt the ideas to your own situation.

Partners: a guide to school-based initial teacher training in modern languages by E. Bird et al (1993) CILT. ISBN 1-874016-16-X. Based on U.K. school experience, an interesting look at profiling competence, establishing frameworks for partnership, how trainers can help, the first year of teaching. Case studies used throughout.

CILT publications are available from CILT mail order, P.O. Box 8, Llandygwl, Dyfed, Wales SA44-42B.

Pronunciation in Action by Linda Taylor (1993) Prentice Hall ISBN 0-13-017864-0. The book aims to get wary teachers tackling more 'pron' in classes at the level of individual sound, word stress and intonation. It gathers together many old chestnuts and some new ones. I went to the book to help a one-to-one student with specific pronunciation problems. The book is not good for this kind of look-up situation since the activities are free of content, are not listed according to specific problem areas and some take a fair amount of preparation. However, for reading before you have an urgent problem this is a good resource book!

Life in language immersion classrooms edited by Elizabeth Bernhardt (1992) Multilingual matters. ISBN 1-85359-150-5. The book chronicles a two-year research project involving two immersion schools in the American Midwest, a team of educational researchers and, as funders, the U.S. Dept. of Education. Unusually the book is not about language analysis or about how learners on immersion programmes become fluent. It is about immersion teachers - their training, beliefs, decisions and also about how immersion schools function within a school system.

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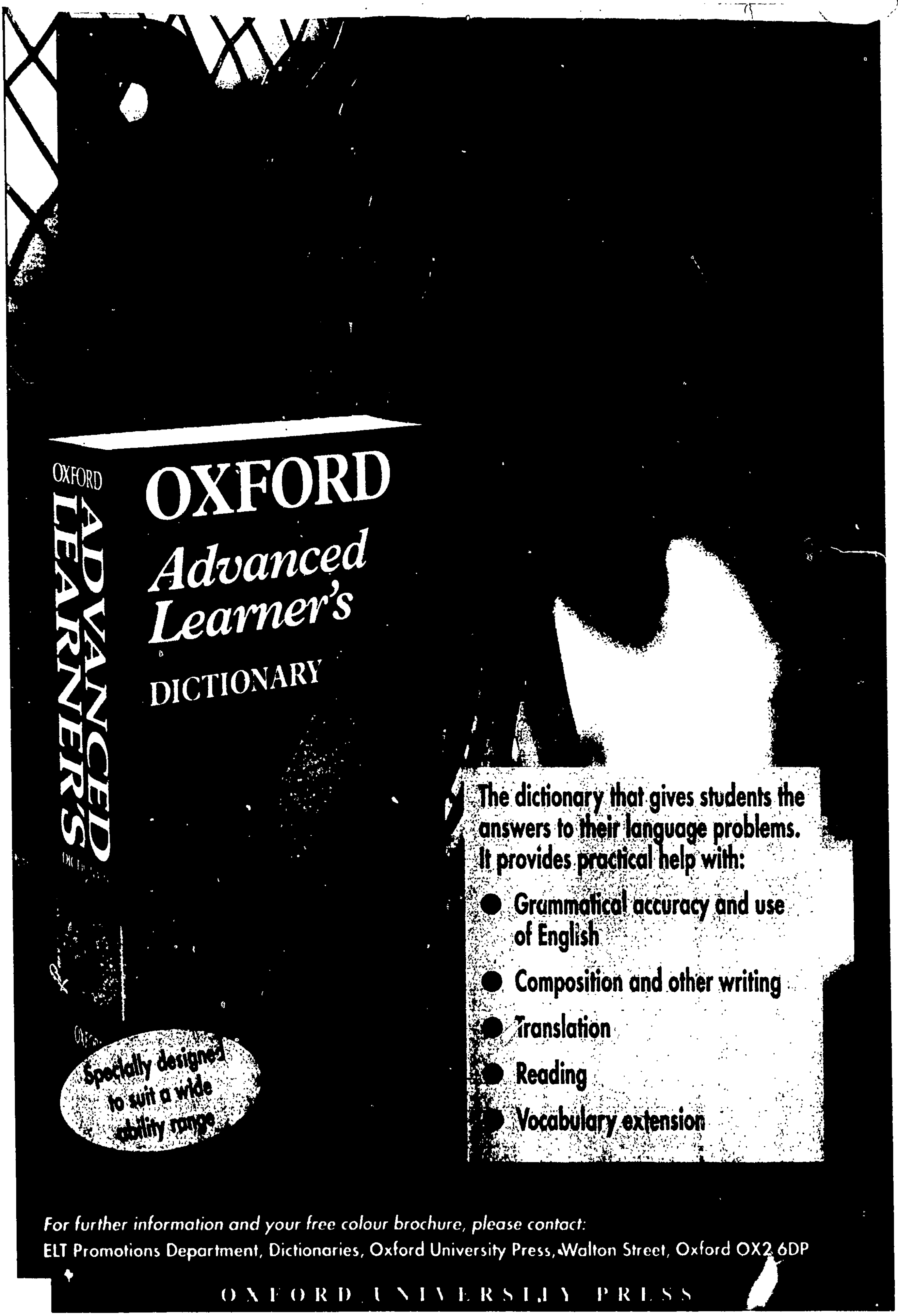
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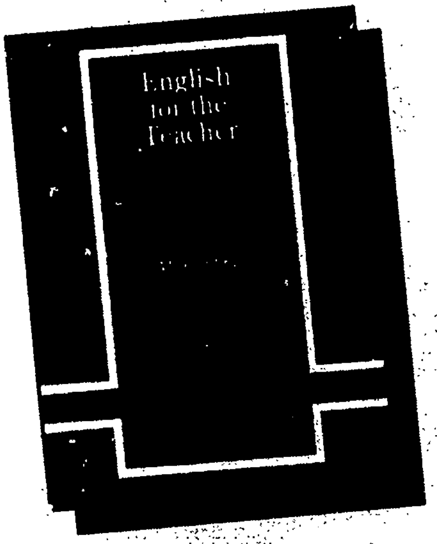

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ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staffroom, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal comes out three times a year and makes use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

Editorial

Dear Reader,

The Teacher Trainer has been running now for eight years. The first priority was to give trainers a place to meet to exchange ideas and information and to put the methodology of teacher training on the map. This process is now well underway. For eight years we've concentrated on our own end of the training process. And we will continue to publish issues with plenty on this. But what of the other side of our professional equation, the trainees? Over the next eight years we would like their voices to join in the discussion. We invite them to articulate what our training courses mean to them. Unlike medical journals which rarely carry articles written by patients, we would like The Teacher Trainer to echo with trainee voices.

Could you and one or more of your trainees come up with your, quite separate, mappings of the same course? Could you offer to write interactive dialogue journals with someone else's trainees? Are you a trainer who is also at times a trainee? It would be great if you could help us fill the journal with voices from different professional perspectives.

As a first taste, there are some trainee voices in my article on the school placement system. A sympathetic trainer asked trainees to discuss their own feelings about having two supervisors (one an academic in college and one a practical school teacher). As the trainees had yet to be given their final grade their anonymity was ensured by using sealed envelopes that came directly to me. Mary Lea and Linden West in this issue are also interested in the adult learner's point of view. They used interviews supplemented by personal journals over an 18 month period to find out what stories adult learners have to tell. Mario Rinvolucri scans a trainer's language to see what attitude it betrays towards teachers in training and is pretty dismayed at the results.

On other matters, at the last major IATEFL conference in Brighton I was lucky enough to be able to share some time with both David Nunan and Deborah Cameron after their presentations and transcriptions of these two short interviews appear in this issue.

On a completely different but very exciting topic is Peter Robinson, a newcomer to our pages, who explains what computers, concordances and corpora are and how they may well completely change the face of EFL teaching!

At the practical, nitty-gritty end of the spectrum this issue are Janet Chadwick on using grids in TT sessions and Natalie Hess on idea files.

Dr. F. Gomes de Matos is back again with another of his exceptionally short but wonderful little gems for trainers. His latest concept is student rights and 'humanisers'.

Phillip Kerr adds a healthy dash of iconoclasm to the mixture with an article that questions the latest fad for "reflecting" on everything.

Tim Murphy continues his mini series on neuro-linguistic programming. This time he writes about our beliefs and the potential we all have for transforming them.

As I put this issue together I felt it was a very interesting one. I hope you'll enjoy it and that you'll consider too how you can help us get more trainee voices in these pages.

Thanks.

Tessa Woodward

Editor

Computers, Corpora and Language Teaching

Some Definitions

Computer

A machine capable of following instructions to alter data in a desirable way and to perform at least some of these operations without human intervention. Its main asset is being able to perform complex tasks on vast amounts of data at great speed.

Corpus (pl. corpora)

A collection of texts (e.g. the complete works of Shakespeare); a body of texts or utterances considered more or less representative of a language, nowadays mainly stored as an electronic database. Words in a corpus can be *tagged*, i.e. by adding identifying and classifying labels to words and other formations, and sentences can be *parsed*, i.e. analysed into their constituent parts (see Appendix, Figure 1 for an example). Much of this work can now be done automatically. Also, spoken corpora can be marked for prosodic features (see Appendix, Figure 2).

Concordance

Traditionally, an alphabetic index of the words contained in a book, such as the Bible or the works of Shakespeare, with a reference to the passage or passages in which each indexed word appears.

Concordance program (concordancer)

A computer program which is applied to a text or corpus to obtain a concordance of its words. In the resulting display or printout, the words of the text are listed alphabetically in the centre of the screen or page, each token of occurrence of a word preceded by and followed by its immediate co-text (see Appendix, Figures 3 and 4 for examples). Concordance programs can, among other things, vary the order of the listing, sort the co-text alphabetically to left and right to show *regularities in context, specify collocations*, show the whole text from which a citation is taken, and provide word lists with their frequency of occurrence.

Background

From about 1960 small groups of linguists and computer scientists became active in using machine-readable corpora for linguistic and literary research. The branch of study dealing with this is called *computational linguistics*, which basically studies and creates formal descriptions of natural language that can be used by a computer to analyse the structure of a language. The main aim of this study has been to devise computer programs to tag and parse machine-readable corpora *automatically*. Once a corpus is fully tagged, text analyser programs, such as a concordancer, are used to analyse it (useful analysis can still be carried out, however, even if the corpus is not fully tagged). *Corpus linguistics* studies the data in such a corpus.

The obvious main application of this is for reference publishing: the Collins Cobuild project is the best-known result, using a corpus of many millions of words stored and tagged in order to produce new dictionaries, grammars, language usage books, and so on.

In the early years, corpus-based research was confined to very few research teams in universities, requiring considerable funding and expensive computer hardware. As personal computers have become faster, cheaper and more powerful in terms of memory, and as large corpora (more than 1 million words, say) have become easier to obtain, more interest is being taken in the application of corpus-based study to language teaching, and indeed this interest is spreading so quickly that language teachers with interest in this field are now finding it difficult to keep up with innovations.

Advantages of Corpus-aided Teaching

A new forum for the exchange of experiences and ideas is TALC (Teaching and Language Corpora), which held its first conference at Lancaster in April 1994.[1] In his introductory talk to the conference, Prof. Geoffrey Leech (Lancaster) discussed the advantages of corpus-aided teaching. Computer corpora tend to promote a learner-centred approach to language learning. In such an approach, the student becomes a *researcher* into language, forming hypotheses and testing them against the authentic data provided by the corpus, and the teacher becomes a *research organiser* (see Johns 1988). The classroom interaction might take this form: Student: 'What does this mean?' Teacher: 'I don't know; let's find out together.' An open-ended and uncensored supply of language data encourages students to explore and discover rules for themselves with the guidance of the teacher. Or, one could employ a deductive approach: the teacher teaches rules which can then be tested and confirmed by the data. Concordanced output can be edited and printed for use as classroom materials (Collins Cobuild have recently published a series of exercise books called *Concordance Samplers*, which use concordanced material for classsroom activities — much more of this kind of material is likely to be published in the future).[2]

The use of corpora enables the learning process to be tailored to the individual's needs and wishes. For example, I recently taught an overseas student taking an MA in Film Studies. Using a corpus of texts taken from the Arts pages of various newspapers, I was able to teach various structures and items of vocabulary in a context which was of immediate relevance to the student.

continued

[1] TALC is in turn an offshoot of ICAME (International Computer Archive of Modern English), an international organisation of linguists and information scientists working with English machine-readable texts. The aim of this organisation, based in Bergen, Norway, is "to collect and distribute information on English language material available for computer processing and on linguistic research completed or in progress on the material, to compile an archive of English text corpora in machine-readable form, and to make material available to research institutions." Conferences have been held annually since 1979.

[2] For further ideas and examples of how to use concordanced material in the classroom, see Tribble & Jones (1990) and Jones (1990).

A major advantage in using concordancers is for the teaching of collocations. A vast number of frequent collocations can be found very quickly by concordancing, which would rarely be found in text books or dictionaries, and many of which would be more frequent in occurrence than the so-called 'main' usages of a word. In my Appendix, Figure 4 shows a very brief sample of a Concordance of the verb 'put' (there were 612 occurrences of the word in a corpus of about 1.7 million words). Note that there are very few occurrences of the word with what might be regarded as the core meaning of the word, the first definition in the dictionaries (LDCE: 'to move, set, place, lay, or fix in, on, or to a stated place'). Instead, there are collocations like 'put a brake on', 'put a brave face on', 'put an end/stop to', twenty-three occurrences of 'put forward', a dozen examples of 'put together', and so on.

Impact of Corpus Analysis on Language Teaching

Some findings from corpus research are likely to have a profound effect on the organisation of language teaching. Firstly, there have been found to be major discrepancies between language as it is found and as it appears in a) grammar text books and b) dictionaries. This implies that the foundations of the grammatical syllabus of English are of questionable value. The research findings of the use of a word such as 'any' or 'as' suggest a different gradation of the word's meanings and a different presentation of its functions. Prof. John Sinclair (Birmingham) at the TALC conference claimed that the number of discrepancies between actual language usage discovered in corpora and usage presented in text books shows that much of our traditional grammatical framework is wrong. As more and more of these discrepancies are found, there is likely to be a revolution in the order and presentation by which language items are taught and definitions are ordered in dictionaries.

As an example of how concordancing might influence language teaching, take the teaching of the word 'any'. 'Any' is usually taught early on in contrast to 'some'. The rule is usually stated as follows: '*Some* is generally used in affirmative sentences, *any* in questions and negations'. Corpus analysis suggests that the most common occurrence of the word *any* is in sentences like 'I thought any fool would know' (over 50% of cases). The question arises: a) are we teaching students items in the wrong order? and b) are we giving them misleading rules? Figures 2 and 3 in the Appendix may provide the reader with a further example, using the word 'as'. 'As' is usually taught first in phrases of comparison, such as: 'it isn't as expensive as a BMW' and then later in connection with teaching of the past continuous, in sentences like 'As I was walking home, I saw an accident.' Again, corpus analysis shows us that sentences of these kinds are less common than other types.

Secondly, corpus analysis shows us how closely lexis interrelates with grammar, how a unit of meaning 'expands' when viewed through a corpus, the point being that a corpus concordance can throw up an 'aura' of meaning possessed by a certain word which might otherwise only be obtained by the teacher's intuition. Individual word meaning becomes less important; what is important is the colouring words take on from the words that accompany them. As an example[3], and one which also shows up discrepancies between dictionary definitions of words and how they are actually used in real life, take the verb 'fondle'. Some dictionary definitions:

- to touch gently and lovingly; stroke softly (LDOCE)
- to touch or stroke lovingly (Oxford American Dictionary)
- to handle tenderly, lovingly or lingeringly (Webster's Ninth)
- to handle with fondness: to caress (Chamber's 20th Century)

Some actual occurrences discovered from a corpus of newspaper articles (*The Independent*):

- [men] tentatively or lasciviously buy underwear for the women in their lives. Here is the chance to fondle expensive basques and bras, stockings and slips in the softest silks.
- celebrating the early raunchy days of jazz it positively blushes with its own daring. Tarts strut their stuff, punters fondle and gloat and everyone does a lot of pumping, grinding, shimmying jazz dance ...
- [Sinead O'Connor] wore a nipple-revealing string vest on stage in Gothenberg and fondled herself on stage, saying afterwards: 'I believe I can do whatever I like with my own body.'
- She alleged she watched from a wall as the couple kissed, embraced and fondled for half an hour in the back of Miss Allan's car.
- London, was ordered to pay a further £200 out of his own pocket after an industrial tribunal heard that he fondled the secretary's breasts.
- Investigations were still under way into events at ...., where at least 26 women were allegedly fondled and even undressed after being forced to run the gauntlet through aviators on the third floor.

I leave it to the reader to decide whether the existing dictionary definitions are particularly helpful for students![4]

---

[3] See also Appendix, Figure 4.

[4] I am indebted to David Minugh (University of Stockholm) for this example.

Obtaining a Corpus

How does one gain access to machine-readable text? One way is to to key it in oneself, i.e. type it into a computer using a keyboard. Obviously this is very time-consuming if one is going to build up a decent-sized corpus, and there are such problems as what kind of texts to select and how big the corpus should be. Electronic scanners are now widely used to read written text directly into a computer. By this method, a large corpus can be built up much more quickly (one book page would take about 30 seconds to be transformed into machine-readable text). If you have access to Internet, you can down-load vast amounts of material (much of it *free*) via electronic mailing lists and newsgroups. You can also down-load ready-made corpora stored in archives such as the Oxford Archive, although access to some of these is restricted and you may have to pay. if you use a word processor regularly you can use your own texts and borrow colleagues' diskettes for material, but remember that machine-readable text must be saved in ASCII form, not as word-processed text. Interest has been shown lately in building up language learners' corpora. As more and more students use word processors for their written work, it becomes relatively easy to construct such corpora. These will make it possible for teachers to see how students' first languages influence their writing in English, what problems they have with certain aspects of English, and so on. Another interesting development is the current interest in *parallel* (or *bilingual*) corpora. Here we have two aligned corpora, one a direct translation of the other. Texts can be obtained from international organisations such as the E.U. A popular source for this kind of corpus research is the Hansard publication of the proceedings of the Canadian Parliament, in English and French. Obviously this has great potential for the teaching of translation.

One major problem for corpus-builders is the spoken language. Authentic spoken material is difficult to obtain, and then of course it has to be transcribed. To retain phonological features such as stress and intonation, it has also to be tagged — altogether a very long business. Another problem is memory space on your computer. One million words of text takes up about 6 Mbytes of memory on your hard disk.

You can buy corpora, on diskette or, increasingly common, on CD (if your computer has a CD-Rom drive fitted). The following well-known corpora (and others) are available from ICAME at Bergen:

Brown Corpus:

500 text samples of some 2,000 words each, representing 15 categories of American English texts printed in 1961. Published in 1964.

Lancaster-Oslo-Bergen Corpus (LOB):

(completed late 1970s) A British counterpart of the Brown Corpus, containing 500 text samples from texts printed in Great Britain in 1961. It exists in a number of versions, with and without word-class tagging.

Lancaster Parsed Corpus:

Syntactically analysed sentences from each text category of the LOB corpus, amounting altogether to over 133,000 words.

continued →

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Articles from daily newspapers, such as the *Guardian*, are also available on CD-Rom. A useful corpus on diskettes is the *MicroConcord Corpus*, available from OUP (2 packages of about a million words each, each costing about £60).

Early corpora were limited in length and 'closed', in the sense that they were finite and fixed the language in time. Since the 1980s there have been two major projects in Britain to construct open-ended corpora of many millions of words. These are:

The Bank of English (Birmingham) (BOE):
Continuing from the Birmingham/Collins Cobuild Project in the 1980s, the BOE has collected by the present time about 250 million words of machine-readable text. It includes many million words of spoken British and American English (mostly taken from radio). About a quarter of the corpus is American English. Most of the corpus has been tagged and parsed. You can consult part of the corpus (about 20 million words, including 2 million transcribed spoken words) and use its associated software Lookup via Telnet, but you have to pay a subscription fee of £500 for 50 hours connect time per annum.

British National Corpus (Oxford):
Ready before the end of 1994, a 100 million word corpus selected from a wide range of written and spoken modern English, fully annotated with word class tags. Its associated software is called Sara. It will include about 7 million transcribed and fully tagged spoken words. I have no information yet about the cost of consulting this corpus, if indeed there is any.

Software

Once you have obtained a corpus, you require computer software to use it. If your corpus is not tagged, the most convenient software to use is a straightforward concordancer. The *Longman Mini Concordancer* is a good start. Although easy to use and reasonably priced (about £80), it is limited by the fact that it cannot handle texts of more than about 50,000 words, nor can it handle texts with foreign accent markings. MicroConcord (OUP) can handle any amount of text (depending only on the size of your hard disk) and can deal with foreign accent markings. It has many useful features and is highly recommended for the general language teacher.

For more detailed corpus analysis, your corpus has to be tagged, as mentioned above. For example, if you want to research into relative clauses, it would not be very helpful to use a simple concordancer to search for the relative pronouns 'who/whom/which/that/whose', because the resulting concordance would throw up thousands of examples of these words used with their other grammatical functions, and also there is no way in which a concordancer could recognise a relative clause in which the pronoun is omitted, unless these clauses have been pre-marked by the researcher. A second problem is lemmatisation: if you are looking at the verb 'be', you want to be able to study it in its various forms ('be/is/are/was/were/being/been'). There is also the problem that English is full of homographs, words spelt the same but with different grammatical functions; it is useful to tag these words with their respective word class symbols.

Although automatic tagging programs have been developed (notably *CLAWS* at Lancaster), they are not easily obtainable and they are not 100% accurate. Manual tagging can be a painfully slow business and you need to adapt your tagging system to the software that you are going to use to process your text. Unfortunately, there is no standardised system for marking texts, and therefore no standard software. The Bank of English and the British National Corpus come with their own software as mentioned above. The ICAME CD-Rom corpora (see above) are tagged in a variety of forms, for use with the American software *Wordcruncher* and the Canadian program *TACT*. The latter program can be obtained free from the University of Toronto by downloading it through the network. Another good commercially available text analyser is *Micro-OCP* (OUP) for use on PCs, costing about £175. Each of these programs require different methods of marking up your text.

The study of the computer applications for the analysis of machine-readable text is an interesting, fruitful and fast-growing field, which is likely to have an ever greater impact on the teaching of language. I hope this article has been a useful introduction to this area of study.

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Appendix

Figure 1

Example of a tagged and parsed corpus. The Susanne Corpus (a sub-set of the Brown corpus) was created by Geoffrey Sampson (Sussex) and has been fully annotated according to the Susanne scheme, which, as Sampson explains, 'attempts to provide a method of representing all aspects of English grammar which are sufficiently definite to be susceptible of formal annotation...'

Space prevents me here from detailing the meaning of all the codes. Suffice it to say that the figures on the left are reference categories pointing to the text where each word occurs. The letters immediately to the left of the word constitute the wordtag field, based on the 'Lancaster' tagset listed in Garside et al. (1987). Thus, JJ means 'general adjective', NN1n is 'singular common noun', CST is 'that as conjunction', etc. To the right of this is the word as it appears in the corpus, followed by its dictionary headword (e.g. 'took' followed by 'take'). The final field contains the parsing element of the corpus: its contents code the grammatical structure of texts as a sequence of labelled trees.

The Susanne Corpus can be down-loaded through the network from the Oxford Archive.

Figure 1

A01:0010b	-	AT	The	the	[O[S[Nns:s.
A01:0010c	-	NP1s	Fulton	Fulton	[Nns.
A01:0010d	-	NNL1cb	County	county	.Nns]
A01:0010e	-	JJ	Grand	grand	.
A01:0010f	-	NN1c	Jury	jury	.Nns:s]
A01:0010g	-	VVDv	said	say	[Vd.Vd]
A01:0010h	-	NPD1	Friday	Friday	[Nns:t.Nns:t]
A01:0010i	-	AT1	an	an	[Fn:o[Ns:s.
A01:0010j	-	NN1n	investigation	investigation	.
A01:0020a	-	IO	of	of	[Po.
A01:0020b	-	NP1t	Atlanta	Atlanta	[Ns[G[Nns.Nns]
A01:0020c	-	GG	+<apos>s	-	.G]
A01:0020d	-	JJ	recent	recent	.
A01:0020e	-	JJ	primary	primary	.
A01:0020f	-	NN1n	election	election	.Ns]Po]Ns:s]
A01:0020g	-	VVDv	produced	produce	[Vd.Vd]
A01:0020h	-	YIL	<ldquo>	-	.
A01:0020i	-	ATn	+no	no	[Ns:o.
A01:0020j	-	NN1u	evidence	evidence	.
A01:0020k	-	YIR	+<rdquo>	-	.
A01:0020m	-	CST	that	that	[Fn.
A01:0030a	-	DDy	any	any	[Np:s.
A01:0030b	-	NN2	irregularities	irregularity	.Np:s]
A01:0030c	-	VVDv	took	take	[Vd.Vd]
A01:0030d	-	NNL1c	place	place	[Ns:o.Ns:o]Fn]Ns:o]Fn:o]S]
A01:0030e	-	YF	+.	-	.O]
A01:0030f	-	YB	<minbrk>	[Oh.Oh]	

Figure 2

Part of a concordance of 'as' in KWIC format (Keyword in Context) from a spoken corpus marked for prosodic features (London-Lund, available from ICAME for use with the software TACT).

Figure 2

(1 1 - A)	he may not . send it . quite	as	soon as ./ | :th/at# | and
(1 1 - A)	into the :diplomatic b\ag# | ^	as	[@:m] - !wh\at's his _name#
(1 1 - A)	*-* | [@:m] ^now it looks	as	if they they both |
(1 1 - B)	^no)) !p=oint# | *((well ^	as	its))* | ^you s=ee# | of
(1 1 - A)	our ex^ternal ex=aminer# . | ^	as	well as our:s/elves of
(1 1 - B)	our 'own !pr\incipal# | ((	as))	he's a ^W\elshman# |
(1 1 - B)	much of a st/atus _post# |	as	to *^justify* !m\oving# |
(1 1 - B)	well ^that's ((a)) p/oint# |	as	^w/ell# | ^y/es# |

continued

Figure 3

Part of a concordance of 'as' from the MicroConcord corpus (OUP). The word 'as' appears once in every 120 words! What seems to be its most common function?

nted <i> toilette </i> scenes as early	as	1889. Nevertheless, an undated oil on
. It now seems incredible that as late	as	1932 a career as a university teacher
and its organization). <p> As recently	as	1955, in a piece called, 'Should You B
hey are [peculiarly] adapted". As late	as	1969 Dr. Benjamin Spock was saying tha
rtly stylistic belief or any form used	as	a signature. <p> Morgan never attempte
le conscience recommend architecture	as	a profession for girls. It takes an ex
d that Morgan did not think of herself	as	a 'woman architect", since she never s
e better of grade of teachers _ which,	as	a whole, shows such broad and enduring
mer hotel. I recall that I designed it	as	a wooden pole structure with a simple
tal problem would be thrown in, such	as	a chapel or a church or a memorial arc
ete buildings. The <i> analytique </i>	as	a teaching device was, at its best, ri
of their position. They did not emerge	as	a group demanding radical changes in h
e us from what they perhaps regarded	as	a too-narrow technical existence in th

Figure 4

From the MicroConcord corpus, a sample of the occurrences of 'put'. Co-text is sorted alphabetically by the first word to the right of the headword. Note the frequency of the collocation 'put an end to'.

f trade Wall Street's rebound helped	put	a floor under price falls. <p> BELGIUM
is a sufficiently good opportunist to	put	a strategic gloss on something he is g
p (Radio 3, Wednesday). This week, he	put	a good case for regarding Alec Douglas
ome. <p> From 1803 until the Institut	put	a stop to it in 1968, the best talents
d if they wished _ only a Kane mutiny	put	a stop to them being marketed as Smash
mongers may not reduce his desire to	put	actual and legal distance between hims
ing business consultancy division has	put	additional strains on Saatchi manageme
ith new newspapers. <p> The aim is to	put	all employees on standard five-day-wee
antinople and, in 733, Charles Martel	put	an end to the Arab advance north of th
ctors _ even if acting humanely _ may	put	an end to the life of a terminally ill
parties on the terms that either may	put	an end to it at any moment at the shor
nd from the public for regulations to	put	an end to the 'individual actions" whi
t on and parted during the war, which	put	an end to the old hierarchic world of
eath, and in some cases his insanity.	put	an end to the agent's authority, thoug

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Would you like to send something in to "The Teacher Trainer"?

"The Teacher Trainer" is designed to be a forum for trainers, teachers and trainees all over the world. If you'd like to send in a letter, a comment, a cartoon, a taped conversation or an article sharing information, ideas or opinions we'll be very happy to receive it. It's easier for us if the written pieces are typed up with double spacing. The style should be simple and readable and the normal length of articles is about 1000 to 2000 words. We can serialise if necessary but this will delay publication considerably!

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Interview

David Nunan is now Director of The English Centre and Professor Applied Linguistics at the University of Hong Kong. After his presentation at the IATEFL Conference in Brighton, he kindly agreed to be interviewed for "The Teacher Trainer".

TW. How do you like your new job?

DN. Well, it's interesting. It's a promotion for me. I worked for five years at Macquairie University in Australia as an Associate Professor. I was the Director of postgraduate programmes in linguistics there. I now have a staff of 40 lecturers and in the next academic year we'll have 2,700 students.

TW Crikey! That sounds like a lot of work!

DN. Yes. It's a big staff and it's great helping them develop into a team. One problem is though that half of them are appointed on a lecturer scale and half of them are on a language instructor scale. The salary's the same but there's a kind of hierarchy even though they do very much the same kind of work. I don't really know what I can do about it but one of the major sources of disaffection is that the lecturing staff get houses. It's the dearest city in the world for housing so if I can't get the status changed, I'm trying to get the conditions changed.

TW. Well, if you're going to be there for a while you should be able to chip away at it...?

DN. Yes, I don't plan to leave in a hurry. I love living in Asia. There's some very interesting research going on. I'm doing some ethnographic studies in work places. We're talking to Hongkong Telecom at the moment about collecting some data.

TW. So, all in all it's been a good move then?

DN. Yes, it has. It's been very stressful. The university administration is very adversarial!

TW. That's probably the British legacy!

DN. Yeah! But the work with the staff is great.

TW. Hmm...Now as you know our journal is especially for teacher trainers so I just wanted to ask you what you see as important issues for teacher trainers.

DN. I think the two big challenges that I confront in "one-off", "stop-start" teacher training are first of all the lack of contact with the realities of the classroom. For example I might be invited to come and do a session on listening comprehension. The teachers may be very involved in issues with the management at the time so the session may not be relevant to their concerns. So one of the things I'm interested in is making sessions more relevant. It's not always easy. The host may ask you to do something he/she thinks the participants ought to have and not what the participants really need.

TW. So the host is sometimes out of touch.

DN. Yeah, and the other problem is the "one-off" nature. They may have something on listening comprehension this term, then something completely different next time. That's why I'm interested in action research since by it's very nature it's continuous, it goes into the medium and long term and it's tied to the interests of the teachers because they're the ones who nominate what they want to work on.

TW. So would you then advocate action research as a replacement for other kinds of in-service training?

DN. I think it augments it because it doesn't matter what you do. You could do a session on listening comprehension. But what I try and do, if possible, beforehand, is think of a listening comprehension task that teachers can do which does or doesn't work well, ask the teachers to teach the task and record it. They bring the recordings along to the workshop and I use them as part of the workshop. We listen to them and brainstorm ideas so that they can go out of the workshop with, say, three things they can apply to their situation. If they can't come up with three then you start to worry about the relevance of what you're doing!

TW. So then you can always add an action research dimension to in-service provision.

DN. Yeah. In Australia I set up action research networks where people worked together. In one instance it was over a three year period. I was the facilitator and I was able to find people within the education system who were interested. That's key! You need people prepared to negotiate with the authorities to give teachers release time.

TW. So you see action research as linking into management?

DN. Definitely. Teachers have to have time to co-observe and come along to workshops.

TW. Do you see any problems in working with teachers

continued

doing action research?

DN. Very often teachers are very interested in doing action research but they're not very sure what it is or how to formulate a research question. The hardest thing is to get them to focus on something that's actually researchable.

TW. Do you have any tips for that?

DN What I do is I have short case studies written up with the question the teacher chose, how she chose to work on it and so on. I've now got hundreds of research questions on different areas written up so I show these. If people are interested in teacher talk or group interaction then I show them all the cases from those areas.

TW. Then people perhaps use the same research questions or change them slightly?

DN.Yeah. that's right.

TW. Does this mean that mostly you've stopped doing other kinds of training with teachers?

DN. Well, the interesting issue here is - what is professional development? A formal input session is only one way of engaging in professional development. There's been a big debate recently in Australia on the quality of university education. Everybody has to nominate how they are going to develop themselves. It's completely tokenistic to say "Well I'm going to go along to some sessions"! I mean what developed me professionally over the last two years is writing a new coursebook. Trying to develop a new approach to texts and textbook writing and making that work. I just learnt so much. Another example is a student who finished her Ph.D recently under my supervision. I encouraged her to take on the supervision of a Ph.D candidate herself! Here's an example of probably the most challenging exciting and demanding teaching you can do and the one thing for which one has absolutely no training! You just have to go through it and do it. That's also professional development.

TW. Right. So just to recap, you feel that professional development can happen in many different ways, not just in-service training sessions and that even in them you can try to build in an action research component?

DN. That's right.

TW. Are there any areas in which you particularly notice teachers needing to develop?

DN. I think a real problem in a lot of places is the lack of linguistic knowledge. Geographically, when working in places like Brazil, the teachers know the grammar far better than a lot of native speakers. Though of course their language skills are not as highly developed. But with native speaking teachers they simply don't know the language system.

TW. Is it the brevity of the training do you think?

DN. Yes. At Macquairie we had two year programmes. The students there get a lot of language. They get pragmatics and systemic functional linguistics. The trouble with that is that it's such a different approach that for people who are not familiar with it, it takes a long time to get the hang of the description.

TW. Mm. But that's interesting. Do you see Pragmatics as the best system of description to begin with?

DN. Well, I believe you ought to start with real language and discourse. You can collect samples of real data, work with contextualised language and go from discourse to grammar rather than from grammar to discourse. Mike McArthur and Ron Carter's new book, "Discourse for Language Teachers" shows how that can be done. Also my own book in the Penguin series on discourse analysis. That's how I go about introducing language too. It's an organic view. it coincides with the data I've collected. For example when a learner masters a particular form say the present simple, and gets to a certain level of accuracy. You think they've acquired the form. Then when they start acquiring another form.

TW. The first one falls out the back of their heads!

DN. Yeah, it just shows that there's an interaction between these different, closely related forms.

TW. Mmm. Interesting! Well, I've kept you long enough David, Thanks!

Psssst! By the way...

If you like Phillip Burrows cartoons in The Teacher Trainer you might like to know that he has co-authored and cartooned, "Boom Boom Loopy and the rainforest remedy" with Mark Foster (The Bodley Head, 1994. ISBN 0-370-31947-8. A very green children's story!

Grids for Recording and Reflecting in Teacher Training Sessions

by Janet Chadwick

This article was written in response to Rod Bolitho and Tony Wright's "Grids as a Reflective Training Tool on Trainer-Training Courses" in the Teacher Trainer Vol. 7 No. 2.

I read this article with interest. Recently I've been trying to do some informal follow-up work at the British Council ELTSUP project in Hungary, to see which ideas and techniques picked up from a teacher training course actually get tried out later in participants' classrooms. I think grids are a useful course record that participants can use to plan classroom work at a later date.

In recent years, working on short intensive Inset courses both abroad and in Britain, I have been getting the feeling that trainers (including myself) tend to concentrate on what goes into input sessions without much thought as to how the participants process, record, remember and adapt session content for their classrooms.

What do participants take home from input sessions, particularly on high-input, high-energy summer intensive courses? In the worst cases they may be left with the memory of one or two activities that they were particularly struck by, some bits of paper with obscure phrases and vocabulary scribbled on them, and the impression of having had a jolly time.

With this in mind, I have recently used a grid whenever I (or the participants themselves) are presenting ideas/techniques. The completed grid provides a structured Record of what has been done, which then provides a basis for Reflection.

The Grid

The example grid in the Grids 7/2 article has seven headings, all of which deal with important aspects. I can't see, however, how this grid can be completed in five minutes, as the writers claim, particularly as the emphasis is on using grids for reflective purposes.

I've tried various grid designs, depending on the focus of the session. In the interests of time and momentum, however, I usually settle for a short basic one, similar to the following:

Fig. 1: Grid

Name of Activity	Aims	Procedure	Comments

Before "gridding"

The first step when introducing the grid is to explain the headings:

Aims These are the teacher's aims and can start with the word "to". For example: "to revise animal vocabulary", or "to encourage cooperation in small groups".

Procedure. What the students do.

Comments. Any immediate points that come to mind and reflections that can be added later, at home.

I often include another heading: Variations. I've found asking participants to think of variations on a demonstrated technique to be a very worth-while training activity as it demands creativity. It does take time, however. So variations, like comments, may often be completed at home, with feedback done in a later session or on a displayed poster.

Having explained the headings, it can be useful to do an example completion together. While doing the example it's also worth revising some note-taking skills such as the use of abbreviations, diagrams, and symbols.

Advantages of using a grid

- It provides a record of what was done in the session.

- It helps participants to focus on the points the trainer wants them to focus on. The mismatch between what is taught and what is learnt is arguably greater in the training room than in the classroom, because of role confusion. In some sessions, while most participants are happy to go through an experiential session via, for example, loop-input, (see Woodward 1988) some lose contact with ground control. This is not to criticise experiential training or loop-input but to remind trainers that participants need time to return to their own role after each activity: "Unless the time is taken and the process made overt, trainees are liable to suffer confusion over who they are supposed to be at any one time" (Woodward 1988:9).

- It makes participants work harder by putting them under a little "positive stress". There is a parallel here with language students doing communicative activities: there may be a positive buzz in the classroom but many of the students are not being stretched (Scott Thornbury at a

continued

recent conference used the car metaphor of "idling"! in this context). The grid can be seen as a check on the participants' thinking: in order to fill in the grid they have to "get themselves into gear".

- It is particularly useful for participants with lower language ability and/or less teaching experience: the gridding time provides an opportunity for clarification with peers.

- It provides variation of focus within a session - a quiet time in contrast with the demonstration or experiential activity.

- Some trainers, like some teachers, tend to fidget while participants are writing. I use the time (after monitoring quickly) to sit down and write as well. I may note down how the activity went and, perhaps, in the light of this reflection, alter aspects of activities planned for later on.

- Knowing that the participants are going to be gridding has a "washback" effect on my planning: I think things through more carefully.

- Participants have commented that the gridding experience (quickly analysing activities in terms of aims and procedure) has a beneficial effect on their lesson planning.

Conclusion

Critics of grids say that using them takes up too much time in a session. But whose time are they referring to? Trainer time, the time needed to "get through" the activities? Or the time needed by participants to absorb, process, and reflect on the activity? A reasonable balance has to be decided on, and then time limits set for gridding. Participants get more efficient with practice, both in terms of quality and quantity of recorded information.

I hope the article on "Grids" in 7/2 along with others (e.g. Process Options Idea 20 in the Teacher Trainer 6/3 and Mugglestone 1979) reflect a growing trend for trainers to take more responsibility for what happens to input after the input session is over.

Reference

Woodward, T. (1988) Loop-Input Pilgrims Publications

Mugglestone, P. (1979) "Mirroring Classroom procedures" in Susan Holden (Ed) *Teacher Training* M.E.P.

Rinvolucri, M. (1992) "Things to do after TT input" in *The Teacher Trainer* Vol 6, No.3

Using An Idea File on Teacher Training Courses

by Natalie Hess

Everything Begins With an Idea

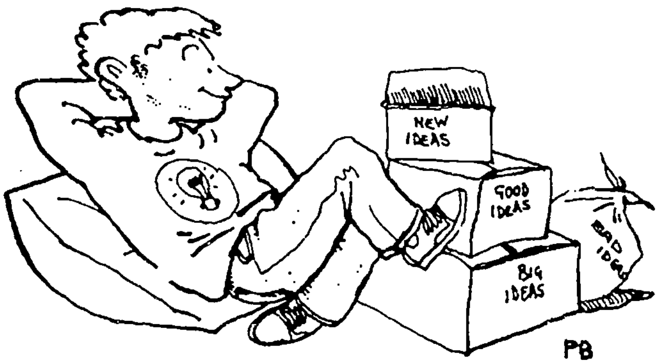
In a typical teacher training seminar trainees are bombarded with teaching ideas. Some of these are carefully tried out in workshop style. Other ideas may have been read about, brought in by the trainer, suggested by seminar participants, gleaned from books or presented by guest speakers. Trainees who are already engaged in classroom work tend to take some of these in-training experiences straight to their classes. They are then able to return with an evaluation of how an idea evolved into a real classroom experience. Trainees often return from such classroom try-outs with a much better feel for the idea. They realise that seemingly small insignificant details can make or break classroom strategies. How much time one gives a phase of an activity, whether reading is done silently or aloud, whether a discussion is held in small groups or thrown open to plenary - all these create significant differences in the process of a technique.

Trainees who have no access to classroom practice frequently voice frustration. They rightly feel that they are likely to forget some of the very best teaching ideas that they encounter in their training course before they as teachers go into the classroom where the ideas can be put to work. Other trainees who do have access to the classroom while undergoing training, nevertheless complain that although the ideas presented to them in class seem relevant and interesting, they are not quite right for the particular group they are teaching right then. "If I ever get a beginners' class, I'll certainly use that one," they say or "I really hope I remember that one if I ever teach a writing class or a group of really advanced students".

As a trainer, I have found that keeping an idea file during the training session helps to prevent classroom strategies from atrophying or losing intensity. Although I don't ever grade the idea file, I make it a requirement of the course and failure to produce one brings a mark of "incomplete" in my methodology related classes at the University of Arizona. I find the concept of an idea file worth sharing because so many trainees have expressed appreciation over the years for this one course requirement that they continued to expand upon and use throughout their teaching lives.

What Is an Idea File?

Because I personally have found the idea file such a useful device for my own teaching and training life, I feel justified in making the idea file a requirement for my trainees.



An idea file is a written record of possible classroom strategies, together with summaries of useful readings. These are arranged in a retrievable fashion, comprehensible both to the person who has worked on the file and to others who might want to use it.

I keep my own idea file on 5" by 8" index cards that I arrange alphabetically according to a key word written in the left hand corner of the card. When I attend conferences or workshops, I take with me a spiral wire-index notebook. Since such notebooks are made up of 5" by 8" cards that can later be detached and filed, it is easy for me at the conclusion of a conference to look through the cards and decide which ones are worth keeping. I may slightly alter those cards I keep by supplying them with a key word, perhaps stapling some together. I then file them away for future use. The file has been invaluable to me when I have suddenly been called in to do a vocabulary workshop, a session on materials development, a seminar on extensive reading, or a class on how best to teach ESP. It is a great comfort to know that somewhere in that file there must by now be at least twenty good ideas on just about everything I might ever be called on to do. I do not ask my trainees to produce a card file. They may use any system they like provided they know how to retrieve their ideas. Some trainees choose to keep loose leaf folders in which plastic envelopes hold both explanatory material and possible hand outs. Other trainees prefer to keep their file on disk arranged according to subject matter headings. I want trainees to use the format most useful to them. I have, however, added the condition that the file should also be comprehensible to other people.

The act of writing is an act of communication. We always write to an audience. People who keep diaries, ostensibly just for themselves, often envision, for example, an imaginary grand-child reading these very personal musings. They are, of course, also writing to a future and other self. So is the person who is writing a "don't forget" note to him/her self. The composer of an idea file is recording ideas for her/him self as a future teacher. The trainee doing this will often use a personal shorthand which may not be comprehensible in a few years time. Because things seem so perfectly clear at the time of recording, the writer may well omit some seemingly small, but very significant steps. This is why I insist that each idea file should be understood by others who see if they can follow the ideas recorded in the file.

Steps in the Creation of an Idea File

In one of the early training sessions on my course we talk about where ideas come from. Trainees individually compose a list, then share their lists in small groups. and lastly compose a class list.

The list may look something like this:

My best ideas come:
when I take a shower
when I'm riding on my bike
when I jog
from books
from observing teachers
from talking to teachers
from movies
from watching television
from my family
from this class
from my friends
from my dreams

Next we talk about what one does with an idea that suddenly pops up. Some trainees have said that they keep a note-book and pencil next to their bed to write down an idea that comes to them in the middle of the night. We brainstorm various ways in which ideas can be collected, for easy retrieval.

At this point I hand out a list of the teaching strategies we have practised so far in the course. In small groups trainees then review the basic steps of each technique and each trainee chooses the strategy he/she personally finds most useful.

Each trainee then composes an idea file entry for this strategy. I collect the entries and pass them out to other students whose job it is to offer helpful comments and/or suggestions for improvement. Each trainee reads and comments on several entries. A general group discussion concludes such a session. As a homework assignment trainees bring in an idea file entry gathered outside class and in the following session we repeat the commenting procedure.

On the day when the idea files are due, we spread out the final products on a table. Trainees browse through each others' work. They take notes on ideas from files that they would like to have and then meet with the creators of these concepts for questions or clarification.

Among the ideas are also summaries of readings that trainees have found useful and feel that they might want to look at again during their teaching lives. These readings may be related to either teaching strategies or to theoretical issues. I have added this component because I have personally often felt frustrated because I could not remember where I had read something that I wanted to refer to again. It is also important to ask trainees to acknowledge the source of each idea. Such acknowledgement is a healthy habit for future academic life and a custom that will give these future teachers a sense of professional belonging and professional pride.

Reflections on the "school placement" model of initial teacher training

by Tessa Woodward

Background Description

Through meeting Austrian teachers and trainers, I have had the chance to learn about a system of teacher training that is common in Austria and throughout the world, namely the college-based, school-placement system. The particular form that it takes in Austria is this...

People wishing to become teachers at primary and some secondary schools attend a three year training course at a teacher training college. They are taught there by educational theorists. Connected to the college is a "lab-school". This is where real classes are taught. Some of the school teachers at the lab-school also lecture at the college.

In their first year the student teachers (STs) watch classes taught by class teachers (CTs) at the lab-school for several weeks as well as attending lectures at the college. Later in the year the STs teach a short (10-15 minute) slot, building up to taking one full lesson a week per subject. Another ST will be in class watching the other teach. The class will have been jointly planned by the ST and the CT. The CT is always in the class too, watching. Sometimes a lecturer (L) from the college will be there too. The college provides an observation sheet but does not insist that it is used!

Feedback on the STs teaching is immediately after the lesson and consists of an informal chat. No files are kept. The only paperwork is the lesson plan and that is kept by the STs. Occasionally the STs work is videoed. Grades are given at the end of each term for the practical work. In the third year there is a 5 week block 'practicum', often in a rural school.

As in many other countries including Britain neither the college lecturers nor the class teachers are specifically trained to be teacher trainers, although they will of course have academic and teaching qualifications. They have simply emerged naturally from the teaching community according to the extent of their ability, time, energy, ambition and so forth.

From fairly long discussions with Austrian teacher training college lecturers, class teachers and student teachers and from reading (see references) some points of interest and concern become apparent.

Points Emerging

1. Naming

a) the student teachers can be variously called interns, trainees, students, clients, apprentices, learner teachers or student teachers.

b) the class teachers can be called co-operating teachers, sponsor teachers, partner teachers, mentors, coaches, host teachers, teacher tutors, master teachers or school associates.

c) the college lecturers can be called tutors or supervisors.

Each of these names brings with it different associations as to role, hierarchy and attitude. Different ones appeal to different people and so a discussion of "names" can open up fixed perceptions of oneself and others (see ref.1).

2. Aims

If separate groups of a) b) c) above are formed and invited to list aims for the practicum or teaching practice element of a course there are likely to be areas of both similarity and difference.

Some example aims I have come across are:

"To ensure that the theoretical base the STs have received at the college is carried into the classroom" (L)

"To show the STs what real life is all about" (CT)

"To be a good teacher and to be liked by the children" (ST)

"To attract the children's attention" (ST)

It is obvious that three different people with different titles, roles and positions in a perceived hierarchy will have different aims. It could hardly be otherwise. However, it would seem a wise course to allow time for the three separate groups to discuss their aims separately and then at least to pass on their lists to each other, if not to discuss them face to face, so that all concerned are aware of their own aims and those of the other two parties in the relationship.

3. Discussing literature on the supervisory triad

If after a discussion of names and aims some gaps or cracks or dissonances between the three begin to appear, it could be worthwhile to retire to the literature to discover what other people consider are a) the advantages and disadvantages of this triad model, b) the main concerns of the triad (L, CT, ST) c) the major influences on the student teacher. An article which I have found particularly helpful is Boyden, 1986 (see ref.2).

4. Supervisory cycle and style (see ref.3).

If we take as a possible supervisory cycle:

Teaching and observation

Reflection by teacher and observing

Feedback session

Reflection and planning

Obviously then, there are many tasks to be carried out at each stage and many ways in which these tasks can be carried out by all the parties concerned. Feedback, for example, can be immediate or delayed, can be based on observation charts and diagrams filled in by peer observers during the lesson or can be lead by the person who taught, asking questions of the observers (see ref.4).

The choice of task, the way in which the task is carried out, and the choice and order of the steps in the basic supervisory cycle can, however, vary widely from triad to triad, and more importantly from person to person within a supervisory triad. Problems arise for student teachers if supervisory aims, styles and content vary significantly from class teacher to class teacher and from college lecturer to class teacher.

"There is an enormous discrepancy between what was recommended to me by my lecturer and what was expected by my mentor (CT). There are just a few cases when they agree".

"The relationship between mentor (CT) and lecturer is in general a good one but from time to time a contradictory one. Sometimes the student teacher can't satisfy both of them. We try to fulfil all wishes though this is a circumstance too difficult to manage".

"Very often they have different opinions so it is rather difficult to fulfil their aims". There is trouble for the student teacher too when the CTs change.

"A lesson which was OK last semester won't be accepted this semester".

(Verbatim quotes from student teachers).

I am not suggesting that a seamless wall-to-wall carpet of aims, methods and content be installed, even if it were possible. But it does seem that at the very least a) two sides of the triad need to get together to discuss the similarities and differences in their ideas and b) a working philosophy be applied that allows for choice between options, differences of style and for "many right ways". Otherwise we will get what we deserve in the way of ST work.

"I try to prepare lessons to please the CTs and the lecturers. This is sometimes very hard because they have different opinions and do not co-operate".

"I've given up preparing lessons which from my personal point of view appealed to me and the pupils. My lessons now are made first for the CT and then for the L. The authority is on their side. I don't complain about this situation anymore. I just assimilate it.

Conclusions

The school-placement system has many positive aspects. A healthy allowance of time is given to real teaching and this teaching takes place in real classrooms. Nevertheless, institutions in many different countries are struggling to improve their systems of school placement for student teachers (see ref.5 for examples). Improvements include re-naming the individuals in the triad, discussing and negotiating aims, giving time for training, discussion and reading for those involved, hammering out new supervisory styles and cycles, restructuring the shapes and times of practicum weeks and the location of "theoretical" weeks, setting up new profiling systems of assessment and doing follow-up studies into the first and second years of "real teaching". If you are improving on a practical element in the training of modern language teachers and would like to share some thoughts on courses, problems and solutions or some useful reading references with other readers, please write in.

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Current Research

The Adult Learner and Self-Narrative in the Management of Personal Change

by Mary Lea and Linden West

Introduction

This article derives from an in-depth, autobiographical study of mature student motivation. It challenges some existing assumptions about why adults enter and continue in higher education and, in the process, raises a number of basic questions about the nature of higher education and its current direction.

Motivational Research and Our Study

Research into adult student motivation suggests that factors of a goal oriented/vocational nature may be most significant in the decisions of mature people to pursue higher education or certificated forms of continuing education (Woodley et al, 1987, see McGivney, 1990 for a summary of the evidence). While such studies also indicate the importance of more personal factors these remain largely unexplored (ibid). This may be unsurprising given a reliance on quantitative, survey methods and, arguably, a simplistic use of highly problematic categories in factor analysis (for example, distinguishing 'personal' from 'vocational').

Motivational research may also be ensnared in wider ideological disputes about what leads people to learn. A growing body of U.K. government-sponsored research appears to suggest highly individualistic, vocational or business reasons for participation (see, for example, Maguire, Maguire and Felstead. 1994 and Department of Employment, 1993). There is, perhaps, a suspicious correspondence between these conclusions and dominant ideologies: the research helps sustain a story about people pursuing education and occupational goals for material self-advancement.

The fact that some individuals may rationalise their actions in vocational or business terms may be a poignant example of what Foucault* terms 'regimes of truth' legitimating what can most appropriately be said. It may feel more acceptable, to self and others, to rationalise actions in socially acceptable ways.

Researchers such as Courtney (1992) have gone some way to challenging what may be an ontological as well as a methodological poverty. He suggests that mature students use higher education as a response to change and can be engaged, no less, in a struggle to reconstruct themselves. He considers cultural, contextual factors, such as a supportive environment and relationships, as important in facilitating participation and change. But Courtney, while acknowledging the centrality of change and remaking of self, fails to develop his ideas in any sustained way.

We wanted therefore to explore motivation and changing selves more deeply and chose to do so by examining participation in the context of whole life histories. We have been conducting up to six interviews, supplemented by personal journals, with thirty students over a period of eighteen months. The intention was to create a relaxed, empathic, open reflexive and empowering research in which students were able to explore their autobiography and the place of higher education within it.

Students were chosen from a variety of backgrounds in terms of age, class, gender and ethnicity. The first interviews took place whilst students were involved in an Access course (a nationally validated course designed to prepare them for university). Subsequently, most students have been interviewed in their first year of higher education. We are using an inter-disciplinary analysis, culling from sociology, feminism, psychology, psychoanalysis, critical linguistics and cultural theory, to interpret the stories being told.

On narrative, stated reasons, change and transition

It may be important at this juncture to explain what we consider to be the relationship between language, identity and personal history. Self-narratives are, in our view, not simply descriptions of life experiences; as narratives they can be considered to be rather more than passive conveyers of experience. Rather the stories we tell give meaning to events. As the self is re-evaluated and made anew, the nature of personal narrative, and the interpretation of self and history within it, change accordingly. A changing story is the prerequisite of a changing self.

Kerby (1991), among others, focuses on the crucial importance of language as constitutive of the self, and talks of narratives as a primary embodiment of our understanding of the world and ultimately ourselves. Similarly Giddens (1990), from a sociological viewpoint, argues that a person's identity is not found in behaviour per se but in the narratives surrounding it. Survival and well-being depend on what he terms the reflexive project of the self which consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives.

Our research confirms how stories both provide coherence and are revised as confidence and reflexivity develop, as a sense of identity as learner and individual with a voice and view, grows. Initial reasons for participation give way to an examination of other, perhaps submerged, aspects of personal history. At first, most, if not all, students gave occupational reasons for their decisions and tended to discount other factors. Yet as they reflected on what becoming a teacher or a solicitor might represent, other personal and historical factors surfaced.

*For a brief outline of Foucault's ideas see Studies in the Education of Adults, April 1994, Vol 26/1. Articles by Edwards, R & Usher, R. on Competency. National Institute of Adult Continuing Education

The notion of becoming a solicitor in the case of one working class woman graphically illustrates the point. She expressed a need, as she put it in her third interview, to 'get inside, to understand how the law works cause I felt bewildered as a 13 year old when my parents were getting divorced. No one consulted me, explained anything to me. I was left to muddle through'. She reflected on the themes of power and powerlessness and the way her childhood distress went unacknowledged and was never subsequently resolved.

In a way becoming a solicitor was a means to make herself heard, to empower, to take control of situations rather than having them control her. As interviews unfolded, other students would describe how thinking of motivation created links between temporally distant events, present and past pain: how feelings of failure, frustration, resentment and inadequacy, including from earliest childhood, could surface in the here and now to fuel or constrain current actions.

The reasons for higher education often lay in changing circumstances, perhaps of a painful kind, which connected with old wounds. The immediate pain might be the result of redundancy, children leaving home, depression or a disintegrating relationship (sometimes many of these combined). However, as experiences disrupted the normal rhythms of getting through the day, of coping, basic questions emerged about past and present lifestyles, values, personal histories and possible futures. Memories, and the strong feelings often associated with them seeped through the fragments.

Changes in marital and family relationships, divorce, children growing up - came high on the list for many of the women, while redundancy or illness were significant for the men although changes in relationships were important here too. People would recall bouts of depression (the incidence of depression was very high in our sample), of dissatisfaction and confusion, of barely holding things together over a number of years. For many, the depression and emptiness were rooted in childhood: connected to parental divorce, a father or mother leaving home or lack of empathic relationships more generally which left them insecure and unvalued at the core.

As they decided to rethink what they were doing, through necessity of choice, and turned to higher education to assist in the process, they began to discover, sometimes slowly and painfully, feelings of greater personal legitimacy: that they had a right to do things for themselves. However, this was often infused with guilt and anxiety echoing processes of change and conscientization described in the women's movement (see McLaren, 1985). Breaking a silence brings mixed emotions. There may, for example, be great pain, as Miller and others have noted, in revisiting and reinterpreting childhood with its repressed feelings and traumas, as well as potential for liberation (Miller, 1993).

Revising self-narratives is also a way of managing transition and giving it meaning. While the latter may be illusive, a confidence to tell new stories appears a profoundly necessary part of reconstituting the self. It is interesting that the students remarked how the research process played an important role in bringing things together, of

creating meaning and unity across time (see Lloyd, 1993 on the unifying, integrative role of narrative).

Managing change and revising narrative, as the students saw it, often relied on the support and advice of significant others such as friends some of whom had themselves taken the step into higher education. At the same time some learners were resentful at the lack of support from close family or friends. In such circumstances they talked of forging a new identity regardless of the resistance they were meeting from partners, workmates or lovers. Whereas they might previously have been willing to sublimate their own selves to the demands of others the experience of the course increased resistance to carrying on as before.

The sociological concept of 'marginality' may be helpful in explaining such processes. As change unfolds, as a different narrative is formulated, as people begin to feel estranged from some of the people around them - at work, home or within their community - they can be said to become marginal within these groups. They may begin to look elsewhere, to other groups such as those in higher education. It is significant that many, if not all, in our sample had known some educational success, albeit rudely interrupted, first time round. Education represented a potentially sympathetic space in which to rebuild (see Hopper and Osborn, 1975).

However, the question remains as to why many individuals are willing to risk the security and stability of relationships, of old affiliations, of an existing job at times of economic uncertainty, to enter higher education. Part of the answer seems to lie in persistent and growing feelings of incompleteness, emptiness, lack of freedom, the absence of a healthy distinct identity which can no longer be tolerated. Most talked of the importance of being 'me': of being more authentic and whole. The answer might also lie in what higher education itself might symbolise: a potentially stable monolith, a source of support, meaning and renewal, at times of kaleidoscopic change and uncertainty.

A Case Study

It may be useful to illustrate some of these themes in a case study. The example is of a working class man in his late 30s. It illustrates how themes such as identity crisis, sublimation of self to others, and the struggle for a more authentic voice apply in this situation as well as in the more widely documented histories of middle aged, middle class, female returners.

continued

In the first interview 'Jim' talked about his ambitions, the impact of redundancy and the Access course on his life. Other themes were also mentioned but not developed, not the least with his father:

> *...I started off as a boiler maker in the Dockyard. Progressed to become on the administration side...Was just beginning to find my ladders to climb up...and the Dockyard was closed. (Then it was) office furniture, the main company sold it off to the managers...which resulted in me getting made redundant again...I think it comes down to my father, it is all you know, get an apprenticeship, get into engineering and it is a job for life which was true in 1970-odd when I started...I had been guided in the wrong direction. At the age of 14, 15. probably from my father's side, probably out of trying to do the best for his children.*

How does he feel about what you are doing now?

> *I'm not sure if he actually understands it. I think it is like the generation gap. I have tried to explain to him what I am doing. I'm not sure he understands...In our close circles, we don't realise what is going on.*

The narrative moves on and indicates the impact of the course and College on his life as well as the importance of other students in changing stories and identity:

> *I've enjoyed it. I really feel I have gained an awful lot from this...I actually miss the tutorials here. I find them interesting, stimulating, which is something - I don't think I have ever experienced that before, even at work, you know, when you had time off work, you loved your time off. But away from this college, I actually - I miss it.*

The narrative moved in a later interview to more explicit comments on early relationships on forging what he feels was a false identity. His lack of confident self regard is partly, as he interprets it, a matter of class, but also of emotional distance between himself and his parents, most of all his father:

> *I am not trying to alienate myself from any class, I'm trying to just be me, maybe and it is very hard. My parents probably still see me as I was when I lived with them. They don't see me as I am now...I would like to be free. There is a feeling I would like to be free and being able to say what you would like and being able to back it up as well...Whereas in a work place, you don't get anything like that. You have to conform to the norm really...No, I don't think he (the father) really understands what I am doing... I can talk to him. It is just I am not sure how much of it actually goes in...it hurts you when people are not interested in what you think.*

'Jim', in our view, would not have talked like this in one interview alone. He needed time to feel confident and assured in the process. The rich narrative which results points to a number of interrelated psycho-cultural factors underlying his motivation: the absence of empathic relationships in childhood and beyond and the implications of this for his feelings about himself; the need for agency - the experience of control, of authorship in his life; a necessity perhaps for differentiation - a belief in one's distinctiveness as a person (see Mollon, 1993). Jim's narrative also reminds us of the harsh material realities underlying alienation including the disabling regimentation of the dockyard.

If the overall thread of our paper is correct, students may look to the academy to make sense of a range of existential and experiential questions. The extent to which higher education, as presently constituted, is however able to respond to the challenge is another matter. Students talk of their subjects - law, psychology, teacher education., politics and sociology - helping but by the fourth and fifth interview Jim and others had become perplexed at the way in which aspects of the course did not fit together; about changed attendance requirements and students not being consulted. The struggle to rebuild could, as another student put it, be placed in limbo by the sense of uncertainty and fragmentation within higher education. Perhaps the fragmentation of the curriculum, including modularity, alongside worsening staff-student ratios and the difficulties of getting to know the tutors, may add notes of disappointment to the stories to be told.

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Mary Lea and Linden West are based at the University of Kent, Department of Continuing Education. Their research project, funded by the Higher Education Funding Council runs for two years and is called "Access Student Motivation".

Language Awareness and Professional Hierarchy

Mario Rinvolucri, Pilgrims, Cambridge Academy and Seal

How do different sub-groups within the EFL community feel about other sub-groups? How do editors feel about authors, and authors about editors? How do trainees feel about the experienced teachers they are assigned to on teaching practice in schools and how do these teachers feel about both the trainees and the university based tutors?

During a lecture by a person speaking about grammar at an applied linguistics conference, I decided to enhance the interest of the contents by taking detailed notes of the speaker's language. After 5 minutes general observation of the lecturer's speech patterns I decided to zoom in on the way she referred to language teachers. The quotes that follow tell their own story:

- when I talk to classroom teachers...
- I don't mean you (the people in the lecture theatre), I mean ordinary classroom teachers...
- they (teachers) seem to believe grammar rules...
- I can remember once supervising a teacher...
- it is important for teachers to realise...
- the books used by teachers to broaden their knowledge
- a lot of teachers want grammar books to be simple arranged..
- I think a lot of them are not the least bit analytical though it is desirable that they should be...
- finding the meaning in structure does not particularly bother most teachers...
- basically they don't expect to find meaning in grammar, they want rules and exercises...
- a lot of teachers find Leech and Svartvik very difficult...

I find this portrait of the language teacher extraordinary. The lecturer was talking about the central professional figure in language learning, the figure to whom all others are subsidiary, be they lexicographers, language lab designers, teacher trainers or applied linguists. The distancing and disrespect is manifest in utterance after utterance and it is a sad state of mind in a person concerned with helping the front line professionals do their job better.

The mental world of this lecturer seems to me to be a hierarchical one in which she sees herself and her audience as peers, while "classroom teachers" are a rung or two down the ladder. A mind set of this sort is particularly insidious if the person concerned is unaware of it. It makes it hard for such a person to harmoniously serve the people to whom her linguistics are applied: classroom teachers and learners.

What do we know of the attitudes the trainees have towards us trainers? What are their various pictures, pecking orders, projections and feelings? Are there ways to find out, to bring some of this into the open? Our power relationship with trainees in many training situations makes it vital to have some idea of how they see us.

And what of my attitudes to them? What can I learn from my own speech in staffroom conversations about the trainees? To find out I can ask a colleague to unobtrusively monitor my speech over a given short period. Her notes may surprise me. I belong to the same hierarchical framework as the lecturer quoted above, and however much I think I dislike it, I draw safety and reassurance from it. What is the tone of voice in which I use the word "they" of my trainees?

! WANTED!

What? The voices and opinions of teachers in training

Where? In the pages of The Teacher Trainer

When? As soon as posible

Please see the editorial (p2) for details.
Thanks

Training Teachers in the Use of Humanisers

by Dr. Francisco Gomes de Matos

Notable advances have taken place in Teacher Training since the early 80s, particularly in the area of Learner Training. However, despite claims to sustained humanistic approaches, the fact is that a probing of a truly humanising language teaching-and-learning process is still to be systematically conducted. A case is thus made for the use of a new macro-concept namely, "humanisers", in teacher training and preparation programs all over the wo·ld. Subsumed by that concept are the interrelated concepts of language learners rights, communicative peace and a pedagogy of positiveness.

The first category of humaniser, language learners rights, is an elaboration of the universal concept of human rights (see below for an illustrative checklist*). The point being stressed here is that analysis of learners' needs, interests, cognitive strategies, personality factors are all necessary but insufficient conditions for language teaching to be human-rights-focused. Needed even more is a consideration and implementation of learners' rights (integrated with the corresponding responsibilities of learners).

The second type of humaniser, communicative peace, is the outcome of probing the communicative paradigm, more specifically the key-concept of communicative competence as proposed by the American anthropologist linguist Dell Hymes in the early 70s. By communicative peace is meant the ability to use the language (second, foreign, first, etc.) for interpersonal and inter group harmony, solidarity, friendship. Strategies for enhancing communicative peace in the language classroom range from how to interact constructively to how to read texts positively.

The third type of humaniser, a pedagogy of positiveness, results from the integration of categories one and two. It is a system of human learning and teaching centred on the acknowledgement and implementation of language learners' (and teachers') linguistic, cultural, pedagogical rights, as well as on humanising the learning process through a positive, constructive human-dignifying experiencing of language teaching. To learn a language well is to learn it for one's well being and for the growth of a friendly global community.

*Learners' Rights: A checklist for Foreign-language Teachers of Adults.

Since the matter of learners' rights is particularly relevant to the teaching of adult students, an illustrative list is presented below, in the hope that it can be expanded and improved upon so as to reflect local, specific conditions. No order of importance is intended and there may be partial overlap of specific rights mentioned. The set is but a point of departure for each school to challenge its teaching staff and student body - the latter at least at the teenage level - to formulate a Chart of Teachers' and Learners' Rights. Such a co-operatively constructed document will certainly pay off with many positive dividends!

Do my adult learners have the right to

1. Have an adult professional as their teacher? How age-related are learners and teacher?
2. Have classmates of a similar age range? How age-appropriate is the classroom?
3. Use their native language when communication in English proves to be too difficult or impossible?
4. Do exercises at a pace which is appropriate for the age of the learners?
5. Have their errors (in pronunciation, in usage) treated judiciously, with a high degree of empathy?
6. Be given explicit explanations concerning the organisation and uses of the English language? Adults often ask for such "grammar rules", thus challenging teachers' competence as explainers;
7. Be provided with truly relevant, contextualised examples, especially as related to their professional or educational experience? How relevant is vocabulary-learning to adult learners' professional interests and needs?
8. Resort to more than one sense modality when engaging in classroom activities; for example, to listen and to look at the printed text during (live) presentation by the teacher? The era of "listen" with books closed is not yet entirely over, especially as regards language learning by adults. This should be seriously considered in teacher-training seminars;
9. Use monolingual or bilingual dictionaries while doing written work or taking a written exam?
10. Contribute to classmates' repertoire of learning strategies by letting others know about the kinds of operations which have served students well and which could be shared by their peers in class?
11. Be evaluated variously, that is, by the teacher, by their peers and by themselves?
12. Negotiate learning strategies which seem to be more appropriate to learners' cognitive structures?
13. Remain silent and opt for written communication instead, during an activity?

Reactions and proposals should be sent to Professor Dr. Francisco Gomes de Matos, Department of Letters Federal University of Perambuco Recife 50 739, Brazil. (Fax No. 55-081-2718300).

(The checklist is reprinted with thanks from FIPLV World News No.29, C/O IFS Phillipps University, Marburg, Germany).

Initial Reflections

by Philip Kerr

Every so often an idea comes along that acquires respectability and becomes part of ELT orthodoxy. One such idea is that which is often referred to as 'reflective practice'. The preponderance of articles on the subject in journals such as this or 'ELTJ' indicates its current importance. Scott Thornbury (1992) suggests that the term 'reflection' "has implanted itself firmly in the discourse of EFL teacher education" (p.9). As if to bear this out, another writer in the same periodical (Smith, 1992) states that "reflective teaching is an essential trait to be developed [...] in future or practising teachers" (p.6).

Thornbury's article discusses the ambiguity of the term 'reflection' and he points out that it has witnessed a steady accretion of meanings. Whilst different models of 'reflective practice' exist and different ways of becoming a 'reflective practitioner' are suggested in the burgeoning literature, there does seem to be general agreement that, whatever it is, it is probably a good thing.

However, in my own work as a trainer of pre-service teachers in the context of the RSA/UCLES CTEFLA scheme (a course which is usually run as a fast, intensive, four-week cram), I have recently begun to question the relevance of the idea of 'reflection'. The ideas which follow reflect my, as yet unresolved, misgivings about the blanket application of a 'reflective' model.

I was more than a little relieved to discover that like me, Judith Kennedy (1993) had found that her trainees were more or less "universal in their dislike of [diaries, teaching logs, etc.] seeing them as yet another thing to be 'done'" (p.160). It was not that they did not want to reflect on what they were doing, but simply that they were not interested in the structured way that I had set up for them to do so. This structure was intended to guide their thinking, to give it shape and to enhance the quality of their reflection. Obliged to play my game, they attempted to guess my rules and a culture of 'self-denigration' (p.161) was a not infrequent result. In this way, one of the main tools of a 'reflective' approach that I had at my disposal often encouraged the opposite of what I wanted it to achieve.

I began to delve a little more into the literature of non-EFL teacher training. Kennedy's observation (p.164) that the divergent agendas of trainers and trainees caused problems on pre-service courses was underlined by much of what I read. Courses of this kind are stressful, the four-week version of the CTEFLA particularly so, and given the significant financial and emotional investment involved, it is normal that the prime concern should simply be to 'get through'. This is not, as Korthagen (1988) points out, "an auspicious moment for learning the art of reflection" (p.39) - an aim which still remains high on ,my list of priorities. As a result of the considerable emotional pressure, beginning teachers generally "make a quick shift from progressive to utilitarian perspectives on teaching" (p.35). This shift and the unfortunate (because usually misinformed) strategy of 'guess-what-the-tutor-really-wants' is well described in Kennedy's article. It may well be, too, that the outwardly non-judgmental practices of the reflective model intensify the emotional pressure by constantly asking for critical analysis of one's work, but without making explicit exactly what the criteria for formal assessment will be. Another researcher, McIntyre (1988) suggests that many young teachers will "need to be convinced that they are competent as teachers and are recognised as being competent before they will have the sense of security necessary to examine their teaching objectively and openly" (p.110).

A research project by James Calderhead (1987) set out to explore the quality of reflection in a group of young teachers. He found that "they typically passed through three stages: fitting in, passing the test and exploring" (p.269). Passing the test came before reflection, but even then he identified a number of factors that "heavily constrained the quality of [their] reflection". Within the framework of a short, intensive, pre-service course, there may quite simply not be enough time for the majority of trainees to get beyond the second of these stages. The constraints of time are probably reinforced by the nature of a graded assessment system.

I work within a scheme that has an ill-defined, but normative syllabus. Even though I have sought to question the model of technical rationality that is implicit in this scheme, I am, as Schon (1983) points out, party to an institution that perpetuates it (p.26). By attempting to introduce reflective practices within the confines of a scheme which may be incompatible with them I may, in fact, have been largely counter-productive. This insight has obliged me to re-evaluate my own practices, my expectations and my consideration of trainees' reflections in my assessment of them. My problem is that if I remove reflection from the equation I am less than satisfied with what remains.

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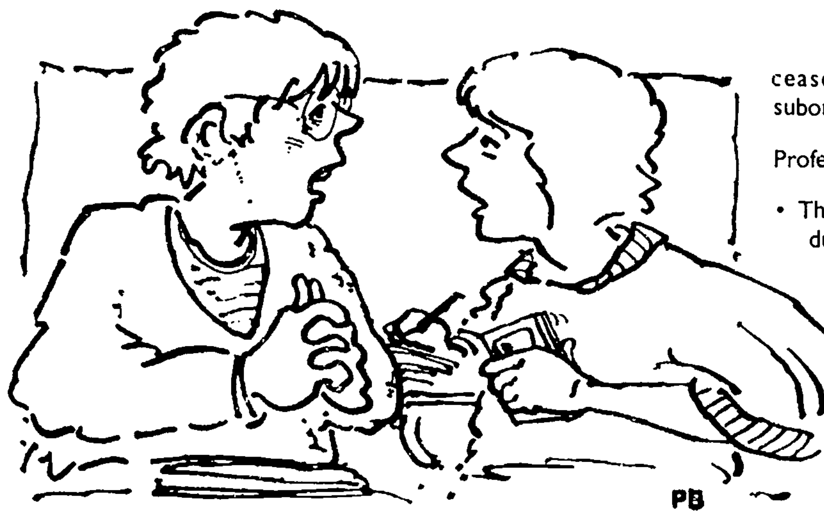

cease to be so grossly over-represented in subordinate positions.

Professor Cameron suggested that:

- There has been overgeneralisation from very dubious "data" about the special features of women's language.
- The interpretation of the 'meaning' of these features was very dubious.
- AT attempts to replace these features with a type of speech that is very odd for anybody.
- AT creates a new myth that women have poor communication skills. This creates anxiety around women's speech.

Professor Deborah Cameron teaches at Strathclyde University in the programme of literary linguistics. She is the author of several books in the field of sociolinguistics and discourse analysis.

Prof. Cameron's talk at the IATEFL Conference in Brighton was very well received. It was about forty minutes long, clear, informative, amusing and left plenty of time for questions. Prof. Cameron traced a public interest in "how women should speak" from medieval conduct books giving advice to court ladies on how to banter with men, through the 1950's "Books for Brides" which suggested that "once an evening is quite enough for a woman to venture an opinion" through to the current interest in "Assertiveness training" and "Leadership skills for Women" She read out the advertising "blurb" for a couple for such courses amidst laughter from the audience. Fun apart, Professor Cameron pointed out that though linguists have rarely been involved directly in the design or delivery of such courses, the rationale, content and techniques clearly have one major source in linguistic findings regarding gender differences in communicative styles. That source dates from Robin Lakoff's book in 1975 about Language and Womens' Lives - a work of anecdotal speculation rather than empirical research but which has had a strong influence, persuading us to believe that women's language is full of politenesses, tag questions, rising intonation and "hedges" (such as, "I'm not sure but...", " sort of...").

Present day assertiveness training (AT) courses for women seem to assume that a) there **are** differences between women's and men's language - greater than differences between women in different settings and of different statuses b) that women's language is somehow **worse** than men's, less powerful and less empowering and c) that if women learn to speak like men or to speak with great directness expressing clearly what they want, repeating what they want, saying 'No' firmly to what they **don't** want, then doors will open for them and they will

Thus Professor Cameron feels that a lot of resources have been wasted by sending people on these courses especially as there has been no evaluation of effectiveness and very little work done on follow-up. She feels that rather than regarding women and men's language as being different and immutably so we should really be putting effort into finding new ways of relating to each other. We need to become better at presenting ourselves as who we **are** rather than learning formulaic expressions that present us as people we don't want to be.

The discussion of whether there are gender differences in language and self expression, whether these differences are significant and whether anything should or can be done about it is obviously an interesting and important one for language students, teachers and trainers so, after the conference, I talked to Professor Cameron further.

TW. Do you personally feel there are gender differences in language use?

DC. Yes, but studies show that they are differences of degree rather than kind and there are a lot of variations between women and women and men and men too.

TW Could you give an example of a difference of degree?

DC Well, women do tend to ask more questions than men. But men do ask questions and if you put men into certain roles such as that of talk show host or market researcher, they will ask loads of questions.

TW. Do you think that these gender differences of degree cause power problems?

DC. Well, the roles that people are put in are connected to their status in society. Women are generally in a facilitating role, a support role both at home and at work. They are not often in the 'leader' role, so the language reflects power differences.

TW. I understood from your talk that you don't think it's a good idea for women or men to artificially change their language use by, for example, learning formulaic expressions or being very direct etc.

DC. No. I think that much communication training is simplistic in that it assumes that there is only one effective way to convey a message. I feel that effectiveness depends on many things - personality, aims, setting. All people need the widest range of communication strategies possible. So we need to put people into as wide a range of situations and conversation types as possible so that they can practice different strategies. When women get practice in a wider range of activities, they will get a wider range of communication strategies and ideally we would be tolerant of all ways of communicating and not think that one way is best.

TW. What relevance do you feel that this has for language teachers and teacher trainers?

DC. Well, when we teach a language, we teach a way of communicating. When we help a person to express something in a new language, what sort of person or role are we encouraging them to have? For example, norms for being polite are very different from culture to culture. When we teach students English politeness patterns we are helping them to construct a new persona more appropriate to the target culture. Some people find this very liberating. Others find it very threatening. I think we should think about this. We should give students the space to negotiate the persona they want. I've recently read some applied linguistics essays stating that now that we know what gender differences there are, we should teach the "gender appropriate style". I think this is a very thorny question. Students must be given the whole range to choose from.

TW. Have you personally changed your own style of talk at all?

DW My style of talk has changed but because I've gone into new situations and have had to evolve new ways of communicating. I haven't sat down and thought "It's about time I learnt to interrupt people"!

TW. Thanks a lot!

!News!

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NLP Series Part Two

Beliefs and Transformation Potential

Tim Murphey, Nanzan University

[N.B. This is the second of a series of articles on NLP. The first article was a general overview of NLP and provided a valuable exercise with the presuppositions of NLP. The next in the series will be about states and strategies].

Introduction

Beliefs are not right or wrong, they are only beliefs. Alone they aren't much, just a few neural networks in the brain. However, they do inspire action, they get us to do certain things. Thus, they can be productive or unproductive because they cause us to behave in certain ways that lead to certain outcomes.

We all recognise that learners' beliefs about how they learn can greatly affect their efficacy in particular situations. Likewise, teacher beliefs about the learning process, the teaching situation, and the ability of their students can have a great impact upon their own attitudes, the actions they choose to take, and the resulting attitudes and actions of their students. And trainers' beliefs about the capabilities of those being trained and about the topic will also be reflected in their attitudes, expectations, and the activities that are presented. Contrast 1) believing that each of your trainees is a future teacher trainer, with 2) doubting whether they can pass your course. Neither is right nor wrong, but each will result in different behaviours and attitudes from you that will in turn inspire different beliefs and actions from your trainees.

From the medical field there has been extensive research on the effect of placebos, research that essentially measures the power of beliefs to change someone. However, again, it is not the belief alone, it is the actions people take because they believe the medicine, doctor, or treatment is effective. If people believe they will get well from a placebo, they may begin to breathe more deeply, relax more, dream of the future, and think pleasant thoughts, and it is these actions inspired by belief that produce the "miracle cure". The power of positive thinking has become such an old cliché that some people no longer stop to consider how it works. The "power" is in the positive beliefs and self talk that build neurological structures in the brain which provoke behaviours which in turn lead to health and excellence.

So how do we get beliefs? How do we recognise an unproductive belief? And how would we change them if we wanted to?

Absorption

Beliefs may be absorbed through the people and culture that surround you. I believe that part of becoming a mature individual is at some point to realise what beliefs you have absorbed without question from your environment and to question whether they are really what you want or not. What mental baggage has your past given you that you had no choice in? After examination you may decide some of it you want to keep and some of it you want to change. These absorbed beliefs are usually in contrast to the beliefs you have actively chosen and may have a lot of experience backing them up. (E.G. I absorbed racial and sexist attitudes from my high school environment. In college I realised for the first time that I had some unconscious assumptions that I hadn't chosen to have, they just were absorbed, the same as my accent).

Reference experiences

Beliefs are often the result of strong "reference experiences", experiences in your past that were very moving and impressive and to which you refer when evaluating situations and making decisions. Each of us remembers times in our lives when we did something, or someone said something to us, that has stayed with us and guided us.The job of teaching, in my mind, is to provide as many quality reference experiences as possible; ones that can transformationally activate a learner's potential. An example is learning how to juggle. Practically all students say "no" when asked if they think they can learn to juggle in 30 minutes. Then I teach them how to juggle and they often do it in 15 minutes. Their belief in their ability and potential grows enormously. Creating a reference experience is also the goal behind doing the fire-walks or board-breaking that some NLP trainers lead their trainees through. I believe this accounts for a lot of the power in doing loop input training sessions (See Ref.1). Trainees experience the process and content in a coherent whole that is very impressive and can stay with them as a reference experience.

Giving tasks: transformational potential.

Milton H. Erickson M.D., though being famous as the worlds foremost hypnotherapist, actually preferred giving clients tasks to do away from his office. By assigning a young man who wanted to get over his shyness the task of interviewing people about shyness on a street corner, Erickson was using loop input and providing him with a real-world reference experience that was even more powerful because it was not anchored to the therapist's office.

Here are a few out-of-class tasks that have had transformational potential for my language students' beliefs about their use of English and learning: writing action logs, telephoning each other in English, interviewing a native speaker, teaching the word "tickle" to a friend by first asking if they know the word and then tickling them if they say "no", teaching songs and games learned in class to family and friends, and wearing their watches upside down to remind them to think and speak in English (see ref.2.).

For the last few years I have also been concerned with overcoming the belief in my students that mistakes are bad. I have them tell a friend about a mistake they made in a humorous way, and I also ask them to make a small mistake on purpose and to notice the reactions of others around them. Telling people about a mistake humorously naturally reframes the mistake (changes its meaning) and the second task allows them to dissociate and observe that others don't really notice or care much when they make small mistakes (see ref.3). "Doing is believing" and more impressive than a teacher simply telling them that mistakes are okay.

My graduate students teach high school and are given the task of taking risks in their own classrooms. At the end of each semester, they give short presentations (30 minutes) in English for local teachers on the risks they are taking with new activities. In addition to that, they have to submit an article on their presentation to a teachers' publication. These risks, presentations, and publications are potentially reference experiences that boost their self-confidence and encourage them to continue presenting and writing and contributing throughout their career. They help form the beliefs that they are valuable members of the profession with valuable information to give. The approach stems from my belief that those I teach are special and that they are potentially agents of change in the Japanese educational system.

Questionnaires for becoming aware

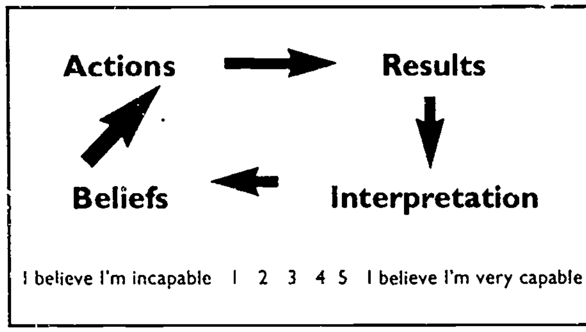
Recognising our beliefs, making them conscious, may be done by using belief questionnaires in low-risk situations within a supportive group. Horowitz's (1987) "Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)" and more recently Ockey, et al "Teacher Belief Questionnaire" (1993) (see ref. 4 & 5) allow teachers to bring beliefs to the surface. Many awareness-raising activities, such as having teachers think back to favourite or disliked past teachers and classrooms, also bring unconscious beliefs to the surface. Through making them conscious and comparing them with our present selves, one's model of the world is loosened to allow for more options and the choosing of beliefs that may be more productive than those we presently hold.

Resistance

Approaching others with the idea that their beliefs are "wrong" can create a lot of resistance. A few guiding presuppositions (beliefs) in NLP are that "Everybody is doing the best they can within their model of the world" and that "There is no failure, only feedback" (see article one activity sheet in this series). With these two in mind, it's a lot easier to respect others' belief systems, to help them to examine them and see if the systems are helpful or if they are keeping them from their goals. Using these two useful beliefs also allows trainers to learn from the trainees' belief systems and to expand their own maps.

Beliefs, actions, results and interpretations (BARI Cycle)

Thus far, we have seen that having certain beliefs inspire certain actions which of course will have some sort of results. Then we interpret the results and these either support our original beliefs or cause us to shift them.



Let's assume for a moment that on a scale from 1 (believing I'm incapable) to 5 (believing I am very capable), I decide to believe 5, which normally inspires people to take a lot of actions. Let's say my results turn out to be only level 3. Here, the interpretation of results is crucial.

If I am disappointed by the results and greatly fear being disappointed again, then I may decide to believe 2 so that I'll be surprised next time with a 3. However, believing only 2 probably won't inspire me to take much action and the results may be even lower. Another response would be, "Hey, I got a 3 through believing 5. Maybe I should believe 7 and then I'll get a 5". Such people are often accused of living in a fairy-tale land, but they often do seem happier and to get a lot done.

You might right now take yourself through the BARI cycle, with a few of your beliefs and just notice what belief you start with and what actions that belief inspires in you. Think of some recent results and notice how you interpret them. Do they change your initial beliefs and the actions that you see yourself taking in the future? How do different interpretations change the cycle?

I like to consider myself a realist. Looking at the evidence I have to admit realistically that while we humans don't always get what we expect, expecting more usually gets us more. Optimists do accomplish more, whether it be in fighting disease, earning money, or educating people, because their beliefs make them take more action. Pessimists tend to say "Why try?" and they don't. Knowing this, I call myself a "realistic optimist", because positive beliefs really are more productive of a proactive life-style. It doesn't mean one can't see things that are wrong with the world. It means you are capable of imagining how things can be better and then taking actions toward that positive future.

References

1. Woodward, T. 1991 Models and Metaphors in Language Teacher Training CUP.
2. Murphey, T. 1992 Telephoning Homework The Language Teacher (JALT) 16 (11) 71. Murphey, T. 1993 Series of 4 Articles in Practical English Teaching Action Logging 13(3) 27, Phone Friendly 13(4) 23, Upside Down That Watch 14(1) 26-27, Supercalifragilisticexpiallidocious, 14 (2) 25.

continued

Teacher Beliefs Activity Sheet

Activity One

1. Describe a teacher that impressed you in your past. What guiding beliefs have you absorbed from this teacher?
2. Describe a teacher that you didn't like. What guiding beliefs have your absorbed from this teacher?
3. Now determine to what degree you have been successful at putting these beliefs into practice in your own teaching. Are there circumstances where these beliefs might be counterproductive?

Activity Two

What early reference experiences did you have that have determined some strong beliefs for you about your self-worth and capabilities? Describe the experiences to your partner and discuss whether the beliefs are productive and if they are always so.

Activity Three

Brainstorm below a list of teacher traits that are positive and negative. Do that now and when you have a good number, look at the end of this sheet.*

Positive Teacher Traits. Negative Teacher Traits

Activity Four

What are your beliefs about the following...?

speaking the students' native language in class

teaching grammar

correcting

evaluation

the ability of your students

Strength and flexibility: Which of the above beliefs are very strong and which are not so strong?

(Now, just for fun, play the devil's advocate with your partner and argue for the exact opposite, sincerely. Find arguments and try to convince your partner of the opposite).

Convincer Strategy Activity Five

How do you decide a technique is a good one?

a) When it works well once.

b) When it works well several times.

c) You decide each time you do it.

d) A respected colleague tells you it is good.

e) An expert/author says it's good.

f) The government Board of Education says it's good.

*After you have finished your brainstorming, switch the headings (Positive becomes negative and negative becomes positive) and discuss with a partner how each of them might be true in some context. (John Fanselow first did this with me in a workshop in 1992).

3. Murphey, T. 1992. Appreshiating Mistakes Anchor Point May pp. 11-13.
4. Horowitz, E. 1987 Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). In A. Wenden & J. Rubin (eds.), Learner Strategies in Language Learning Prentice/Hall International.
5. Ockey, G., Cononlos, T., and Christison, M.A. 1993 Teacher Belief Questionnaire (paper given at The TESOL '93 Convention in Atlanta). Two excellent NLP books addressing belief issues are:
Dilts, R. 1990 Changing Belief Systems Meta Publications: Cupertino, California.
Dilts, R with T. Hallbom & S. Smith 1990 Beliefs: Pathways to Health and Well-Being Metamorphous Press: Portland, Oregon.

N.B. While some descriptions suggest that there is a hierarchy with beliefs flowing down to states and strategies or in an ELT approach flowing down to method and techniques, others argue for a bottom up and top down reciprocity, and that through giving teachers effective techniques, for example, they can change their belief systems (their approaches). (See Woodward pp. 144-145 for a discussion of this). Also, for a very complete and recent survey of the literature on beliefs in general education and particularly in teacher training, see M. Frank Pajares (1992) "Teacher's Beliefs and Education Research: Cleaning Up a Messy Construct" Review of Educational Research 62 (3) 307-32.

Tim Murphey, Ph.D. is a certified NLP trainer and teachers course in NLP, Alternative Learning Forms, and Applied Linguistics at Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan. He conducts seminars internationally. He is the author of Teaching One to One (Longman) and Music and Song (OUP). NLP is one of several fields he has pursued in his own continuing teacher development. Thanks to Herbert Puchta, Judith Baker, and Tessa Woodward for their sensitive insight and suggestions on previous drafts of these articles.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of special interest or relevance to teacher trainers are:

The texts of Paulo Freire by P.V. Taylor (1993). Open University Press ISBN 0-335-19019-7. If you have read with interest any fragments of Freire (perhaps quotes from 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed') or if you are involved at all in literacy teaching, then you may well enjoy this book. Taylor sets out, with Freire's permission, to sketch the life so far of this revolutionary Brazilian pedagogue, discuss the background and content of his texts and review and question his successful method of teaching.

Understanding teaching by John Olson (1992). Open University Press ISBN 0-335-09288-8. Olsen discusses how understanding teacher routines and tacit knowledge can be a better basis for reform in schools than change introduced "scientifically", from the outside and against the grain of teacher intuition. He argues that much teaching is based upon intuition and that teacher development is effective when aimed at enhancing the capacity to understand one's own practice. Through case studies of change in classrooms, he analyses the importance of rituals and routines which reflect judgements teachers make about how to structure daily life in classrooms and which help teachers to resolve the dilemmas of teaching.

English experience materials available from English experience, Brambletye, Woodland Road, Lyminge, Folkestone, Kent CT18 8EP, England. The materials are designed for teenage and adult learners of English and use information from neuro-linguistic programming, suggestopedia etc. to make them 'brain friendly'! The charts, cards and books all sport jolly cartoons and cover areas such as phonetic symbols, tenses, social English, songs and business courses. Entertaining and flexible for self or class-study.

Improve your Image. The effective use of the OHP by D. Tierney and F. Humphreys (1992) CILT Mail Order, P.O. Box 8, Llandysul, Dyfed, SA44 4ZB, Wales (CILT publications are primarily written for modern language school teachers in the U.K. but make interesting reading for us all). This booklet, Number 15 in the slim, pathfinder series, shows how to make silhouettes, overlays, masks, keyholes etc. on the OHP to enliven presentations, grammar, songs, stories, games and other language-using activities.

Not bothered? Motivating reluctant language learners by J. Alison (1993) CILT. Forty pages of basic, practical advice on teaching teenage school children who did not choose to be in your language class.

Creative use of texts. By B. Kavanagh and L. Upton (1994) CILT. This booklet deals with both teacher and learner creativity when using texts to learn the phonetic code, talk, encourage attentive listening and write your own meanings.

Grammar! edited by L. King and P. Boaks. A report of a conference organised by CILT in 1993 to bring together modern language teachers and theorists in the U.K. to discuss the value of structural understanding in the (post?) communicative era.

Cultural awareness by B. Tomalin and S. Stempleski (1993) O.U.P. ISBN. 0-19-437194-8. The introduction makes you want to read the 70 activities on 'recognising cultural images and products, examining patterns of everyday life, behaviour, communication, values and attitudes and exploring cultural experiences. Many activities, however, start with, "collect a class set of ...", Find enough X's for each student", so your time will not be cut out! Many of the examples in the book are from the U.S. and the U.K. and are lightweight. Issues get slightly more profound towards the end of the book.

Context and Culture in Language teaching by Claire Kramsch (1993) OUP ISBN 0-19-437187-5. Chapter One has an anecdote so vivid that it pulls you into the book deeply and instantly. Case studies throw up the cultural implications of various teacher choices. There is discussion of literacy and 'authentic texts and the whole drift of the book is that cultural knowledge is an educational objective in its own right. Very interesting discussion.

How languages are learned by P. Lightbown and N. Spada (1993) OUP ISBN 0-19-437169-7. An introduction to first and second language acquisition aimed at helping teachers thus to make better judgements about different methodologies and textbooks. Very accessible style, cartoons, glossary, further reading and not too long.

Teaching myself by Bernard Dufeu (1994) OUP ISBN 0-19-437-1883. Divided into three main parts (i) presentation of an approach to foreign language acquisition through the use of psychodrama (ii) practical ways of experiencing a F.L. "from within". (iii) teacher training that emphasises the human relations element of teaching encounters. The three parts can be read in any order, all of them encourage teachers to consider their own behaviour and how far they allow other people to develop.

Co-operative language learning Ed. Carolyn Kessler (1992) Prentice Hall ISBN 0-13-173618-3. Very small print. Co-operative or collaborative learning (CL) is an in-class grouping of heterogeneous S's learning to work together on tasks and projects in a way that benefits all the group-members. Twelve authors contribute in three parts (i) theory and models of CL (ii) CL in content-based instruction (iii) teacher talk, role and training in co-operative settings.

Writing our lives Eds. J.K. Peyton and J. Staton (1991) Prentice Hall ISBN 0-13-969338-6. On the use of dialogue journals with adults learning English. Chapters on what dialogue journals are, different ways of using them and training teachers in their use.

Exploring gender: questions and implications for English language education Ed. Jane Sunderland (1994) Prentice Hall ISBN 0-13-042524-9. Papers and case studies on gender issues in the English language, materials, classroom processes, management and professional issues. The contributions from teachers, trainers and writers are inter-disciplinary and independent aiming to acquaint readers with new developments and concerns. Good bibliography.

continued

Before the bell rings by G. Stricherz (1982) Alemany Press/Prentice Hall. ISBN 0-13-068297-7. Simple little booklet of filler ideas for when your lesson plan runs out and your brain won't work. Listening practices in the area of spelling, spatial positions, numbers, problem-solving.

Writing warm ups by A. Tom and H. McKay (1989) Alemany Press. ISBN 0-88084-321-7. Collection of 70 low-tech, ready-to-go, before-writing activities for any age or level. Pages are perforated and hole-punched and there is an answer key.

All things to all people by D. Flemming, L. Germer, C. Kelley (1993) TESOL ISBN 0-939791-44-7. Gives a picture of what it's like to be an ESL teacher working with small classes of children from non-English backgrounds in state schools in the U.S.A. Topics discussed are teacher roles, methods and techniques, culture, non-academic needs, contact with parents, mainstream children, administrators and sponsors.

State of the art TESOL essays Ed. Sandra Silberstein (1993) TESOL. ISBN 0-939791-48-X. Most of the papers in the book were commissioned for the 25th Anniversary of the TESOL Quarterly in 1991. Eighteen contributions (from e.g. Diane Larsen Freeman, David Nunan, James Alatis) grouped a little vaguely into 'overviews', 'perspectives on the field', 'skill areas', but some papers give a useful snapshot of U.S. TESOL issues.

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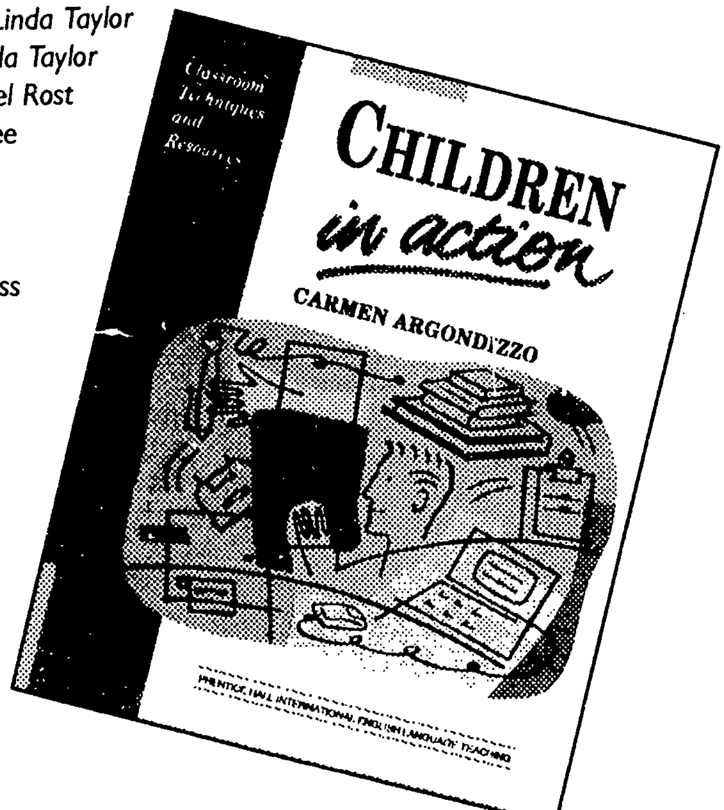

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